

Regional Policy Coherence for the Great Green Wall Initiative:

Maximising the flow and impact of finance

04 POLICY BRIEF

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) is a transformative African-led effort to combat desertification, restore degraded lands, and build climate resilience across the continent. However, achieving its ambitious goals depends on the ability to mobilise and efficiently deploy financial resources. The GGWI Strategy and Ten-year Implementation Framework emphasise strengthening governance, enhancing financial transparency, improving coordination, and mobilising diverse funding sources to ensure long-term sustainability. A key approach to maximising financial flows and impact is fostering regional policy coherence. Aligning the GGWI Strategy with complementary initiatives—such as the African Union's Green Recovery Action Plan, Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and Sustainable Forest Management Framework—reduces inefficiencies, improves access to multiple funding streams, and strengthens investment appeal.

To scale financing, the GGWI needs to harness blended finance, green bonds, and payments for ecosystem services while

strengthening monitoring, reporting, and verification systems to unlock results-based climate finance. Building local capacity for financial management, expanding private sector participation, and introducing targeted mechanisms for women and youth can ensure inclusive and efficient fund use. Regional coordination mechanisms, stronger domestic resource mobilisation, and nature-positive financial reforms will be essential to sustain long-term investment. By adopting these interventions, the GGWI can unlock sustainable funding, accelerate land restoration and climate resilience efforts, and drive economic and environmental transformation in Africa's drylands.

This policy brief outlines the financial challenges facing the GGWI and provides key intervention areas within the GGWI Strategy aimed at enhancing access to funding, improving financial mobilisation, and ensuring transparent and efficient resource allocation. The brief explores regional policy coherence and identifies other key opportunities for enhancing the flow of financial resources and maximising the impact of investments in land restoration and climate resilience efforts.

INTRODUCTION

The Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) is a transformative African-led programme aimed at restoring degraded land, combating desertification, and fostering sustainable livelihoods across multiple African countries. Since its inception in 2007, the initiative has attracted international attention and financial commitments from global donors, development banks, and climate funds. However, despite the ambitious scope of the GGWI, financing remains a critical challenge, threatening the sustainability and scalability of its objectives. A 2020 review by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) estimated that at least \$33 billion more funding was needed to meet its 2030 target. While international donors pledged \$19 billion in 2021, only \$2.5 billion had been received by March 2023, with the rest due by the end of 2025.¹

For the Sahel, financial support includes over \$19 billion pledged under the One Planet Summit. Key contributors include the Global Environment Facility (GEF) (over \$1 billion in grants, leveraging \$6 billion more), the World Bank (over \$6 billion), the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) (over €500.8 million since 2021), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (\$876.5 million). The European Union Investment Bank (EIB) (€3.2 billion), the Green Climate Fund (GCF) (\$3.51 billion), and the African Development Bank (AfDB) (\$6.5 billion) are

also major financiers, supporting diverse projects from ecosystem restoration to climate-resilient agriculture. The European Union has committed €1.54 billion (2021-2023), and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has invested over \$400 million, contributing to land restoration and job creation. These collective efforts demonstrate a strong international commitment to achieving the GGW's environmental and socio-economic objectives in the Sahel region.²

A major issue lies in the structure of funding, which is often project-based and short-term in nature. Technical and financial partners primarily support individual projects rather than comprehensive and integrated programmes, leading to resource competition among GGW entities and a lack of long-term financial security. This fragmented approach limits the ability to implement large-scale, continuous restoration efforts and undermines the initiative's long-term impact. Furthermore, African governments face significant challenges in allocating domestic resources to GGWI activities, with dryland agriculture and land restoration often receiving low prioritisation in national budgets. Given the long-term nature of the initiative, where tangible benefits may take decades to materialise, securing stable and predictable funding mechanisms is crucial.

