



# FOLUR

Food Systems • Land Use • Restoration

## Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration Program

### SPRING 2024 UPDATE

#### Lessons from the Landscape

SUPPORTED BY

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IN COOPERATION WITH



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



Global Landscapes  
Forum



International  
Finance Corporation  
WORLD BANK GROUP  
*Creating Markets, Creating Opportunities*



The Food and Land Use  
Coalition



GOOD  
GROWTH  
PARTNERSHIP  
led by UNDP

This spring update, which covers the period from July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023, was prepared by the Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) Impact Program with contributions from the following implementing agencies: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU), [Global Landscapes Forum \(GLF\)](#), Good Growth Partnership (GGP) led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and International Finance Corporation (IFC). All currency references in this report are US dollars unless otherwise specified.



A close-up photograph of a cacao tree branch. Several large, elongated, reddish-brown cacao pods are hanging from the branch. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting a lush forest environment.

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## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CI	Conservation International
E&S	environmental and social
EUDR	European Union Deforestation Regulation
FACS	Food and Agricultural Commodity Systems
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations)
FOLUR	Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration Impact Program
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GGP	Good Growth Partnership
GLF	Global Landscapes Forum
GP	Global Platform
ICO	International Coffee Organization
IFACC	Innovative Finance for the Amazon, Cerrado, and Chaco
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILM	integrated landscape management
PILA	Participatory Informed Landscape Approach
SAFE	Sustainable Agriculture for Forest Ecosystems
SDSN	Sustainable Development Solutions Network
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VBV	value beyond value chains

Above: Vegetable market.

Photo by Vincent Tremeau/  
World Bank.





Cattle in Paraguay.

Photo by Papa Pic/Flickr.





Above: River in Malaysia.

Photo by Greg Girard/CIFOR.

## A Message From FOLUR Managers

### SHAPING DYNAMIC CHANGE TO RESTORE LANDSCAPES

The facts are clear: we are destroying the planet as we feed ourselves. Food production is a main cause of climate change, contributing about a third of all emissions, a cost that is unsustainable.

Current food systems encroach on natural habitats, drive deforestation, pollute the planet, exacerbate rural poverty, and underlie ill health and disease. Indeed, the food system is the primary source of methane and the leading cause of biodiversity loss. Emissions from food production are increasing in developing countries.

At the same time, the future of key food and beverage commodities is uncertain due to unsustainable land management and the impact of climate change on weather patterns.

With demand for coffee projected to outstrip supply in years to come, unsettling questions arise regarding how the world will meet demand from middle-income countries sustainably and in a way that does not contribute significantly to the destruction of the world's forests.

Similarly, other highly coveted foods, such as the eight commodities found in the [Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration](#) (FOLUR) portfolio—cocoa, beef, maize, palm oil, soy, rice, and wheat—are also destroying forests, ecosystems, and animal habitats and rank among the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases.



Dinara Akhmetova



Chris Brett



Timothy Brown



Yet reforming agricultural systems and restoring land can heal the planet—through practices that store more carbon than is released into the atmosphere, thereby reducing planet-heating emissions.

Affordable actions are available to reverse these distressing trends. The technological capacity exists to implement significant changes by mid-century—even making it possible to feed a growing population, set to rise to 9.7 billion by 2050 from 8.1 billion today.

Improving management of existing production systems, reducing waste in food supply chains, and enhancing overall agrarian efficiency is vital to achieving environmental equilibrium.

Since its inception in 2021, the FOLUR Impact Program has been innovating to accelerate food systems transformation, tackling the challenges involved in improving landscapes by reducing deforestation across projects in 27 countries.

Funded by the [Global Environment Facility](#) (GEF) and led by the [World Bank](#), FOLUR is making strides toward meeting goals in a competitive environment, connecting the country projects with Global Platform (GP) tools and knowledge, while adjusting to big picture trends that include sweeping international trade agreements, such as the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).

Connections between country projects working in the same region or on the same commodity have multiplied since the FOLUR Impact

*“FOLUR countries recognize the time for food systems transformation is now, collectively improving the health of the planet by building integrated landscapes and efficient food value and supply chains.”*

Chris Brett,  
co-manager,  
FOLUR



FOLUR in Paraguay.

Photo by FOLUR.



Program hosted its first regional dialogue, FOLUR Africa, which focused primarily on coffee and cocoa.

The dialogue also strengthened the nexus between country projects and the tools and knowledge to implement change. A positive feedback loop generated around key instruments, such as the **Participatory Informed Landscape Approach** (PILA) and Policy Accelerators, is growing as initiatives are adopted and improved by the country projects.

Participatory approaches are essential to multi-stakeholder dialogue. For example, FOLUR Africa participants suggested that mapping should be done by local communities to tap into local knowledge and identify resources in a landscape. Participants also expressed the need to include Indigenous Peoples and local communities in mapping exercises for the purposes of equity and human rights.

Cooperation between the World Bank, the five FOLUR partnership organizations, and the country projects forms a powerful engine, challenging the convention that pressures on the food system from a growing population mean casting aside sustainability considerations.

