

Concept Note



Global
Landscapes
Forum



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GREENING THE AFRICAN HORIZON

GLF AFRICA 2024 HYBRID CONFERENCE

17 September
2024

Nairobi, Kenya
and Online

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#GLFAfrica

Can Africa lead the world's restoration? With vast natural resources to support its food systems, livelihoods, markets and growing young population, Africa has an unprecedented opportunity to restore its degraded landscapes, cater to the needs of its people and pave a sustainable way forward for all of humanity. However, this can only be possible if Africa takes a leading role in scaling sustainable landscape solutions, championing biodiversity conservation and climate action, combating land degradation, and building sustainable agrifood systems – while securing the rights and livelihoods of millions of its people.

In the midst of the current resource tensions and multiple landscape crises, the **climate crisis is disproportionately impacting Africa**, threatening its ecosystems and livelihoods. Moreover, exploitation of Africa's natural resources coupled with unsustainable present and historic land management and use patterns have yielded catastrophic biodiversity loss, widespread land degradation, and marginalization of livelihoods: **over 45% of Africa's land area and 65% of its cultivated area are degraded.**

These landscape challenges are exacerbating the effects of the climate crisis and other existing socioeconomic and humanitarian development

crises, including food and water insecurity, mass migration, slow economic development, unemployment, and the marginalization of women, children, youth and Indigenous People. Thus, Africa needs just and multifaceted approaches across its landscapes to fast-track **locally-led, relevant, and sustainable solutions** for land restoration, biodiversity, climate, agrifood systems, and livelihoods.

Who is GLF Africa 2024 for?

The GLF Africa 2024 Hybrid Conference will gather diverse action-oriented stakeholders including local communities, Indigenous People, policymakers, researchers, scientists, innovators, private sector actors, NGOs and civil society actors, youth networks, women and women-led initiatives and groups, practitioners, farmers and media.

Collectively, these stakeholders will showcase and promote transformative locally-led and contextually relevant landscape solutions and innovations. These will inform policies, finance, build knowledge, and interventions to scale-up landscape restoration and biodiversity conservation, build sustainable food systems, and strengthen climate resilience and livelihoods in Africa.





GLF Africa 2024 objectives

- Convene and engage diverse, action-oriented stakeholder groups building and scaling solutions and partnerships for just and sustainable landscapes restoration in Africa.
- Provide a dynamic platform for collaboration, showcasing transformative locally-led solutions for addressing agri-food, climate, biodiversity, restoration and livelihood challenges in Africa.
- Capture the voices and messages of local community actors including African farmers, NGOs, civil organizations, Indigenous People and local communities among others and bring them to mainstream platforms including the three Rio Conventions.
- Facilitate learning, matchmaking, knowledge and expertise sharing, among diverse stakeholders working on restoration.
- Provide a platform to highlight successful and effective policy, funding, and practice interventions on restoration that are locally relevant.

Navigating Africa's shifting landscapes

Africa holds a plethora of ecosystems and landscapes that host vastly different activities and face different challenges. GLF Africa 2024 will identify solutions to these challenges in the context of the continent's distinct and constantly shifting landscapes.

Tropical forest and savanna landscapes host a plethora of biodiversity and provide multiple ecosystem services and goods that form the lifeblood of Africa's agrifood systems and economy. However, these landscapes are threatened by unsustainable land use practices and degrading at unprecedented rates. To illustrate, Africa has lost over **22%** of the forested land since 1900, with about **3.9m Hectares** of forests lost annually. GLF Africa 2024 will frame these challenges in a local context, mainstreaming issues and solutions of biodiversity conservation, and landscape restoration while drawing interlinkages with broader policy and practice initiatives including **REDD+**, the **UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration** and the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**.

Drylands and the Sahel, home to **40% of Africa's people** depending primarily on rain-fed agriculture and livestock husbandry, face several challenges including climate change, increasing desertification and economic marginalization. GLF Africa 2024 will highlight and promote opportunities to revitalize dryland landscapes, including greening and reversing desertification coherent with the **UNCCD Land Degradation Neutrality Principles**, rural livelihoods and development, and climate resilience and adaptation in neglected landscapes.