1. Africa Briefing, 2024. [Africa's Great Green Wall faces funding shortfall, delays.](#)

2. Great Green Wall Accelerator, 2025. [Technical Brief #5.](#)

Another pressing issue is the inefficiency of funding flows. Many countries have identified bottlenecks in accessing and deploying financial resources, with funds getting delayed or lost within complex bureaucratic processes. Despite significant pledges made, particularly during high-profile summits and conferences, the actual disbursement of funds to local implementation efforts remains limited. Strengthening financial governance and ensuring more efficient mechanisms for channelling funds to local authorities and community-led projects is essential to overcoming this challenge.

The scale and complexity of the GGWI further complicate financing efforts. Spanning multiple countries and covering millions of hectares, the initiative requires a high degree of coordination across different governance levels. Without robust institutional frameworks, improved monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) systems, and targeted financial instruments, efforts to mobilise additional funding, particularly from private and innovative sources, will be hindered.

Expanding financial mechanisms beyond traditional grants and integrating innovative financing solutions, such as blended finance, green bonds, and payment for ecosystem services (PES), is necessary to achieve the GGWI's ambitious restoration targets.

A key approach to unlock additional financing for the GGWI is enhancing policy coherence with other regional frameworks, such as the African Union's Green Recovery Action Plan (GRAP), Sustainable Forest Management Framework (SFMF), Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (CCRDS), and the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (ABSAP). By aligning GGWI efforts with these strategies, stakeholders can tap into a broader pool of climate finance, biodiversity conservation funds, and resilience-building investments. This alignment would not only strengthen the financial sustainability of the GGWI but also ensure that it contributes to broader regional and global environmental and development goals, thereby maximising its impact.

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Our shared objective is to significantly enhance the flow, efficiency, and impact of climate finance. In close partnership with the African Union and African partners, the United Kingdom hopes to unlock the financial resources needed to build robust climate resilience across Africa”

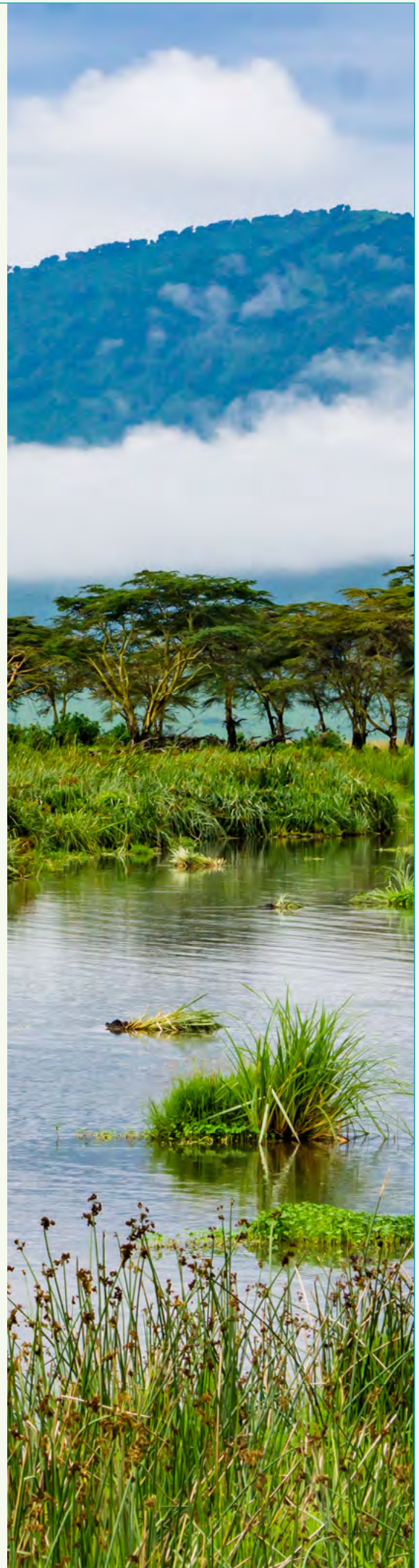
Adam Dury, United Kingdom Ambassador to the African Union.



