



European  
Commission

# FORESTS AND TREES FOR CLIMATE

GCCA+ The Alliance for a changing world



#GCCAPlus #EUClimateAction #EUGreenDeal

2020

## KEY ISSUES

Forests support the livelihoods of more than **1 billion** people living in extreme poverty and provide paid employment for over **100 million people**. They are home to more than **80 percent of the world's terrestrial biodiversity** and provide ecosystem services such as air and water filtration services.

Forests are integral to the climate change story. Extensive land clearing to make way for commercial agriculture, roads and cities has diminished carbon sinks while emitting millions of tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. **Standing trees remove carbon from the atmosphere** and protect land, coastlines and watersheds.

**Forest management is multidimensional** and often involves difficult cross-sectoral policy questions, including international politics, economic governance and human rights, i.e. deforestation by illegal charcoal burners lacking alternative livelihoods; reluctance to invest in tree planting because of insecure land tenure.

## GCCA+ LESSONS LEARNING

The **Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+)** portfolio offers insights into approaches that effectively support adaptation and mitigation while improving social wellbeing and economic prosperity. GCCA+ programmes have refined techniques to plant and **restore mangroves as coastal defences** against rising seas and storm surges. Many countries now combine sea-defence infrastructure with this **ecosystem-based solution**.

Across such projects GCCA+ approaches highlight how **community engagement is necessary** to build confidence that **future benefits** need time to mature. Interim measures can be necessary to support livelihoods in such cases.

GCCA+ learning suggests external policies and decisions can impact outcomes, e.g. under REDD+ frameworks, the GCCA+ has been faced with uncertainties around international finance streams and land tenure risks that may yet impact community support.



### Sierra Leone's illegal charcoal burners

Timber logging is the main cause of destruction of the Sierra Leone's forest. The National Protected Area Authority (NPAA) struggles hard every day to keep the forest intact notably by dismantling the pits.

These REDD+ activities, were part of the EU flagship initiative GCCA+ and the EU Delegation to Sierra Leone in 2017, received an Environmental Award for the REDD+ project achievements.

See the full story on [gcca.eu/stories](https://gcca.eu/stories)

Photo: In the hills of the Western Area Forest Reserve in Sierra Leone, Jonathan Bundu, a photojournalist from Climate Tracker, contracted by the GCCA+ accompanies forest rangers in charge of protecting the forest from poachers involved in the illegal charcoal business.

# THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

## EU commitment in forestry

In 2019 the European Commission issued a new Communication *Stepping up EU Action to Protect and Restore the World's Forests*.

Focused on preserving primary forests and supporting sustainable and responsible forest restoration, it aims to:

1. Reduce the EU consumption footprint on land
2. Promote deforestation-free supply chains in the EU
3. Partner producing countries to 'deforest-proof' EU development cooperation
4. Redirect finance to support sustainable land-use practices
5. Support the availability and quality of, and access to information on forests and commodity supply chains
6. Strengthen international cooperation to implement REDD+

## International Developments

**REDD+** Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) has expanded to REDD+ to include enhancement of carbon stocks and new financial incentives. Limited international climate finance and carbon markets, as well as national policies challenges have slowed progress. Article 6 of the Paris Agreement aims to open trade of carbon finance and abatement.

Other mechanisms include:

**Partnerships**, such as the AFR 100, building on the Bonn Challenge, bring together international organisations such as IUCN and WRI, and countries to restore 150 million hectares of the world's deforested and degraded lands by 2020.

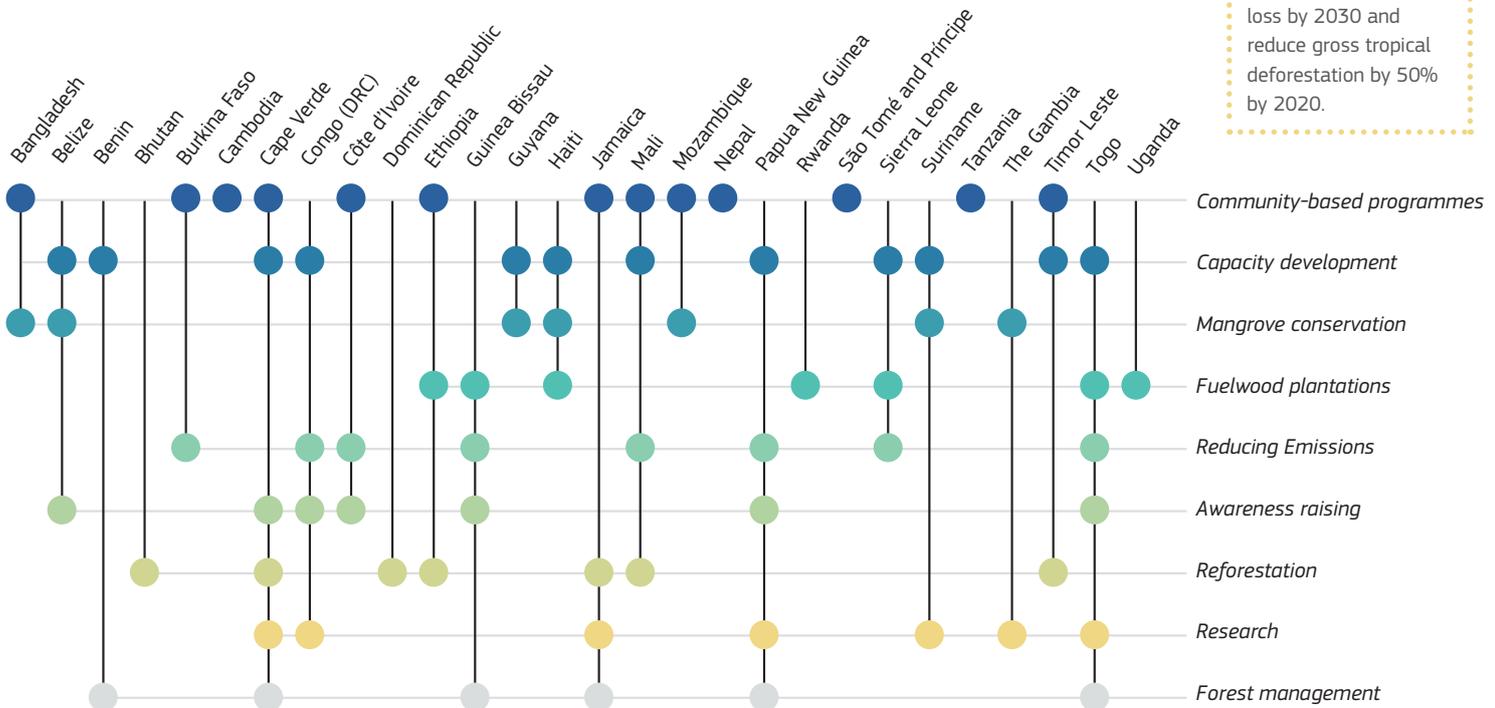
**Certification bodies**, such as the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil, certify deforestation-free supply chains.

**Voluntary carbon markets** relying bodies such as Verra (formerly the Verified Carbon Standard) which certifies GHG emission reduction projects sale into carbon markets.

## GCCA/GCCA+ and Forestry

**34** projects    **40%** of GCCA/GCCA+ portfolio    **30** countries    **225** million euros

The EU's 2008 Communication on Deforestation aims to halt global forest cover loss by 2030 and reduce gross tropical deforestation by 50% by 2020.



[www.gcca.eu](http://www.gcca.eu)

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