Transformation cannot be achieved without the private and public sectors working together to lay the groundwork and reshape policy conventions across government departments and jurisdictions.

FOLUR leaders envision thriving value chains by 2050, in which high-quality commodities suitable for export reward smallholder farmers with a living income.

FOLUR continues to confront the challenges posed by agricultural expansion through application of the integrated landscape approach. At the country level, this means adopting measures in the field that can lead to high yields, while conserving biodiversity, protecting ecosystems, and holding planet-heating greenhouse gas emissions in check.

Economies are deeply affected by the hidden cost of the food system—a monumental **US\$12.7 trillion**, according to the **Food and Agriculture Organization** (FAO) of the United Nations—due to inequities and inefficiencies across social, economic, and environmental sectors.

As this spring update demonstrates, covering activities from July to December 2023, FOLUR is pushing boundaries and mobilizing change—from local to national, regional, and global—delivering concrete actions on both the production and demand sides of food supply chains to sustainably feed the planet and support global conservation efforts.



Dairy cows in Ukraine.

Photo by Feel good studio  
AdobeStock.



In addition to the FOLUR Africa Regional Dialogue, highlights during the second half of 2023 included:

- Hosting “How Land Restoration Can Heal the Planet,” at the [Global Landscapes Forum](#) (GLF) Nairobi 2023, bringing together experts in discussions on land restoration and how land use for food production must adapt to halt deforestation.
- The launch of the FOLUR Policy Accelerator to support policymakers aiming to design or improve incentive programs for landscape restoration.
- Publication of the [Resource Guide on Gender Equality](#) by the [Good Growth Partnership](#) (GGP) led by the [United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP) in cooperation with the World Bank-led FOLUR Gender Working Group.

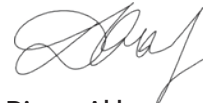
FOLUR continues to push boundaries and mobilize change at the local, national, regional, and global level, delivering concrete actions on both the production and demand sides of food supply chains for global environmental benefits.



**Timothy Brown**  
FOLUR Managers



**Chris Brett**



**Dinara Akhmetova**



Rapids in Guizhou Province, China.

Photo by Louis Putzel/CIFOR.





## Continuum Across Landscapes

Reaching consensus among stakeholders on how best to implement integrated landscape management (ILM) practices is critical for synthesizing seemingly competing land use goals to ensure social, environmental, and economic benefits. This process is far from straightforward, even within the FOLUR Impact Program, which is designed to facilitate it.

The FOLUR Global Platform (GP) draws on its unique international, interdisciplinary, cross-commodity perspective to build up a bank of knowledge to address diverse landscapes, but the country projects are complex, at times characterized by fragmentation and facing the challenge of resolving myriad competing interests.

While many country projects are underway and reporting achievements, others are bogged down or facing hurdles. The challenges they are experiencing are informative, providing important lessons about the ambitions of the FOLUR program, which must simultaneously address land degradation issues in farmers' fields, private and public sector interests in the eight soft commodities, and frameworks meant to address unsustainable value chains and largescale environmental concerns, from local to national, to international. Indeed, the country projects are similar to incubators for the landscape approach itself—in effect, the subsummation of a range of land uses in a given location under one holistic, integrated process.

To what extent can the landscape approach be implemented on the global stage to meet FOLUR objectives of realizing food systems transformation by promoting sustainable, integrated landscapes and efficient commodity value chains?

**Above: Palm plantation.**

Photo by Flore de Preneuf/  
World Bank.



Within the World Bank team, conversations have increasingly revolved around this question as discussions on how to activate all of the projects have taken place. Plans are underway to develop a classification framework denoting progress to inform a triage system and find additional methods of supporting the implementing agencies, participating countries, and core partners to achieve transformational impact.

A decision to engage regional experts on three continents—Africa, Asia, and South America—to work more closely with the implementing agencies and country level representatives will also facilitate the transmission of reports and information back to the FOLUR GP.

Subsequent exchanges will be invaluable for the World Bank and all core partners in order to address challenges, provide relevant support to FOLUR country projects, and accelerate the adoption of knowledge transfer to drive change.



FOLUR in Papua New Guinea.

Photo by FOLUR.





## July–December 2023 Highlights

Several activities and events reflected creative methods of communicating, engaging, capacity strengthening, and measuring gender outcomes.

- The FOLUR group attended the GEF **Seventh Assembly** in Vancouver. With an emphasis on amplifying women's voices, the conference helped to raise global awareness on how gender equality and environmental challenges are intertwined. It also challenged the global development community to focus more effort and investment into implementing these solutions widely. A landmark Women and Gender Caucus was formed from a coalition of women's networks, organizations and gender allies.
- Representatives from Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Côte D'Ivoire, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Uganda met in Nairobi, Kenya and online to participate in the FOLUR Africa Regional Dialogue. Country projects shared goals, achievements, and challenges, particularly in relation to the key commodities of coffee and cocoa.
- FOLUR hosted "How Land Restoration Can Heal the Planet" at the GLF **Nairobi 2023**, bringing together experts in discussions on land restoration and how land use for food production must adapt to halt deforestation.
- Awareness of the FAO of the United Nations-led **Participatory Informed Landscape Approach** (PILA) grew at GLF Nairobi 2023, FOLUR Africa Regional Dialogue, and Nigeria's inception workshop.
- The FOLUR Policy Accelerator was successfully launched for policymakers looking to design or improve incentive programs for landscape restoration in forests and on agricultural lands. It was adapted to the FOLUR context, with a particular focus on deforestation-free coffee and cocoa production.