African Union Great Green Wall Initiative Strategy and Ten-year Implementation Framework (2024-2034)

The Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI), launched by the African Union (AU) in 2007, is a transformative continental programme designed to combat the escalating challenges of land degradation, desertification, climate change, and biodiversity loss across the Sahara and Sahel regions. Initially envisioned as a continuous belt of trees to halt the expansion of the desert, the initiative has evolved into a comprehensive landscape restoration programme that integrates sustainable land management, ecosystem rehabilitation, and climate resilience strategies. Over time, the GGWI has also become more comprehensive in its geographical reach, extending beyond the original eleven member countries of the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall (PAAGGW) to embrace a more continent-wide approach. The initiative has grown significantly, with new members from 42 countries to date, joining from North, East, Southern, and West Africa. Spearheaded by the African Union Commission's Directorate of Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy (SEBE), the GGWI sets ambitious goals, including restoring 100 million hectares of degraded land, creating 10 million jobs, and sequestering 250 million tonnes of carbon by 2030. By improving soil fertility, enhancing biodiversity, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices, the GGWI works to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and Indigenous communities.

Recognising the importance of a comprehensive continental approach to tackling land degradation, desertification, biodiversity loss and climate change, and acknowledging the need for its urgent revision, the AU used an inclusive process to develop a revised framework to guide the initiative. The resulting **African Union Great Green Wall Initiative Strategy and Ten-year Implementation Framework (2024-2034)** (GGWI Strategy) promotes a more integrated and holistic approach to land rehabilitation and climate-resilient development amongst AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Agencies and partners. The new GGWI Strategy is founded on agreed guiding principles with a vision, objectives and four strategic intervention axes.



Strategic framework of the GGWI Strategy



VISION

By 2034, Africa's dry regions are transformed into socially, economically, and environmentally resilient and stable regions.



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

Enhance the resilience of communities, ecosystems, and economies in the African drylands by improving the living conditions of populations, improving the state and health of ecosystems, advocating and mobilising resources, strengthening institutional collaboration and promoting policy coherence.



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Promote locally led land planning, land restoration and resilience building initiatives and nature-based entrepreneurial and livelihood activities that improve the well-being and incomes of communities, as well as empower them, particularly women and youth.

Catalyse inclusion, alignment, cooperation and ownership of land restoration and resilience-building in related strategies, policies, programmes and plans.

Promote policy coherence, alignment and a common narrative in strategies, policies, programmes and plans.

Invest in, and scale up, nature-based practices and inclusive landscape approaches to sustainable land, water and biodiversity restoration and management to support resilient value chains.

Enhance Africa's capacity to mobilise resources at multiple scales.

Develop, invest in, and support, economic and environmental infrastructure facilitating the move to a green and circular economy.

Enhance the linkage and effective collaboration among community, practice, science, policy and private sector stakeholders fostering knowledge sharing and learning from experience and building upon a harmonised knowledge management system.

Encourage systems-oriented, cross-sectoral and coordinated decision-making and adaptive management environments that facilitate the integration of activities across all stakeholders, sectors and scales.

Four strategic intervention axes have been identified in the new strategy to support the achievement of the GGWI vision and objectives:



AXIS 1

Enhancing leadership, governance and political commitment



AXIS 2

Co-design and deliver pathways toward transformative restoration, resilience and development



AXIS 3

Enhancing the means of implementation for resilient landscape restoration



AXIS 4

Leveraging existing initiatives

Intervention areas of the GGWI Strategy on improved access, mobilisation, and transparent and efficient use of finances

The success of the GGWI Strategy is dependent upon the effective mobilisation of resources, the use of new funding mechanisms and the efficient distribution and use of those resources. The GGWI Strategy seeks to enhance access to finance through strategic interventions that strengthen governance, improve coordination, and mobilise diverse funding sources. By reinforcing leadership, governance, and financial transparency, the GGWI Strategy aims to establish a more sustainable and resilient financial framework that ensures the long-term success of its land restoration efforts across the continent.

STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND TRANSPARENCY

One of the key strategies to improve financial accessibility is enhancing the governance and political commitment of the GGWI. Through the establishment of robust national coordination mechanisms between the GGW national entities and relevant line ministries, financial management is expected to become more efficient and transparent. Additionally,

by analysing barriers and incentives for fostering a more favourable economic and institutional environment, the GGWI seeks to create an effective governance structure that promotes resilience and stability. A crucial aspect of this approach is the use of MRV tracking tools, which enhance financial accountability and ensure transparency in fund allocation and expenditure.

ENHANCING RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND FINANCE FLOWS

To secure sustainable financial resources, the GGWI prioritises expanding finance flows and resource mobilisation efforts. African institutions are expected to take full responsibility for mobilising and leveraging financial resources for GGW implementation. A comprehensive resource mobilisation strategy led by the African Union Commission (AUC) will support these efforts, ensuring a strategic and well-coordinated approach to securing funds.

Commitments from AUC member states in dryland regions to allocate a percentage of their national budgets to the GGWI will enhance domestic funding. Simultaneously, advocacy efforts will focus on accessing climate finance by emphasising the GGWI's contribution to global public goods and environmental benefits. The initiative aims to synergise various funding sources,

including international donors, development agencies, climate finance mechanisms, multilateral and bilateral agreements, private sector investments, philanthropic organisations, and national budgets. Strengthening national and local capacities to mobilise both domestic and international financial resources will further reinforce these efforts.

Encouraging private sector involvement is also a key priority. The GGWI seeks to expand corporate social responsibility (CSR) and shared value investments, ensuring long-term financial sustainability. Additionally, applying Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks will facilitate the evaluation of business-level carbon and social footprints, encouraging responsible and sustainable investments.



BUILDING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND INCLUSION

Developing creative partnerships and improving coordination among different sectors, such as environment, land, water, agriculture, gender, youth, and finance, is essential for enhancing financial accessibility. By integrating subnational authorities into funding initiatives, the GGWI ensures that land restoration is incorporated into broader national and regional development plans. Moreover, efforts to remove financial access barriers for youth and women will contribute to a more inclusive and equitable financing framework.

ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL ORGANISATIONS

International financial organisations play a crucial role in funding the GGWI at multiple levels. Institutions such as the World Bank, IFAD, AfDB, GEF, and GCF are key stakeholders in mobilising financial resources for the initiative. The GGWI Steering Committee, with donors, intergovernmental organisations, the UNCCD, and international financial institutions invited as observers, will help facilitate financial coordination and ensure the alignment of investments with GGWI objectives.

Table 1. The GGWI Strategy's strategic intervention axes and action areas related to finance.

STRATEGIC INTERVENTION AXIS	INTERVENTION AREA	ACTIONS
Strategic Intervention Axis 1. Enhancing leadership, governance and political commitment	<u>Intervention Area 1.2</u> Strengthen the leadership, governance, efficiency and transparency of the Great Green Wall Initiative and its agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catalyse robust national coordination mechanisms between the GGW national entity and the relevant line ministries
	<u>Intervention Area 1.5</u> Analyse barriers and incentives for creating a more favourable economic and institutional framework for effective governance, resilience, stability, and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use MRV tracking tools for enhanced accountability and reporting of finance and related actions

