



## Rio Conventions Pavilion Tuesday, 27 November 2018

On its 11th and final day, the Rio Conventions Pavilion focused on Forest Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration.

Expert panels and interactive discussion sessions convened throughout the day to explore how to strengthen partnerships to advance global forest, climate and biodiversity goals through restoration approaches. The discussions highlighted supporting tools and resources from partners, inspiring examples from restoration initiatives on the ground, as well as sustainable forest management models that incorporate biodiversity considerations. Links to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (Post-2020 Framework), as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation and the broader 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, were highlighted. Participants also provided their perspectives for building on the growing momentum around the restoration agenda, for which a UN Decade has been proposed.

The Day was convened by the Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative (FERI) in collaboration with members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), the Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration (GPFLR), and the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER), with support from the Korea Forest Service.

### Opening session

Blaise Bodin, CBD Secretariat/FERI, introduced the objectives of the day and invited Ham Tae-Sik, Korea Forest Service, to make opening remarks. Ham highlighted

Korea's expertise and support to forest restoration, and recalled the launch of FERI at CBD COP 12 in Pyeonchang, Korea, which sought to transfer South Korea's knowledge in forest restoration to parties in an effort to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. He also praised the CBD Secretariat's capacity building workshops on this topic as it helps parties develop the needed policies to address deforestation.

Alexander Shestakov, CBD Secretariat, highlighted how forest landscape and ecosystem restoration unifies the work of the three Rio Conventions. He pointed out that Aichi Biodiversity Target 15 addresses this theme but it is important to question to what extent parties are able to achieve the 15% target of restoring degraded ecosystems. Shestakov also drew attention to various global initiatives – including the New York Declaration on Forests and the Bonn Challenge – which are dedicated to this theme, and expressed his hope that the issue of restoration will have a prominent place in the Post-2020 Framework.

Jorge Ernesto Quezada Díaz, National CBD Focal Point, El Salvador, promoted the benefits of his country's proposed UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) and informed participants that there is strong support for the initiative from Latin America and Africa. He added that cooperation is necessary to develop an effective strategy and restoration effort. Díaz demonstrated how this topic links to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2, 6, 12, 13, 14 and 15 and noted that a synergistic approach is therefore very important for restoration.



Alexander Shestakov, CBD Secretariat



Adriana Vidal, IUCN

### ***Taking stock of global opportunities for Forest Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration***

This opening panel showcased a number of global-scale assessments of ecosystem degradation and restoration opportunities, and discussed how they can help prepare the ground for interventions that support a range of Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The panel discussion was moderated by Jim Hallett, Society for Ecological Restoration (SER).

Stefan van der Esch, PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, outlined some results from the Global Land Outlook, an initiative by the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) that aims to map and quantify historical as well as future trends in global land degradation. He shared information on the second Shared Socio-Economic Pathways (SSP2) related to the 'productivity decline scenario' and explained how land use changes over the coming decades will influence the achievement of global sustainability ambitions.

Bernardo Strassburg, International Institute for Sustainability (IIS), analyzed some opportunities for the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 15, drawing on Brazil's 'Native Vegetation Protection Law' and a tool developed by IIS to identify priority areas for restoration. Strassburg mentioned the algorithm created can help pinpoint exact solutions to the optimization problem and emphasized that restoration is a very powerful tool for global challenges that should be included in the Post-2020 Framework.

Adriana Vidal, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), spoke about how to accelerate biodiversity commitment through Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR). She said that IUCN seeks to balance ecological integrity with human wellbeing, as well as local and national priorities. She outlined IUCN's 'Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology' (ROAM) framework, noting its recognition by the CBD as an effective tool to support ecosystem restoration. She also pointed out that many benefits from restoration can be generated in the short term to benefit livelihoods and ecosystems, but projections of return on investment in monetary values are usually measured over a 20-30 year period to accrue the totality of benefits of ecosystem restoration versus business as usual. During a discussion session, panelists and audience members further reflected on how to include the



Liliane Parany, Madagascar National Parks

increasing population issues into scenario analysis and how the modelling tools presented could be adapted for use at the country level.

### ***Implementing the Short-Term Action Plan for Ecosystem Restoration***

This session reviewed progress with implementing the Short-Term Action Plan on Ecosystem Restoration (STAPER), adopted at CBD COP 13 with the aim of helping parties, as well as any relevant organizations and initiatives, to accelerate and upscale activities on ecosystem restoration.