Above: FOLUR in  
Papua New Guinea.

Photo by FOLUR.



- **World Business Council for Sustainable Development** launched a mission paper for the **RICE+ Hub for Regenerative Ricescapes** in collaboration with member companies and partners, under the auspices of the **Sustainable Rice Landscapes Initiative**.
- **Sustainable Development Solutions Network** (SDSN) advanced development of a method to allow FOLUR countries to automatically track and report their consumption- and production-based emissions from agriculture, forestry, and other land uses. The model was finalized for four crops, rice, wheat, soybean and maize, in collaboration with Britain's **University of Oxford**.
- The **United Nations Environment Programme** (UNEP), part of the GGP led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), referred to collectively as GGP–UNDP, delivered training to financial institutions in Paraguay with a focus on sustainable land use finance, in collaboration with the **Innovative Finance for the Amazon, Cerrado and Chaco** (IFACC) project.
- UNEP developed environmental and social (E&S) investment fact sheets for Paraguay and Indonesia. The E&S fact sheets serve as a guide for investors and other financial institutions when considering investing in these two countries.
- UNEP updated its global training program to include recent developments in financial disclosures and environmental regulation, specifically the **EUDR** and the **Sustainable Finance Disclosures Regulation**.
- **Conservation International** (CI), part of GGP–UNDP, participated in the **World Coffee Conference** hosted by the **International Coffee Organization** (ICO), which focused on discussions around critical topics for the global coffee sector. The CI team presented on the topic of climate change and the impacts on coffee production, as well as the value and need for multi-stakeholder collaboration.
- CI hosted a series of virtual events highlighting the preliminary outcomes of landscape assessments, using the LandScale tool, in Kenya, Peru, and Vietnam. As part of the sessions, experts discussed opportunities to use landscape approaches for compliance with EUDR.
- A **Resource Guide on Gender Equality**, developed by the GGP–UNDP in cooperation with the World Bank-led FOLUR Gender Working Group, was officially launched, offering a consolidated selection of resources on gender equality from FOLUR GP partners.
- A three-course Gender Learning Programme (GLP) is available to support FOLUR country projects and implementing agencies in the development and delivery of gender-responsive interventions.
- The **International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling Alliance**, part of GGP–UNDP, developed a research briefing titled "**Advancing Gender Equality in Agrifood Systems: What's Working?**"





Above: A farmer's fields in Ghana.

Photo by Nathaniel Abadji.

# FOLUR Impact Program: Mission and Design

## ABOUT US

FOLUR is a US\$345 million, seven-year initiative supported by the GEF and led by the World Bank. The program focuses on accelerating sustainability across the value chains of eight major commodities and food staples—cocoa, coffee, livestock, maize, palm oil, rice, soy, and wheat—seeking to transform agriculture's environmental footprint. The FOLUR Impact Program consists of landscape-level interventions in 27 country projects and a FOLUR GP, which communicates lessons learned across the country projects and global value chains. From 2022–23, activities advanced in many countries as projects were implemented.

In addition to translating knowledge into action, the FOLUR GP also uses the expertise, networks, and investments of the World Bank and five core partners: FAO of the United Nations, [Food and Land Use Coalition](#), GLF, GGP/UNDP, and [International Finance Corporation](#) (IFC). Coordinating program delivery across these organizations allows the FOLUR GP to identify new opportunities for collaboration and enhance key products and services. Financing from the GEF also mobilizes significant resources from donor agencies, recipient governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

Oil palm fruit at an oil palm plantation.

Photo by Flore de Preneuf/  
World Bank.





## WHERE WE WORK

The FOLUR Impact Program works across landscapes in 27 countries in Africa; North, Central, and South America; Eastern Europe; and Central, East, and Southeast Asia. The projects are distributed throughout globally important geographies for commercial agricultural commodities and food staples. Project interventions also target areas of high environmental value, where improved management and restoration could yield global environmental benefits and improve the sustainability and resilience of local communities.

## PROGRAM DESIGN

The FOLUR Impact Program is designed to transform our food systems based on sustainable land use and productive, healthy landscapes that contribute a range of environmental benefits. To achieve this vision, the FOLUR GP and country projects promote an integrated approach that emphasizes collaboration across the private sector, governments, financial institutions, land managers, research institutions, and civil society. As the lead agency, the World Bank supports and coordinates the implementing agencies, participating countries, and core partners to achieve transformational impact. The World Bank convenes the annual work planning process, facilitating collaboration on planned activities. The FOLUR GP focuses on activities and services related to program and capacity strengthening, public and private sector engagement, and knowledge sharing and communications. FOLUR also promotes a consistent approach at the country level with 27 country projects, emphasizing the development of integrated landscape management systems, the promotion of sustainable food production practices, responsible commodity value chains, restoration of natural habitats, collaborations, capacity building and such crosscutting themes as gender responsiveness.