STRATEGIC INTERVENTION AXIS	INTERVENTION AREA	ACTIONS
<p>Strategic Intervention <u>Axis 3</u>. Enhancing the implementation of resilient landscape restoration through resource mobilisation, partnerships, inclusion, knowledge exchange and capacity development</p>	<p><u>Intervention Area 3.1</u> Enhance finance flows and resource mobilisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the full responsibility of African institutions to mobilise and leverage financial resources for the implementation of the GGW • The AUC should develop a resources mobilisation strategy • AUC Members States in the drylands should commit to allocate a percentage of their National Budget to the implementation of the GGW • The AUC to advocate for climate finance funding based on the GGW contribution to the public goods and global environmental benefits • Synergise the sources of GGW investments from international donors and development agencies, climate finance, multi-lateral and bilateral agreements, private sector investments, philanthropic organisations, and national budgets • Synergise national and local capacities to mobilise domestic and international financial resources • Integrate subnational authorities in funding initiatives and ensure land restoration is an integral part of development plans • Encourage private sector actors to expand their CSR and shared value investments, as a means of ensuring sustainable financing • Encourage the application of ESG frameworks to undertake evaluation of business-level carbon and social footprints
	<p><u>Intervention Area 3.2</u> Develop creative partnerships and effective coordination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships and coordination among different sectors - environment, land, water, forest, agriculture, livestock, gender and youth, education, finance, and planning
	<p><u>Intervention Area 3.3</u> Ensure inclusive leadership and participation, especially of women and youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove barriers towards accessing the funding for youth and women

STRATEGIC INTERVENTION AXIS	INTERVENTION AREA	ACTIONS
Chapter on Coordination and implementation	<u>Section 7.1</u> Great Green Wall Initiative bodies and support institutions across various scales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GGWI Steering Committee - Donors, intergovernmental organisations, the UNCCD, and international finance institutes are invited as observers • International finance organisations - International finance organisations are key to funding the efforts of the GGWI at numerous scales. This includes entities like the World Bank, the IFAD, AfDB, the GEF and the GCF

Intervention areas of the African Union Green Recovery Action Plan for enhancing the flow and impact of climate finance

Increasing the flow, efficiency and impact of climate finance is a priority area of the **AU Green Recovery Action Plan (GRAP) (2021-2027)**. It highlights how climate finance plays a crucial role in both mitigating climate change and enhancing adaptation efforts, particularly in Africa, where many regions are highly vulnerable to climate shocks. Securing and efficiently deploying climate finance is recognised as essential for reducing risks, improving resilience, and ensuring long-term sustainability. However, accessing these funds remains a challenge, as financial mechanisms are often complex, slow, and inefficient. Even when finance is secured, the failure to leverage broader funding sources limits its impact on the most vulnerable populations.

The GRAP highlights climate finance as a key enabler for scaling up climate action in Africa. It notes there is significant opportunity to enhance the accessibility and flow of these funds to the most affected regions and communities. This requires increasing financing for both mitigation and adaptation while ensuring

that these efforts align with broader development goals, such as those outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development. Strengthening these financial frameworks will help create a more resilient and sustainable recovery from climate-related challenges, including those exacerbated by COVID-19.

Furthermore, inclusive participation in climate finance allocation and decision-making is emphasised as essential. Engaging women, youth, people with disabilities, and other marginalised groups ensures that finance reaches those who are most impacted by climate change while also leveraging their local knowledge and leadership in sustainable practices. For example, women's participation in political processes has been linked to more responsive policies, greater cooperation across diverse groups, and increased social stability. Without inclusive engagement, climate policies and projects risk exacerbating existing inequalities, reducing their overall effectiveness and long-term sustainability.

The GRAP has four intervention areas on climate finance:

- **Improve accessibility and efficiency of financial flows for both mitigation and adaptation** by protecting, enhancing, and improving the delivery of climate funding mechanisms. This will see increased climate finance flows to benefit the most vulnerable, including women, youth, and marginalised groups, to increase adaptation and build resilience to climate shocks.
- **Transform Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) into a pipeline of bankable projects**, which have the potential to attract investment at scale from the private sector. Promote the use of policy-based and results-based climate finance tools.
- **Align with the UN Financing for Development work, explore opportunities for debt swaps for climate action, promote development**

orientated carbon trading mechanisms that can help support climate adaptation in Africa, and recognise the role that micro-finance can play in improving resilience to both COVID-19, climate change and other shocks.

- **Taking note of the need for a Just Transition, encouraging states to ensure that economic recovery plans and borrowing from International Finance Institutions supports a recovery that is clean, resilient and inclusive** – prioritising those areas outlined in this action plan over carbon intensive or climate vulnerable sectors.

