



Collaborative Partnership on Forests

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Trees and Landscape Restoration Can Help Deliver a ‘Triple Win’

Nairobi/Washington DC – Against a backdrop of volatile food prices and increasing climate variability, more and more people are paying attention to the relationship between a healthy environment and resilient farmland. From policy makers to private investors, from researchers to smallholder farmers, many are looking for better ways to increase food security in a changing climate. Organizers of a three-day Investment Forum in Nairobi on May 25-27 are hoping these groups will focus their eyes on trees – trees in productive landscapes that can help achieve the ‘triple win’ of increased productivity, climate resilience and carbon capture, in ways that benefit smallholder farmers.

“Feeding the planet in the next 20 years is not simply a quantitative challenge,” said Inger Andersen, Vice President for Sustainable Development, World Bank, ahead of the Forum. “Unsustainable practices that degrade soil fertility will depress yields and keep pushing people further into remaining natural forests. We want to encourage agricultural practices that are part of the solution rather than part of the problem.” Agricultural expansion is the main driver of deforestation in many parts of the world, directly challenging conservation efforts.

About 100 people representing farms, businesses, investment firms, research centers, NGOs and development organizations will convene in Nairobi for an [Investment Forum](#) devoted to *Mobilizing Private Investment in Trees and Landscape Restoration in Africa*. The event will be hosted by the World Agroforestry Centre, in a unique partnership with IUCN, the World Bank, EcoAgriculture

Partners, PROFOR and TerrAfrica. The keynote address will be delivered by Stanislas Kamanzi, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources in Rwanda, a country which has launched an ambitious forest landscape restoration program and is committed to reversing the current degradation of its soil, water, land and forest resources by 2035.

The gathering represents an attempt to identify -- and lift -- some of the financial, institutional and policy barriers that so far have held back investment in sustainable tree-based practices. It follows the Hague Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change in October 2010 when 60 Agriculture Ministers worked together with partners to define a Roadmap for action on climate-smart agriculture. The topic is expected to gain prominence at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Durban, South Africa, in December 2011 as negotiators ponder how to link agriculture to the climate convention.

“Changing global markets and prices for key commodities are making scaled-up investments in farmland and tree-based land-use systems increasingly viable and attractive. Combined with new forms of finance such as carbon payments, public and private funds could help transform degraded landscapes, breaking the cycle of poverty while enhancing ecosystems' functioning biodiversity,” said Stewart Maginnis, Head of the IUCN Forest Conservation Programme.

African entrepreneurs, farmers, civil society and governments have understood the benefits of landscape investments in many cases, leading for example to impressive results in “re-greening” parklands in Niger in the past two decades, restoring watersheds in Rwanda, and wide-scale adoption of conservation agriculture in Zambia. Trees have been an integral part of this re-greening – either in fields, on farm boundaries, or within larger sustainably managed forests and plantations.

“The question is how to mobilize capital to make a difference on a significant scale,” said Sara Scherr, of EcoAgriculture Partners. “Experience shows that growth in agriculture depends mainly on private investment. Indeed investment by farmers and agriculture-related businesses vastly outstrip development aid flows to Sub-Saharan Africa and will increasingly do so in the future. The Forum will help us understand how to tap these sources to increase tree cover and restore ecosystem services in rural landscapes.”

The practice of incorporating trees into the agricultural landscape is becoming increasingly important throughout the world. FAO data confirm that while the global forest area is still declining every year, the number of trees on farms is dramatically increasing. Currently, 46 percent of all agricultural land

globally, or more than 1 billion hectares, has at least 10 percent tree cover.

Research has shown that the nitrogen-fixing tree *Faidherbia albida* is doubling unfertilized maize yields in Malawi (See for example [Creating an Evergreen Agriculture in Africa](#)). The trees are also being grown on millions of hectares of cropland throughout Niger, at densities of up to 200 trees per hectare, and showing a tripling of yield in the crops growing beneath them.

Those yields make tree-based technologies an attractive business proposition at a time when many investors are beginning to realize that resilient returns over the long term will only be possible if their assets deliver a balance of social, ecological and economic benefits. Trees can provide many livelihood benefits to smallholder farmers and other community members, including a diversified income, resilience to risk, nutritious foods, medicines, green fertilizers, timber, fuel wood, oil, charcoal and fodder. Trees in the landscape will also provide a buffer against the extreme weather events expected through the effects of climate change, and protect the hydrological cycle and genetic resources that are critical for rural families.

“Combining trees and agriculture is nothing less than the radical, but entirely practical, pathway to a reinvention of agriculture,” said Dennis Garrity, Director General of the World Agroforestry Centre. “It is a vision of a future in which much of our food crops will be grown under a full canopy of trees.”

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About the Forum: <http://www.profor.info/profor/events/Nairobi-forum>

Pictures for press use: <http://www.flickr.com/forestideas>

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The Collaborative Partnership on Forests ([CPF](#)) is a voluntary arrangement among 14 international organizations and secretariats with substantial programs on forests. The CPF's mission is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forest and strengthen long term political commitment to this end.

CPF members:

- Center for International Forestry Research ([CIFOR](#))
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations ([FAO](#))
- International Tropical Timber Organization ([ITTO](#))
- International Union of Forest Research Organizations ([IUFRO](#))
- Convention of Biological Diversity ([CBD Secretariat](#))
- Global Environment Facility ([GEF Secretariat](#))
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification ([UNCCD Secretariat](#))
- United Nations Forum on Forest ([UNFF Secretariat](#))
- United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change ([UNFCCC Secretariat](#))
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- World Agroforestry Centre ([ICRAF](#))
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- The International Union for Conservation of Nature ([IUCN](#))