## Program Achievements

This spring update—one of two major reporting requirements each year that aims to update the GEF and other interested parties about the Impact Program (IP) highlights and achievements—covers the period from July 1, 2023 to Dec. 31, 2023. It is made available to partners, countries, and interested stakeholders through the FOLUR Impact Program, GLF, and Food and Agricultural Commodity Systems (FACS) websites.

### PROGRAM AND CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

FOLUR aims to strengthen capacity through training and technical assistance through proactive learning across country projects and commodity value chains in order to fill gaps, capture opportunities, and promote innovations. These initiatives are intended to enhance collective understanding and action across and beyond FOLUR landscapes. The World Bank coordinates and leads strategy and prioritization through the annual workplan process.

### Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The period from June to 2023 to December 2023 marked considerable acceleration of FAO's technical country docking support, as well as working within the FOLUR GP.

Firstly, the roll-out of the PILA gained momentum during the dedicated GLF Nairobi 2023 Hybrid Conference: "A New Vision for Earth" and the subsequent FOLUR Africa Regional Dialogue: "Transforming Value Chains and Agroforestry Systems in Africa for a Better Food Future," in which the FAO raised awareness on how PILA addresses country needs at the

**Above: Rice paddies in Viet Nam.**

Photo by Tran Thi Hoa/  
World Bank.



landscape level by collectivizing producer organizations to enable and empower small-scale producers to gain greater access to markets while adopting more sustainable practices.

The second half of 2023 also witnessed an expansion and acceleration of PILA country piloting to incorporate Viet Nam and Nigeria, in addition to India, Kenya, and Nicaragua. Nigeria presented PILA during its inception workshop, which was held in its capital city, Abuja, from November 14 to 15. The PILA geospatial platform has been successfully customized to support country work in India, Kenya, Viet Nam, and Nigeria with the inclusion of relevant layers that support the ILM planning process.

In addition, the World Bank and FAO have joined forces in the development of an e-learning on Integrated Land Use initiatives. Through the e-learning course, awareness-raising and capacity enhancement will be paired with PILA guidelines and further enhanced through in-person trainings with country teams.

Secondly, the FAO advanced work on the Assurance System Evaluation Framework for deforestation-free commodity value-chains. The Assurance System Evaluation Framework aims to evaluate country alignment with the EUDR in legal, traceability, and deforestation-free requirements, as well as the general robustness of assurance systems. It will be piloted in select FOLUR countries in 2024.

Finally, progress was made on the development of a study on sustainable finance standards for deforestation-free commodities and the establishment of a Financial Institutions Working Group for deforestation-free finance. Insights from this working group will inform the development of a final guidance document for deforestation-free finance with expected finalization in 2024.



Oil palm fruit.

Photo by ObuezieWikimedia Commons.

## Good Growth Partnership Led by the United Nations Development Programme

### *Supporting Gender Mainstreaming in FOLUR Country Projects*

In all FOLUR countries, both women and men make crucial contributions in commodity value chains, agricultural landscapes, and forest conservation and restoration. Yet, women's roles and contributions are often not fully recognized. Promoting gender equality is one of the key elements of the FOLUR Program, and FOLUR country projects can benefit from a number of capacity-strengthening initiatives.

The [\*Resource Guide on Gender Equality\*](#), developed by GGP-UNDP in cooperation with the World Bank-led FOLUR Gender Working Group, was officially launched in October 2023. The Resource Guide offers a consolidated selection of resources on gender equality from FOLUR Global Platform's Partners, and it is organized around FOLUR country projects' components.

Building on the guide, a three-course GLP is now available to support FOLUR country teams and implementing agencies to develop and deliver gender-responsive interventions. A first course, Introduction to Gender Concepts in Food Systems, Land Use, and Restoration, and a two-module second course, Gender in Landscape Management and Restoration Initiatives, were delivered with participation from FOLUR Brazil, China, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, and Paraguay. A total of 184 participants attended the training: 74 in course 1, and 110 in course 2. Course 3 will be delivered in the first quarter of 2024, focusing on gender-responsive commodity value chains and gender considerations in farmers' support investments.

The content of the courses has been designed in response to the needs identified by participants in pre- and post-event surveys. Each course is a combination of presentations by keynote speakers from the World Bank, the UNDP, and FAO, and country case studies. In course 2, case studies from Latin America and Africa were presented, including FOLUR Ghana and Liberia. Following course 3, based on the learning from this first GLP pilot, a second cycle will be developed to focus on topics of interest to FOLUR countries that will be more advanced in their implementation.