The GRAP recognises that green economic transformation will require **strong partnerships and coordination with public and private investors**. A deliberate partnership and resource mobilisation strategy will facilitate a coordinated approach of maximising collaborative resource mobilisation.

BRIDGING THE CLIMATE FINANCE GAP: SCALING INCLUSIVE INVESTMENT FOR GRAP AND GGWI PRIORITIES

Although the GRAP highlights climate finance as a key enabler for scaling up climate action in Africa, current flows remain critically insufficient. Despite a 48% increase to \$43.7 billion in 2021/22, Africa's climate finance meets only 23% of annual needs required to achieve its 2030 climate goals. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) report underscores that flows must quadruple annually to close this gap, particularly as adaptation receives just 20% of needed funding and mitigation 18%. Geographic disparities compound the challenge: 10 countries absorb 50% of total finance, while the 10 most climate-vulnerable nations receive only 10%.³

To mobilise finance at scale, GRAP's focus on transforming NDCs into bankable projects and leveraging debt swaps aligns with Member States' call for urgent private-sector engagement, which currently contributes just 18% of total flows. Prioritising equitable distribution and channelling funds to marginalised regions will be critical to addressing GGWI-

3. Meattle C, Balm A, Diaz JE, Miao G, Stout S, Gupta I, Abraham S, Sloley A, Wignarajah D. 2024. **Landscape of Climate Finance in Africa 2024**. Climate Policy Initiative.

linked vulnerabilities, such as food security and resilient infrastructure, while avoiding exacerbating inequalities. Strengthening domestic resource mobilisation is equally vital, as African public funding fell to \$1 billion in 2021/22.⁴

To support the initial phase of operationalising the GRAP, the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) is implementing the Transformative Climate Finance Programme (TCFP GRAP), funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC), in

collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). The programme focuses on developing inclusive climate finance strategies, building pipelines of bankable projects, strengthening capacity to mobilise inclusive climate finance, and facilitating dialogues with investors and Member States. These efforts can be scaled to support countries in addressing priorities related to the GGWI.

Recommendations

- **Harness the potential of blended finance, green bonds and payment for ecosystem services.**

- **Blended finance** offers a strategic entry point by using concessional public funds to de-risk private investment in high-impact sectors like dryland restoration. Structuring blended finance vehicles—such as investment funds or project platforms—can involve layered capital arrangements, where junior tranches from public donors absorb early losses, thereby attracting commercial capital to senior tranches. These vehicles should prioritise bankable projects with clear restoration, climate, and social outcomes, and provide technical assistance to enhance project readiness and investor confidence.
- **Green bonds** also present a scalable mechanism to raise capital for landscape restoration. Bonds can be issued by governments, development

banks, or private actors and linked to certified restoration activities, using proceeds to finance sustainable agriculture, reforestation, and land rehabilitation in GGW regions. To ensure credibility, issuers should align with international green bond frameworks (e.g. International Capital Market Association's Green Bond Principles) and integrate monitoring systems to track environmental performance.

- **PES schemes** can generate long-term revenue streams by compensating communities and land users for maintaining ecosystem functions such as carbon storage, water regulation, and biodiversity conservation. PES programmes within GGWI should be designed to include strong MRV systems, transparent benefit-sharing arrangements, and links to voluntary or compliance carbon markets where appropriate.