Freshwater, marine and coastal landscapes and the blue economy are relatively uncharted territory, with a **projected value of \$405 billion by 2030** shared among 70% of African Union member states being coastal countries. However, these ecosystems are threatened with degradation and water insecurity and are vulnerable to the adverse impacts of the climate crisis. GLF Africa 2024 will provide opportunities to unleash the potential of the blue economy, build resilience in coastal landscapes and improve water security.

Key topics at GLF Africa 2024

GLF Africa 2024 focuses on topics that are pertinent to setting Africa on the road to a sustainable and prosperous future based on [New Visions for Earth](#) as outlined at GLF Nairobi 2023, and consistent with the key development priorities in the African Union Agenda 2063 and the outcomes of the [2023 Africa Climate Week](#).

The six focus topics of GLF Africa 2024 include:



Scaling landscape restoration : To ensure sustained healthy ecosystem functioning that underpins the fabric of societies and economies across Africa, it is imperative to halt land degradation and accelerate land restoration and sustainable land use at scale. How to accelerate relevant nature-based solutions, biodiversity conservation, the circular (bio)economy and landscape-level innovations and best-practices towards landscape restoration and societal well-being?



Partnerships and finance for climate, biodiversity and land degradation neutrality: How can we form meaningful partnerships and develop innovative and sustainable financial mechanisms to build a green pathway to a sustainable, transparent and inclusive well-being economy across Africa's landscapes? This topic will address key issues around finance for climate and biodiversity, sustainable land management and restoration, green commodities and emerging markets, blended finance, and opportunities for stakeholders to forge partnerships to drive viable green development investments.



Sustainable agrifood systems: How can we unleash and harness the potential of Africa's food systems to drive sustainability transitions, socio economic development, and human and ecosystem wellbeing across the continent? This topic will tackle agrifood system issues around sustainable production, supply, and consumption, profitability, climate resilience, land rights and livelihoods.



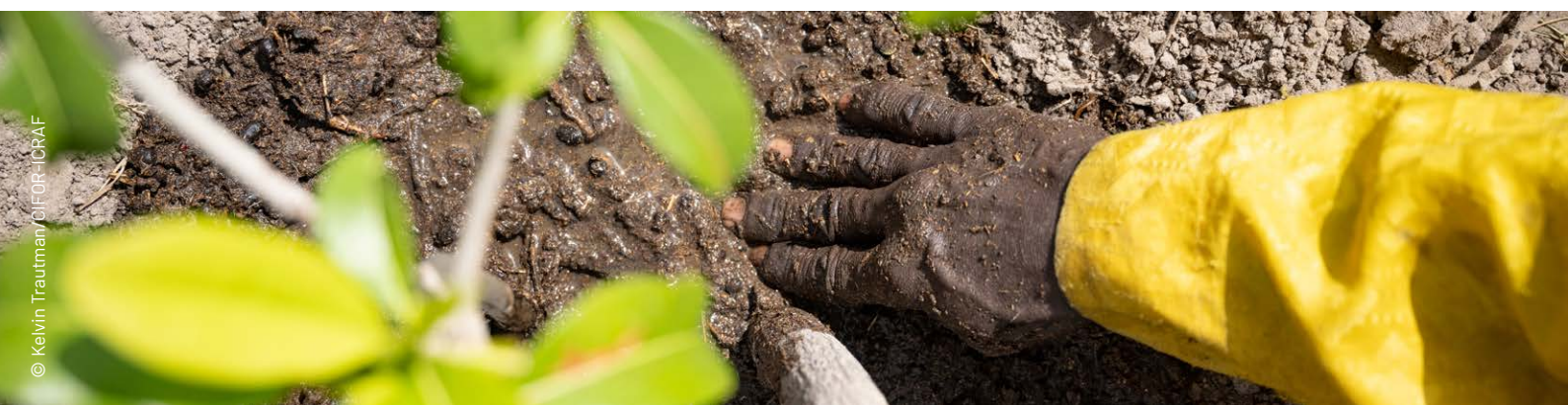
Rights and livelihoods in shifting landscapes: Africa's landscapes are changing, and so are the competing and often conflicting claims and rationalities among the different stakeholders to access landscape resources. This has led to the marginalization of livelihoods and alienation of rights of vulnerable groups including women, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and youth. How to adapt to climate change, and cope with emerging resource strains and tensions while promoting gender equality, youth engagement, and dignified livelihoods?