Digging deeper into the issues affecting gender equality in the FOLUR areas of intervention, the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling Alliance, as part of GGP-UNDP, has developed a research brief titled "Advancing Gender Equality in Agrifood Systems: What's Working?"

Understanding what works is crucial to advancing gender equality and unlocking the multiple benefits it brings, and this is why the research briefing delves into three constraints on women's equality—structural barriers, land tenure, and resource access—and provides concise case studies. As FOLUR country projects progress with implementation, such



Cows by a watering hole in Paraguay.

Photo by FOLUR.





case studies offer ideas and opportunities for gender-responsive actions that can potentially be included.

### *Food and Agricultural Commodity Systems Community*

The FACS Community builds on the experience of the UNDP-FACS team, the GGP, FOLUR, and other initiatives. It focuses on advancing progressive practices and innovative solutions for effective collaborative action and effective food systems governance, as well as promoting proven technical solutions in integrated landscape management. Through capacity building and learning events, the FACS Community, which serves more than 550 members from 71 countries, working on 12 food and agricultural commodities—which comprise the eight FOLUR commodities, in addition to tea, pineapple, cashews, and blue food—is a space to shape, share, and learn about what works in transforming food and agricultural commodity systems. It brings together project practitioners, global change makers, sector specialists and local leaders from government, business, international organizations, and civil society.

In the second half of 2023, the FACS Community hosted 12 webinars on a range of topics. Each session was held on Zoom, and over the course of six months attracted more than 800 FOLUR actors and community practitioners (table 1).

**TABLE 1** Webinars Hosted by FACS Community from June to December 2023

Event	Attendees
Introduction to Gender Equality Concepts in Food and Land Use Coalition	74
Supporting Compliance with the EU Regulation on Deforestation-free Products: Case Study from Cocoa Sector	121
Accelerating Innovation for Farmer Extension Services—Discovery & Promotion	49
Accelerating Innovation for Farmer Extension Services (Americas)	70
Driving Transformation in Coffee through Collaboration—Case Studies from Exporting Countries	125
VBV Workshop (Africa): How Collaboration between Private Sector and Governments Can Enhance Sustainable Agriculture Production	32
Supporting Producers: A Systems Approach to Strengthen Farmers' Extension Services—Farmers' Support Systems Toolkit (Americas)	34
Gender in Integrated Landscape Management and Restoration Initiatives	57
The State of Coffee Sustainability: Review of Commitments, Trends, and Progress in the Coffee Sector	77
VBV Workshop (Americas): How Collaboration between Private Sector and Governments Can Enhance Sustainable Agriculture Production	35
Gender in Integrated Landscape Management and Restoration Initiatives	53
Living Income: Insights, Evidence, and Collective Action	96

Source: FACS Community.

Note: VBV = value beyond value chains.

Harvesting rice in Indonesia.

Photo by Tri Saputro/CIFOR.





## International Finance Corporation

IFC continues to engage private sector agents and organizations on sustainability standards and practices, responsible sourcing, financing, and sustainable investments with country projects. IFC is creating opportunities for people-centered development in the livestock sector by investing in private sector companies in developing countries and emerging markets. Investing in agriculture can provide a pathway out of poverty for millions of people. It also provides a more food-secure future and stronger climate resilience. By working with client companies to raise agricultural productivity in FOLUR countries, IFC is supporting public policies to protect the most vulnerable small-scale farmers.

In developing countries, a large, informal livestock sector and a smaller—though fast-growing—formal sector often exist. Due to the related sustainability challenges of investing in the sector, all IFC investments follow the [Practices for Sustainable Investment in Private Sector Livestock Operations](#) supported by FOLUR. They cover animal welfare, biosecurity, use of antibiotics, decarbonization, and traceable supply chains. Over the past year, following the 2022 launch, the practices were adopted by the five largest multilateral development banks. Since the Livestock Practices were published, IFC has made a total of 11 investments in Livestock totaling little over \$500 million.

IFC is seeking opportunities to finance companies that improve value chains by reducing the intensity of greenhouse gas emissions and strive to make meat and dairy production more efficient. This reduces the demand and climate impact on resources helping to make value chains more sustainable.

Wheat harvest in central India.

Photo by Scott Wallace/World Bank.





## Policy and Value Chain Engagement

FOLUR advances dialogue toward scaled-up action on environmentally sustainable production practices, standards, and investments. The goal is to move companies and countries toward achieving commitments to sustainable landscape management, production, and restoration approaches by focusing on selected policy opportunities and stimulating both public and private sector resource mobilization.

### POLICY ENGAGEMENT

#### Food and Land Use Coalition

*World Resources Institute*

The FOLUR Policy Accelerator was successfully launched from November 7 to 10, with a cohort of 45 senior government officials, including 23 women and 22 men from Mexico, Guatemala, and Colombia in attendance. These officials held decision-making positions representing the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, and Climate Change. Among the participants were mentors from various institutions, including [World Resources Institute](#), [International Center for Tropical Agriculture](#), [Fondo Golfo](#), [Cafecol](#), [Instituto del Café de Chiapas](#), [Fondo de Conservación El Triunfo](#), and the [Colombian Coffee Federation](#).

