

Day 2 Session Summaries

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Catalysing Effective Nbs Design and Implementation at Scale With the IUCN Global Standard For NbS, Demonstrated by Examples of its Successful Application.

Lead: Charles Karangwa (IUCN).

Local Groups and Vulnerable Communities:

- **Local groups play a pivotal role** in identifying and prioritizing vulnerable communities. Their intimate knowledge of the local context allows them to pinpoint areas of need.
- By involving these communities, we can **break down barriers** and foster a sense of **ownership**. Empowering local stakeholders ensures sustainable and context-specific NbS.

Collaboration for Scaling Up NbS:

- **Collaboration with partners** is essential to **scale up NbS** across diverse landscapes. Partnerships can pool resources, share expertise, and amplify impact.
- NbS designs must be adaptable to various contexts, considering factors like climate, ecosystems, and community dynamics.

Societal Challenges and NbS:

- **Climate change adaptation and mitigation** are critical aspects of NbS. These solutions help communities cope with changing weather patterns and reduce emissions.
- **Disaster risk reduction** is another societal challenge addressed by NbS. Ecosystem-based approaches enhance resilience against natural hazards.

Catalyzing Effective NbS:

- The **IUCN Global Standard for NbS** provides guidelines for designing and implementing effective solutions. It emphasises **contextual relevance**, **ecosystem integrity**, and **social equity**.
- While many projects are labelled as NbS, their results often fall short. We must bridge this gap by ensuring tangible outcomes.

NbS as Bottom-Up Interventions:

- NbS should not be viewed as a **top-down intervention** imposed from above. Instead, they thrive when rooted in local knowledge, community participation, and shared responsibility.

AFR100 and Landscape Restoration in East and Southern Africa

12 March 2024: 10:45-12:15

The AFR100 (the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative) is a country-led effort to bring 100 million hectares of land in Africa into restoration by 2030. In this lively event, moderated by Jonathan Muriuki (GEA), we heard about the progress made toward AFR100 by countries throughout the continent. This included Benjamin Akobund, Programme Officer, Energy Infrastructure, AU NEPAD/AFR100, who explained how AFR100 supports countries in their implementation and provided highlights to date in key countries. Hiwot Workagegnehu, Project Manager, Forests for Future, GIZ, Ethiopia, provided a case study on Ethiopia, which has pledged the restoration of 15 million hectares of deforested and degraded landscapes as part of AFR100. This is being pursued in part through the development and implementation of effective land use plans that include integrated approaches for the restoration and sustainable use of forest landscapes.

The session also explored the need to recognize and overcome the barriers to success in AFR10 implementation. This included keen insight from Sonny Zulu, Standard Chartered Bank, who spoke frankly about the goal of for-profit businesses to strengthen their bottom line, even within their philanthropic pursuits. “How do you make your nature-based solution efforts bankable,” he asked the audience. Just as important, he added, “How do we make a profit without destroying the planet?”

Audience participation was strong, including the engagement of a local farmer who posed thought-provoking questions and encouraged all panelists and participants to put their faith in the farming community to restore and protect the landscape upon which they depend for their lives and livelihoods.

Hitting the Road with the Exponential Roadmap for Natural Climate Solutions: Agriculture and Africa

Describing Natural Climate Solutions (NCS) in farming and grazing that can contribute carbon removals, align Exponential Roadmap with African context

During the Conservation International-hosted conference session, panelists discussed nature-based solutions connected to livestock and carbon removal. The focus was on companies positively impacting the environment through proper livestock management, utilizing bomas and kraals. These practices contribute to soil improvement through manure and hoof action, supporting grass growth and yielding a clear return on investment across social, economic, environmental, and policy dimensions. Community involvement is highlighted as essential for the success of these initiatives, fostering economic enterprises such as boma repairs, seed and fodder collection, and the utilization of leather and livestock byproducts.

Another panelist emphasized the importance of community rights and ownership in land-related carbon projects. Stressing that no nature-based solution can thrive without community involvement, the discussion underscored the significance of considering various ecosystems across Africa and the indispensable role of communities in these initiatives.

“Across Africa we have numerous ecosystems, but you can’t talk about any of them or the solutions without talking about the communities.”

The ‘Forgotten Five’ in Restoration Scaling. Lead: Peter Minang (CIFOR-ICRAF)

Indigenous Knowledge:

Contextualizing knowledge is crucial, especially considering the rich tapestry of indigenous knowledge that exists across various cultures and regions. Indigenous knowledge encompasses the systematic body of knowledge acquired by local people through accumulated experiences, informal experiments, and an intimate understanding of the environment within their specific cultural context

By recognizing and valuing indigenous knowledge, we can enhance our decision-making processes and promote sustainable practices.