Technology and data driving sustainability: Emerging technologies, data, and knowledge have become powerful tools driving sustainability transitions, yet their potential to support sustainable resource use and management in Africa has yet to be fully harnessed. This topic will focus on emerging innovative approaches, tools, technologies and evidence-based data used by various stakeholders, to inform decision making, shape solutions, and facilitate monitoring and tracking transitions across Africa's landscapes.



Governing the just transition: It is crucial to devise a new model for economic development that leaves no one behind, addresses present and historical inequalities or injustices and tailors environmental, social, and economic governance to meet the needs of local communities. How to support local policies, solutions and action through locally-led approaches, while bridging the interface between local governance regimes and mainstream environmental and socioeconomic discourses?



Speakers

Among hundreds of GLF past speakers are conservationist **Dr. Jane Goodall**, WTO Director-General **Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**, Her Royal Highness **the Nnabagereka (Queen) of Buganda**, world-renowned nutritionist **Dr. Walter Willett**, Indigenous leader and Minister **Sonia Guajajara**, USAID Administrator **Samantha Power**, environmentalist and Managing Director for Africa at WRI **Wanjira Mathai**, religious leader Father **Joshtrom Isaac Kureethadam**, Global

Environment Facility CEO **Carlos Manuel Rodriguez**, Ghanaian actress and humanitarian **Joselyn Dumas**, climate activist **Vanessa Nakate**, and the heads of United Nations agencies such as the UN Environment Programme, UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and UN Development Programme (UNDP).

As for our previous GLF Africa editions, we aim to raise African knowledge, expertise and perspectives, and share examples of innovative and inclusive leadership. Here is what our previous speakers said:

“ We have existing solutions and the tools to develop new ones that the world truly needs. And if we come together, we can go beyond surviving – to thriving.



Éliane Ubalijoro
CEO, Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF) & Director General, ICRAF

“ Africa, which is very rich in ecosystems, traditions and knowledge, holds a key. The continent has long practiced sustainable agriculture from the terraced fields of Rwanda to the agroforestry traditions of West Africa. It's time to amplify these African-led solutions, scaling them up and out.



Ibrahim Thiaw
Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

“ The African youth generation has awakened, and we are committed to doing all we can to build a prosperous Africa. For that, we need African leaders to actively promote investment in the agricultural sector. After all, agriculture is the coolest job in the world. African agribusiness will be worth \$1 trillion by 2030, and everyone does need to eat.



Ineza Grace,
Coordinator, Loss and Damage Youth Coalition

“ When we think of adaptation, our first thought might be around reducing food risks or preventing water shortages, but what we learn is that strengthening health systems can reduce the impact of infectious disease, heat stress and other climate-related risks, as well as trauma associated with extreme heat.



Youba Sokona,
Vice-Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

“ Enhancing the digital literacy of women is a key tool to promote sustainable development.



Barbara Birungi Mutabazi
Executive Director, Hive Colab

“ This decade is about you and me, the environments we live in ... and it's about our very survival.



Musonda Mumba,
Secretary General, Convention on Wetlands

Activities

GLFx

Local communities and practitioners are closest to landscape challenges and pivotal for realizing lasting transformation. Voices and wisdom from GLF local partners, including the **GLFx network of community-led chapters**, will join GLF Africa to collectively leverage the solutions, knowledge, and agency that can turn a new vision for Earth into transformative action.

GLFx chapters at GLF Africa

The on-site and hybrid sessions will feature local champions as inspirational speakers and expert panelists who will bring attendees closer to their stories of successes and struggles in accelerating restoration, seeking social justice and ensuring sustainable livelihoods in African landscapes and worldwide. GLFx representatives will invite participants to reflect critically on intersections of challenges in shifting landscapes and why a new vision for Earth is inherently rooted in their communities.

GLF watch parties

Directly connecting to the conference from several countries in Africa, GLFx chapters will bring together landscape actors to follow the conference, trigger discussions and further collaborations around topics relevant to their localized solutions. GLF watch parties will enable more local communities to join GLF Africa from their landscapes.

Africa-based community-led dialogues

The GLFx community will host dedicated sessions around the conference topics through the GLFx regional meetings, where 20 local organizations representing 15 countries will nurture collaboration, exchange knowledge and reimagine solutions that increase their agency for transformative and connected landscape restoration.