The World Resource Institute's Peer-to-Peer Policy Accelerators are tailor made capacity-building programs established in 2019 for policymakers looking to design or improve incentive programs for landscape restoration in forests and on agricultural lands. In this case, the Policy Accelerator was adapted to the context of FOLUR, with a particular focus

**Above: Landscape in Ethiopia.**

Photo by Ollivier Girard/  
CIFOR.



on deforestation-free coffee and cocoa production. The program resulted in engaging discussions and the identification of priority bottlenecks and a potential roadmap of solutions to scale FOLUR initiatives. It included interactive exercises, during which the last day stood out as especially beneficial in terms of exchanges for policy acceleration. The discussions on policy bottlenecks in Mexico and Guatemala provided valuable insights into the existing challenges and the collaborative efforts needed to overcome them. The program provided a great space for knowledge exchange and networking. Field trips, facility tours, and social events also helped foster a sense of community among participants.

Of the various bottlenecks that were identified, the World Resource Institute managed to mobilize resources outside of the FOLUR grant to directly support the Mexican state of Veracruz with the development of a statewide restoration plan, as well as an environmental compensation program.

## VALUE CHAIN ENGAGEMENT

### Food and Land Use Coalition

#### *World Business Council for Sustainable Development*

In November 2023, World Business Council for Sustainable Development launched the mission paper for the RICE+ Hub for Regenerative Ricescapes in collaboration with member companies and partners, under the auspices of the Sustainable Rice Landscapes Initiative. The “**RICE+ Hub for Regenerative Ricescapes Mission Paper**” is a call to action to bring together committed companies to drive an action-oriented agenda to overcome the major challenges that inhibit investments in scaling sustainable and regenerative rice-based

landscapes—or regenerative ricescapes, for short. Given the unique opportunity for sustainable rice landscapes to deliver solutions for climate mitigation and adaptation, nature recovery, and improving farmer livelihoods, while contributing to food and nutrition security, there is an urgent need to target finance and scale up actions in high-impact landscapes in South and Southeast Asia.

The mission paper provides information about the significant potential for positive impacts in the areas of climate, nature, and equity, as well as the emerging opportunities to scale private sector investments and collective action for sustainable rice production and landscapes. It also identifies the range of challenges that currently limit the acceleration of the rice sustainability transition at the scale needed, which include customized support for rice farmers, transition costs and long-term agreements, sustainability target-setting guidance gaps, barriers to engaging in voluntary carbon markets, and public and private sector investment gaps.

Cacao seeds.

Photo by Scott Wallace/  
World Bank.



## *Sustainable Development Solutions Network*

In 2023, SDSN continued developing a method to allow FOLUR countries to automatically track and report their consumption-based emissions, in conjunction with production-based emissions from agriculture, forestry, and other land uses. This model was finalized for four crops—rice, wheat, soybean, and maize—in collaboration with Britain’s University of Oxford. The model considers detailed transportation costs, trade policies, production costs, and consumer prices, and includes results from the **Food, Agriculture, Biodiversity, Land-Use, and Energy Consortium’s** Scenathon 2023, which was held during the FOLUR annual meeting in Brazil and provides data on the projected net trade for rice, wheat, soybean, and maize for 22 participating countries, including Brazil, China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, and Mexico. In the coming months, the SDSN will expand the model to cocoa, coffee, beef, and palm oil.

## **Good Growth Partnership Led by the United Nations Development Programme**

### *United Nations Environment Programme*

In the second half of 2023, UNEP, part of GGP–UNDP, developed and delivered training to financial institutions in Paraguay with a focus on sustainable land use finance, in collaboration with the IFACC UNEP project. To date, around 400 financial institutions have been trained by UNEP on issues relating to sustainable land use finance, including investing in nature-based solutions.

UNEP also updated its global training program to include recent developments in financial disclosures and environmental regulation, namely the EUDR and the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation. A training program for impact investors has been developed and was delivered in late 2023 in collaboration with the UNEP **World Conservation Monitoring Centre**, with a total of 500 participants. The training sessions are made available through the **UNEP-Impact Hub**.

In addition, the UNEP has developed two E&S investment fact sheets for Paraguay and Indonesia. The E&S fact sheets serve as a guide for investors and other financial institutions when considering investing in these two countries. The factsheets include information on social considerations such as labor issues, human rights, and material environmental topics in commodity-producing regions of these two countries. To continue to support the capacity needs of environmental and social topics in FOLUR countries, through the FOLUR program and in partnership with IFACC UNEP delivered a workshop in November 2023 to identify ongoing capacity gaps for financiers investing in the agriculture, land use, and forestry sectors in Paraguay.

### *Conservation International*

Conservation International (CI) continues to lead the engagement and sector dialogue on coffee sustainability under FOLUR.