4. *Ibid.*



- **Strengthen MRV systems to unlock climate finance.** Robust MRV systems are essential to track the progress and impact of land restoration efforts under the GGW and to unlock results-based climate finance from sources such as the GCF and the GEF. A well-designed MRV system supports transparency, accountability, and data-driven decision-making, forming the foundation for financing mechanisms that reward verified outcomes. Some complementary MRV systems include:
 - **Digital MRV platforms** integrate data from multiple sources and streamline reporting, allowing for real-time tracking of restoration indicators, emissions reductions, and co-benefits such as biodiversity gains and livelihood improvements. These platforms enhance data accessibility for funders and stakeholders, aligning with international climate finance reporting standards.
 - **Community-based monitoring** empowers local stakeholders to collect ground-level data, ensuring that restoration outcomes are context-specific, inclusive, and socially verified. This approach not only improves data accuracy but also builds local ownership and capacity, which are critical for long-term sustainability.
 - **Satellite-based monitoring** provides cost-effective, scalable tools to assess vegetation cover, land degradation trends, and carbon sequestration at landscape level. When integrated with geospatial data and artificial intelligence powered analytics, satellite imagery significantly enhances the credibility and scalability of MRV systems.

- **Enhance private sector engagement and ESG integration.** Effective engagement requires targeted incentives, clear standards, and robust impact measurement mechanisms. Some pathways for catalysing private sector investment include:

- **Investment incentives** such as tax breaks, concessional loans, and risk guarantees can reduce perceived risks and increase the financial viability of dryland restoration projects. Blended finance structures, combining public and private capital, can further de-risk investments and align returns with sustainability outcomes.

- Development of **green investment standards** tailored to dryland contexts—including clear criteria for sustainable land management, climate resilience, and biodiversity—can help define bankable projects. These standards enhance investor confidence by ensuring environmental integrity and alignment with green finance principles.

- To attract impact investors, mechanisms must be in place to **measure, report, and verify ESG impacts**. Standardised ESG frameworks and disclosure tools allow investors to assess the non-financial performance of projects and track outcomes such as carbon sequestration, community benefits, and ecosystem restoration.

- **Strengthen regional policy coherence through concrete coordination mechanisms.** To translate policy coherence into actionable alignment, GGWI financing efforts should

be supported by formal regional coordination structures, as follows:

- **Establish a regional GGWI finance coordination platform or secretariat** to align funding pipelines, streamline donor engagement, and reduce overlap across projects and countries.
- **Develop joint funding windows or pooled funds** among AU Member States and RECs to support cross-border restoration efforts and leverage economies of scale.
- **Adopt harmonised reporting standards and MRV systems** across GGWI-related initiatives to facilitate consolidated impact tracking and attract results-based climate finance.
- **Build local capacity for financial management and fund absorption.** Improving financial outcomes requires targeted capacity development at subnational and community levels, efforts should include:
 - **Training in proposal writing, financial reporting, and impact measurement** to enable local actors to access and manage climate finance.
 - **Support for establishing basic financial systems and governance structures** in local institutions to ensure fiduciary compliance and transparency.
 - **Technical assistance facilities** that provide ongoing support to local stakeholders engaged in GGWI project implementation and reporting.

- **Integrate gender and youth-focused financing mechanisms.** To translate inclusion goals into practical outcomes, the GGWI should incorporate dedicated financing instruments for women and youth, these could include:
 - **Targeted microfinance schemes, matching grants, or concessional loans** for women- and youth-led restoration enterprises.
 - **Impact investment funds** focused on inclusive business models that promote equity in dryland restoration.
 - **Capacity-building programmes coupled with financing** to ensure these groups can develop viable, fundable projects and participate meaningfully in the restoration economy.
- **Strengthening GGWI financing through strategic support and project development.**
 - **Integrate GGWI countries into GRAP support structures.** GRAP should expand its scope to formally include GGWI countries, providing targeted support in developing climate finance strategies, policies, and pipelines aligned with GGWI priorities.
 - **Develop robust capacity-building programmes.** Launch dedicated capacity-building initiatives to equip national and subnational actors with the skills needed to design and implement bankable projects that directly address GGWI goals, such as land restoration, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods.
- **Prioritise project pipeline development for investment mobilisation.** Accelerate the identification and preparation of high-impact restoration projects in GGWI areas, with the aim of presenting compelling investment opportunities at financing roundtables and donor engagement platforms.
- **Leverage emerging international commitments and partnerships.**
 - **Engage new donors and track emerging pledges** to ensure timely and strategic disbursement to GGWI-aligned priorities.
 - **Highlight and expand bilateral support.** Explore targeted bilateral partnerships, particularly those focused on food security, displacement, and land restoration.
- **Strengthen nature-based finance infrastructure.**
 - **Integrate nature into financial sector regulation.** Work with partners to support the integration of nature-related risks and opportunities into macroeconomic models, financial regulation, and credit risk assessments—framing GGWI as a buffer against climate and economic shocks.
 - **Adopt nature-positive disclosure frameworks.** Promote the adoption of frameworks for nature-related financial disclosures among public and private stakeholders in GGWI countries to attract capital aligned with ESG standards.