Blaise Bodin, CBD Secretariat/FERI, presented an overarching framework used by FERI to achieve the objectives of the action plan. He highlighted the four pillars of the approach: capacity building workshops and analysis of national commitments on restoration; direct support to restoration projects; outreach and collaborative initiatives with diverse partners; and the production and dissemination of knowledge products.

Jim Hallett, SER, provided further detail on support available to enhance STAPER implementation. He highlighted the contents of a companion document to STAPER, and related web platform, noting it provides additional and easily accessible resources and case studies, organized under the four activity streams, sourced from FERI partners.

Camilo Ponzani, CBD Secretariat, provided an overview of Biobridge, a technical "matchmaking" platform launched at COP 12, with three key features: an interactive web platform providing access to curated resources and a help desk; regional roundtables to facilitate articulate common challenges and contribute to partnership building; and seed grants to kickstart implementation. He also mentioned new initiatives to be implemented in the second phase, including a video game to engage more young people, and expansion of the innovation and solutions fair, of which the first edition took place on the sidelines of COP 14.

Two panelists then presented examples of ongoing FERI projects.

Liliane Parany, Madagascar National Park, presented the restoration initiative of degraded humid forests in the World Heritage site 'Rainforests of the Atsinanana.' She explained the project comprises six national parks and said the activities to be





**Sheila Wertz-Kanounnikoff**, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and **Adriana Vidal**, IUCN

carried out include: conducting a study to identify priority areas of natural habitat to be restored; training of local communities; natural regeneration; and active restoration interventions.

Mark Nicholson, Brackenhurst Botanic Garden, Kenya, discussed initiatives combining biodiversity conservation with ecological restoration. He highlighted serious land degradation, invasive species and the loss of indigenous knowledge, as worrying trends, and underlined the importance of education to counteract this loss. Nicholson observed that “restoring is not restored,” to emphasize the importance of investing time, money, skills, protection and commitment to address these challenges.

### ***Cooperation for Efficient Action on Forest Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration***

This session explored the role that inter-institutional forums such as the CPF and the GPFLR have played in building the political momentum behind the FLR concept, as well as fostering ambitious commitments under the Bonn Challenge.

The session opened with a “keynote interview” between Catalina Santamaria, GPFLR and Jorge Ernesto Quezada Diaz, El Salvador. Highlighting some conclusions from the recently-launched GPFLR report, Santamaria mentioned the need to coordinate actions at various levels within countries, and noted the importance of combining public and private funding sources to demonstrate that FLR projects are bankable.

Marie-Laetitia Busokeye, Ministry of Environment, Rwanda, presented outcomes from the African Regional Ministerial Meeting on the Bonn Challenge, and outlined the contribution of the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100), a continent-wide restoration initiative that seeks to contribute to the achievement of the Bonn challenge. She explained that African governments have the opportunity to integrate values of restoration across policies and planning and should create incentives for investment in FLR.

**Reflections on Collaborative Initiatives on Restoration from CPF and GPFLR Members:** On behalf of the CPF members involved, five speakers highlighted progress under the CPF Joint Initiative on FLR.

Sheila Wertz-Kanounnikoff, FAO, outlined some CPF delivery mechanisms, including focal agencies, dialogue and joint initiatives. She highlighted how the Partnership supports



**Marie-Laetitia Busokeye**, Rwanda

the work of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), enhances forest cooperation and coordination among CPF members, and promotes synergies among the Rio Conventions.

Marieta Sakalian, UNEP, offered an overview of The Restoration Initiative (TRI), which seeks to foster innovation and integration in support of the Bonn Challenge. Describing it as the largest GEF-financed programme focused on restoration, she noted there are currently 11 national projects implemented by three international agencies, IUCN, FAO and UNEP, and that it is executed by national ministries, agencies and NGOs.

Adriana Vidal, IUCN, provided additional information on the CPF joint initiative on FLR and noted its objective to enhance synergies at the global level, as well as assist countries and other stakeholders to strengthen and scale up implementation at the national and sub-national levels. Vidal also drew attention to the project components and gave examples of ongoing activities.

Blaise Bodin, CBD Secretariat/FERI, explained how past challenges as well as current gaps in FLR are being addressed. He stated that available information on the costs and benefits of FLR have been insufficient, preventing investors from benchmarking or evaluating proposals. Bodin highlighted efforts to develop a global reference database on past and current FLR projects to address these weaknesses.