In October 2023, the **Sustainable Coffee Challenge**, convened and facilitated by CI, published the 2023 **Commitment Hub Report**. This report tracks the movement of 170



challenge partners against their sustainability commitments and shares collective progress against sector-wide 2025 targets for people, planet, coffee, and markets. Commitments tackling key issues have increased year-on-year, but there is still room for industry improvement when reporting progress.

From September 24 to October 1, the ICO held the high-level World Coffee Conference to enable discussion around critical topics for the global coffee sector. The CI team participated in the event and presented on a panel on the topic of climate change and the impacts on coffee production, as well as the value and need of multi-stakeholder collaboration. In addition, CI met with private sector representatives and ICO task force members to discuss the future of the Resilient Landscape Working Group, and to learn about EUDR efforts and a coffee fund on the ICO agenda.

In the second half of 2023, CI also reactivated the learning series on landscape approaches through the Sustainable Coffee Challenge and ICO. The team hosted a series of virtual events highlighting preliminary outcomes of three landscape assessments, using the [LandScale](#) tool, in Kenya, Peru, and Viet Nam. As part of the sessions, experts discussed opportunities to use landscape approaches for compliance with EUDR.

Finally, conversations are ongoing with FOLUR country projects focusing on coffee. Instrumental to this was the participation of CI in the FOLUR Africa Regional Workshop on coffee and cacao. CI co-led several sessions during this workshop and was able to connect one-on-one with country projects that focus on coffee in the region, providing initial ad-hoc guidance and establishing connections for further follow-up.



Rice paddies.

Photo by A'Melody Lee/World Bank.





## Strategic Knowledge Management and Communications

FOLUR fosters knowledge exchange, developing and promoting critical, demand-driven analyses and guidance. Activities include leading and participating in global and regional events, outreach for strategic knowledge, and tools for scale-up and replication through web presence and a knowledge bank.

### WORLD BANK

#### Africa Regional Dialogue

The FOLUR Impact Program hosted a Regional Dialogue, “FOLUR Africa: Transforming Value Chains and Agroforestry Systems in Africa for a Better Food Future” on October 13–14, 2023 in Nairobi. The occasion served to assess progress toward transforming food systems—particularly coffee and cocoa value chains—by improving agricultural practices and land use management. The meeting brought together representatives from 10 African countries, which delivered projects, as well as partners for relationship-building, knowledge exchange and training, showcasing lessons, and accelerating impact. Almost 50 in-person participants from 10 African countries, working on coffee, cocoa, palm oil, and rice—in addition to core partners of the FOLUR GP and GEF—joined the two-day session. Representatives from Ethiopia connected online.

Land and tree tenure, particularly for women, was a key theme that emerged. Participants agreed that legal land tenure, particularly for smallholders and women, was essential to achieving FOLUR IP goals. It was strongly associated with farmers’ ability to act as custodians

**Above: Cacao farmers.**

Photo by Dominic Chavez/  
World Bank.



of land and protectors of forests, but also to promote more sustainable, long-term practices that avoid land degradation.

Some participants reflected that the future of key commodities is at risk; for example, demand for coffee could outpace supply, as CI stated that meeting future demand for coffee would require tripling production by 2050, with significant impacts on forests, as most coffee is currently grown in forested areas.

Participants reflected that the adverse effects of climate change were a significant challenge to sustainability and productivity. The Global Coffee Platform highlighted that Kenyan coffee production had declined significantly—62 percent in the past 30 years—due to climate change and such challenges as inefficient cooperatives.

The cross-border nature of landscapes was flagged as an important consideration, as the production of one commodity can span two countries and two implementing agencies under FOLUR. This scenario points to the need for an integrated and whole of landscape approach, in which both wildlife and domesticated animals are factored into the coffee production landscape; the former requires forests for survival and the latter is important to farmers' livelihoods.

Political economy was seen as a barrier to policy change, while participants recognized that national politics are often very dynamic. Participants highlighted a lack of payments to farmers for ecosystem services and a reliance on direct subsidies as shortcomings. Some policies cited discouraged cross-border trade and perpetuated countries' reliance on exports, particularly for such staple foods as rice.

The importance of women smallholder farmers in driving more sustainable practices was recognized among FOLUR Africa participants. While many projects had impressive targets set for reaching female beneficiaries, there was also a recognition of the need to move beyond gender targeting in projects and toward more systemic shifts, such as enabling women to own land with legal deeds and certificates. Creating conducive spaces and establishing convenient times for women to participate in workshops and dialogues was considered a vital ingredient for change.

Bottom-up, participatory approaches were highlighted as essential steps in multistakeholder dialogue, with FOLUR Africa participants suggesting that mapping should be done by local communities to tap into local knowledge and identify resources in a landscape. Participants also expressed the need to include Indigenous Peoples and local communities in mapping exercises for reasons of equity and human rights.

There was a forward-looking ambition to reduce dependence on imported staple crops and "learn to eat what we grow" with production and processing taking place on farms, which would also reduce food loss and waste when crops tend to spoil during transport or at the border. Participants envisioned thriving coffee, cocoa, palm oil, and rice sectors by 2050, producing high-quality commodities suitable for export and rewarding smallholder farmers with a living income.