Youth

Landscape Leadership Workshop: Prior to GLF Africa, the GLF Youth Program will facilitate the 2024 Landscape Leadership Workshop in collaboration with the Youth in Landscapes Initiative (YIL), African Restoration Stewards, the 2024 GLF Africa Youth Project team and other regional partners. This skill-enhancing hub for aspiring students, practitioners and young professionals is rooted in the notion that resilient, just and productive landscapes demand a new type of leadership that values nature, cares about people and can facilitate lasting transformative change.

Artivism: The combination of art and activism can be a powerful tool for expressing environmental concerns and creative approaches to tackle different issues. The 2024 Africa Youth Storytelling Contest will be launched ahead of the conference, aiming to highlight the work of young Africans who use creative mediums to communicate their perspectives on contemporary and historical landscape issues.





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Youth at GLF Africa 2024: Young people are experts in their respective fields, and youth landscape leadership can be a major catalyst for positive change, challenging conventional norms and advocating for stewardship mindset and practices. During GLF Africa 2024, youth will contribute to shaping the conference both virtually and in person by hosting regional dialogues, workshops and networking spaces. They will also be represented in plenaries and sessions, with speakers including Restoration Stewards, members of GLFx Chapters and other young people from the broader YIL network. For more information and collaboration opportunities, please contact **Eirini Sakellari** at e.sakellari@cifor-icraf.org.

A wide-reaching digital communications and outreach campaign

The 12-week pre-event campaign will leverage regional and global events to build momentum ahead of GLF Africa. The campaign will amplify African perspectives

and drive engagement and discussions to resonate with millions online, galvanizing action for Africa's pressing issues. Through GLF Live streamed conversations online with experts and practitioners, multimedia stories, media visibility and collaborations, social media campaigns and a photo competition, audiences from Africa and around the world will be invited to join the conversation to share, learn and act. The event outcomes will be widely shared in a post-event campaign, linking to the global conversations.

The back-to-back event and campaign are tipped to reach 40 million people from over 100 countries across the globe and engage 500,000 in the conversation through social media, partners, influencers and the networks of conference speakers, participants and media. As part of our outreach process, the GLF's 42 social media ambassadors are enhancing the visibility of the campaign across 27 countries and in over 15 languages. For more information and collaboration opportunities, please contact **Elena Matviichuk** at e.matviichuk@cifor-icraf.org.

Sponsorships

GLF Africa 2024 offers a unique opportunity for partner organizations to demonstrate their dedication to a sustainable future in Africa while accessing a diverse and influential audience. We invite local and international organizations to join us as sponsors and contribute to the success of this transformative event. Sponsorship packages include valuable engagement and outreach opportunities, such as participation in the campaign leading up to GLF Africa 2024, hosting conference sessions and showcasing your initiatives through dedicated pavilions.

By partnering with us, you can gain exposure to a global audience of over 60 million through our comprehensive outreach campaigns, connect with leaders and influencers from diverse sectors, position yourself as a thought leader in sustainability, and demonstrate your commitment to corporate social responsibility. Join us in expanding impactful change across Africa's landscapes and shaping a more just and prosperous future for the continent and the world.

To craft the ideal sponsorship package for your organization, please contact **Marina Brunale** at m.brunale@cifor-icraf.org.



About Global Landscapes Forum

The Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is the world's largest knowledge-led platform on integrated land use, dedicated to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement. The Forum takes a holistic approach to create sustainable landscapes that are productive, prosperous, equitable and resilient and considers five cohesive themes of food and livelihoods, landscape restoration, rights, finance and measuring progress. It is led by the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), in collaboration with its co-founders UNEP and the World Bank and Charter Members.

Charter members: CIAT, CIFOR-ICRAF, CIRAD, Climate Focus, Conservation International, Crop Trust, Ecoagriculture Partners, The European Forest Institute, Evergreen Agriculture, FAO, FSC, GEF, GIZ, ICIMOD, IFOAM - Organics International, The International Livestock Research Institute, INBAR, IPMG, IUFRO, Rainforest Alliance, Rare, Rights and Resources Initiative, SAN, TMG-Think Tank for Sustainability, UNCCD, UNEP, Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation part of Wageningen Research, World Farmer Organization, World Bank Group, World Resources Institute, WWF International, Youth in Landscapes Initiative (YIL)

Funding partners



based on a decision of the German Bundestag