Madeline Craig, UNDP, highlighted their broad forest portfolio, noting it spans activities under the GEF Small Grants Programme, REDD+ support, the New York Declaration on Forests, as well as regional projects in the Amazon and other parts of the world. She also highlighted UNDP’s role in connecting the FLR and sustainable development agendas.

The session concluded with a presentation on WWF’s work and cooperation on FLR. Hermine Kleymann, explained her organization’s goal for a world enriched by extensive, resilient forest landscapes benefitting biodiversity, people and climate. She pointed out that the targets outlined in the IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C will not be reached without halting deforestation by 2030.

**Panel Discussion on How to Reflect FLR Commitments and Action in the Post-2020 Framework:** During this general discussion, moderated by Jorge Ernesto Quezada Díaz, El Salvador, representatives from FAO, IUCN, WWF, UNEP



Günter Mitlacher, WWF



Aboubacar Oulare, Guinea

and UNDP presented some perspectives and insights for accelerating progress on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and SDGs, and contributing to the Post-2020 Framework. Among other issues, the discussions highlighted the importance of:

- Building on and scaling up established best practices, especially through regional cooperation and other knowledge exchange platforms;
- Linking the diverse expertise and scales of operation of the diverse initiatives, while also reaching out to more networks and processes;
- Translating the many global commitments into concrete national targets and actions on the ground as an entry point for support and partnership building;
- Using the momentum generated by the Bonn Challenge and other FLR initiatives to link to, and raise the ambition of climate- and SDG-related processes at national level;
- Demonstrating effective implementation models and “bankable projects”;
- Offering alternative land-use models that balance conservation with increasing the functionality of productive landscapes;
- Targeting drivers of landscape restoration by building an enabling environment for cross-sectoral approaches and the linking private and public sector financing;
- Setting more specific targets for FLR and ecosystem restoration and linking them to existing global commitments such as the UNFF and the land degradation neutrality target under SDG 15; and
- Ensuring a balance between quantitative and qualitative reporting to “go beyond hectares to understand what is actually happening under the canopy.”

### ***Aligning Action on Biodiversity with the Gef-7 Impact Programmes on Sustainable Forest Management and Food, Land Use and Restoration***

Volatiana Rahanitriniana, Ministry of Environment, Madagascar, discussed the integration of FLR into a robust policy strategic framework in her country. She explained that the multi-faceted approach to build a shared, easy to coordinate project has proven more effective.

Jeffrey Griffin, FAO, spoke on behalf of GEF to present the impact programmes related to FLR. He noted that given GEF’s limited budget size, it has changed its trajectory to focus more on integrated systems-based approaches, for example, by investing in food systems. Griffin also highlighted that the GEF requires a suite of related strategies and interventions with diversified country portfolio investments.

Theresa Castilion-Elder, Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), discussed some capacity building activities for member countries in ecologically responsible forest management and biodiversity conservation in the Amazon. She highlighted a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Secretariats of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the CBD to enhance biodiversity conservation in tropical forests.

Aboubacar Oulare, CBD Focal Point, Guinea, shared experiences from a GEF-7 funded project on mainstreaming biodiversity in food, land use and restoration in Fouta Djallon.

Anja Gassner, ICRAF, explained how to extend the restoration agenda to trees on farms for biodiversity and highlighted the need to adopt tools for measuring on-farm biodiversity since spatial arrangements of trees on farms is very different to trees in forests.

In a final interactive discussion on financing opportunities for FLR and sustainable forest management beyond the GEF, moderated by Günter Mitlacher, WWF, speakers further reflected on: the changes necessary to get funding beyond the GEF; the costs of implementing sustainable forest management in the Amazon region; the sustainability of trees on farms investments; the contribution of ecosystem-based approaches; and the role of the private sector in GEF projects.

### ***Closing of the Rio Pavilion***

In the closing session, moderated by David Ainsworth and Blaise Bodin, CBD Secretariat/FERI, some of the organizers of the 11 Rio Pavilion “Days” at COP 14 presented highlights from the thematic sessions. Closing the session, Ainsworth thanked the GEF and the European Commission for their financial support to the Pavilion over the years and urged participants to continue the conversation at UNFCCC COP 24 and beyond.