National Parks and Grazing Areas:

While it’s essential to preserve national parks as vital ecosystems, we must also address the needs of local communities.

Turning national parks into grazing areas can be problematic because it may lead to uncontrolled animal populations and ecological imbalances. Striking a balance between conservation and community livelihoods is crucial.

Investment in Nature-Based Solutions:

Nature-based solutions offer innovative ways to address environmental challenges. These solutions leverage natural processes and ecosystems to provide benefits.

Facilitating investment in such solutions can lead to sustainable outcomes, including improved biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and climate resilience.

Developmental Side of Conversations:

While conversations are essential, we must not overlook the developmental aspects. Dialogue alone won’t drive progress; we need concrete actions and policies.

Integrating conversations with practical development initiatives ensures holistic growth.

Climate Change and Forgotten Areas:

Climate change profoundly impacts vulnerable regions often overlooked. These forgotten areas face unique challenges related to water scarcity, food security, and ecosystem degradation.

Addressing climate change in these regions is critical for equitable global progress.

Paramount Chief Kawenga’s Perspective:

Paramount Chief Kawenga from Malawi emphasizes the importance of contextualizing planning. When formulating strategies, we must consider local views and experiences.

Donors should understand that effective plans emerge from a deep understanding of the local context.

Affordable Proven Solutions:

We should prioritize affordable and proven solutions that don’t require significant financial investment.

These solutions, even if they cost zero dollars, can have a substantial positive impact on communities and the environment.

Restorative Agriculture as NBS in Watersheds. Lead: Olaf Westermann (Catholic Relief Services)

The complexity of our sheds reflects the intricate nature of the challenges we face, compelling us to introspect for solutions that lie within our collective capability. Prioritizing tasks effectively and substituting fire hazards with controlled grazing practices can significantly mitigate risks, drawing inspiration from historical cattle management a century ago. The crux of the matter hinges on galvanizing our local and civic leaders to embrace their responsibilities earnestly and effect change where it’s most impactful.

Our commitment to empowering women and the youth remains unwavering, fostering hope that they will eventually ascend to leadership roles.

“In the realm of Water Management, the emphasis must be on sustaining and establishing enduring soil covers that aid in minimizing soil disruption while optimizing rainwater capture and infiltration at the source, thereby ensuring robust soil health and crop nutrition.”

Lessons for Scaling-Up Land Restoration from Regreening Africa. Leads: Mieke Bourne and Patrick Worms (CIFOR-ICRAF)

Key outcomes from the session:

1. **Vision and Target:** To achieve the evergreen mission, it is crucial to set a clear vision and specific targets. A well-defined vision provides direction and purpose, guiding efforts toward sustainable outcomes. By identifying specific targets - such as planting a certain number of trees, improving soil health, or promoting sustainable practices - we create a roadmap for success.

2. **Collective Support:** The evergreen mission cannot thrive in isolation. It requires support from various quarters. Governments play a pivotal role by enacting policies, allocating resources, and fostering an enabling environment. Traditional and faith leaders, deeply rooted in communities, can mobilize people, inspire action, and promote sustainable practices. Communities themselves are essential partners—they hold local knowledge, engage in on-ground efforts, and contribute to the mission's success. When everyone rallies behind the cause, the evergreen mission gains momentum.
3. **Evidence and Trust:** Evidence-based decision-making builds trust among partners. Evidence workshops—where data, research, and experiences are shared—create transparency and credibility. When stakeholders see tangible results, they become more invested in the mission. Whether it's showcasing successful reforestation projects, demonstrating improved crop yields due to soil conservation, or highlighting community benefits, evidence fosters trust. Let's prioritize evidence-driven approaches to strengthen collaboration and ensure the evergreen mission flourishes.

Areas for improvement:

- **Gender and Youth Integration:** We must actively integrate gender perspectives and involve youth. Empowering women and youth enhances the mission's impact. Their unique insights, skills, and energy contribute to sustainable practices and community resilience.
- **Specific Theory of Change:** Developing a precise theory of change clarifies how our actions lead to desired outcomes. Let's articulate the causal pathways, identify key interventions, and measure progress effectively.
- **Beyond Projects and Training:** While projects and training are essential, let's think beyond them. Engage farmers in participatory processes, involve them in decision-making, and amplify their voices through radio programs. Farmers learn best from fellow farmers.
- **Leveraging Faith Leaders:** Faith leaders wield influence and can champion the evergreen mission. Let's collaborate with them to spread awareness, inspire action, and foster stewardship of our natural resources.