- **Support aggregated project pipelines.** Engage with initiatives like the Carbon Accelerator Programme for the Environment (CAPE) to bundle GGWI restoration projects for scale, especially those tied to carbon and biodiversity credits.
- **Enhance domestic resource mobilisation and financial governance.**
 - **Engage ministries of finance and central banks.** Shift financial leadership of GGWI from environment ministries to stronger institutions (e.g. finance ministries, central banks) to mainstream natural capital into national planning and investment frameworks.
 - **Explore fiscal reforms linked to ecosystem services.** Identify major beneficiaries of GGWI ecosystem services (e.g. energy, water sectors) and explore tax reforms, pricing strategies, and public-private mechanisms to redirect domestic revenues toward land restoration.
 - **Collaborate on revenue collection capacity.** Strengthen revenue administration in GGWI countries, especially where data gaps and weak tax bases limit domestic financing potential.
- **Focus investment readiness and governance reform.**
 - **Pilot private sector financing in high-capacity countries.** Refine geographic focus by prioritising countries with stronger governance, financial systems, and institutional capacity to attract and absorb private sector investments as test cases for scalable models.
- **Support carbon market readiness.** Develop a regional, NDC-aligned pipeline of carbon credit projects under the GGWI, with technical support for carbon market access, ESG compliance, and MRV standards.
- **Improve accountability for nature-based commitments.** Link GGWI finance to results-based frameworks tied to NDCs, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), and AU-led monitoring platforms to strengthen accountability and transparency.
- **Align investment with co-benefits and systemic impacts.**
 - **Prioritise interventions with multiple benefits.** Focus on projects that simultaneously deliver climate mitigation, adaptation, biodiversity, and livelihood benefits, ensuring alignment with donors' multidimensional goals.
 - **Build nature-positive financial ecosystems.** Establish enabling environments for nature-positive investments, including legal, trade, and judicial reforms, and support blended finance vehicles to channel private capital toward inclusive, green development in GGWI zones.



CONCLUSION

The success of the GGWI Strategy hinges on the ability to effectively mobilise resources, adopt innovative funding mechanisms, and ensure the efficient distribution and use of financial resources. As an African-led and African-owned initiative, the GGWI underscores the importance of developing new, predictable, and sustainable funding sources for land restoration and climate resilience. To achieve this, the initiative must harness blended finance, green bonds, and payments for ecosystem services to attract private capital and generate long-term revenue streams. Robust MRV systems—including digital tools, satellite monitoring, and community-based approaches—are critical to unlock results-based climate finance and enhance accountability. Targeted incentives, ESG-aligned standards, and dedicated instruments for women- and

youth-led enterprises can further deepen private sector engagement and inclusion. Strengthening regional policy coherence through coordinated financing platforms and harmonised reporting will reduce inefficiencies and improve access to diverse funding streams. Equally important is building subnational financial capacity, improving domestic resource mobilisation, and aligning GGWI with macroeconomic and nature-related financial reforms. By fostering financial innovation, enhancing governance readiness, and aligning with broader frameworks such as GRAP, CCRDS, ABSAP, and the SFMF, the GGWI can unlock scalable, inclusive, and sustainable investment for climate-resilient land restoration across Africa.



Access the new GGWI Strategy here:



For additional information about the meeting and how you could get involved, please contact:

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