Cow herd in Paraguay.

Photo by FOLUR.

Participants heard from an all-female panel about the need to move beyond gender targeting and meeting pre-determined quotas of women beneficiaries, and instead toward establishing more secure land rights for women, such as through land certificates signed by both spouses. The Burundi and Ethiopia FOLUR projects, for example, are taking advantage of gender-transformative land certification efforts supported by the World Bank and others.

Meaningful participation of women in forest and natural resource decision-making bodies, particularly in leadership positions, were highlighted as key enablers of long-term empowerment by FOLUR project team members from Ghana, Tanzania, and Liberia. Project activities created conducive spaces and established convenient times for women to participate in workshops and dialogues.

Participants encouraged the use of bottom-up, participatory, and inclusive approaches that included mapping landscape resources with diverse community members and Indigenous Peoples. In addition, the *Resource Guide on Gender Equality* for FOLUR was launched at the event.

## GEF Assembly

FOLUR also attended the Seventh GEF Assembly in August in Vancouver and participated in a women's caucus where there were encouraging signs of change. Approximately 1,500 delegates from 185 countries participated in this event, which opened its doors to a record number of civil society, women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples to influence the way forward for new environmental programs that are inclusive and environmentally sustainable.

Catalyzed by GEF's Gender Partnership, a landmark "Women and Gender Caucus" came together, creating a dynamic of a scale not previously seen. The self-organized coalition of multiple women's networks, organizations, and gender allies was united under GEF's diverse agendas to foster a human rights-based approach to social and gender justice.





### Rice paddy terraces in Indonesia.

Photo by Photo by Yayan Indriatmoko/CIFOR.

Over the course of a few days, in several meetings and virtual interactions, a succinct and strong set of priorities emerged. A consensus was reached on clear messages and concrete recommendations related to women's groups and programming.

Women make up **half of the global population**; therefore, the objectives of biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, waste and pollution eradication, and sustainable use of land and water require collective action and cooperation to include women and girls' specific knowledge and contributions. To achieve global environmental benefits, all projects, programs, and initiatives must include women, not merely as beneficiaries, but as key rights holders, partners, and co-investors.

Delegates recommended that all programs and projects should be gender-responsive, community-led, and context-bound, and resources should be dedicated to addressing gender-specific challenges and opportunities. More efforts need to be dedicated to ensuring women's access to equitable and adequate funds. It is imperative to address financial constraints faced by women's organizations—in particular, Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local women's groups. Much more investment is also needed in projects designed to target gender, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities to ensure Indigenous and local women's direct access to funding.

Funding procurement mechanisms for projects must be simplified, and application processes streamlined and tailored to the realities facing grassroots women's groups. These mechanisms must support transformative change without being an additional load on the triple burden women and girls are already carrying. In addition, much more investment and support should go to women's organizations aimed at strengthening and amplifying women's voices and agency to be able to effectively advocate for their rights and contribute to needed policy change and implementation.

By amplifying women's voices, the conference helped to raise global awareness on how gender equality and environmental challenges are intertwined, and to highlight solutions addressing both. It also challenged the global development community to focus more effort and investment toward widely implementing these solutions.

## GLOBAL LANDSCAPES FORUM

### GLF Nairobi

GLF Nairobi: “[A New Vision for Earth](#)” brought together over 7,000 participants from 130 countries, both in person and online, with a potential reach of 80.2 million people on social and other media. As part of this conference, FOLUR hosted the session “[Putting Smallholders at the Center of Deforestation-Free Value Chains in Africa](#),” which investigated how to approach the EUDR, including actions that must be taken to comply with the new regulations and potential challenges that may be specific to Africa’s context, as well as mechanisms or levers to engage with smallholder farmers. An article, “To Tackle Deforestation in Africa, Start with Farmers,” was published on ThinkLandscape, the GLF news website, detailing key takeaways of the session.

The second day of GLF Nairobi saw the FOLUR-hosted session, “[How Land Restoration Can Heal the Planet](#),” bringing together experts in discussions on land restoration and how land use for food production must adapt to halt deforestation. Takeaways were detailed in the article “Healing the Planet, one Farmer at a Time” and echoed in the press release, “Staying within Planetary Boundaries is Imperative—and Possible.” The two FOLUR hosted sessions were viewed by over 2,000 people.

The World Bank: Landscapes for a Livable Planet Pavilion, co-hosted by FOLUR and [PROGREEN](#) (the Global Partnership for Sustainable and Resilient Landscapes) at the GLF Nairobi Conference, included presentations from FOLUR core partners on topics such as landscape restoration and private sector engagement for sustainable agriculture.



GLF Nairobi.

Photo by Global  
Landscapes Forum.



### *GLF Live: Connecting with Country Voices*

The GLF Live interview “[What Does the Future of Coffee Look Like?](#),” the resulting article, “[Rising to the Challenge of Inclusive, Sustainable Coffee in Kenya](#),” and podcast episode, “[We Need to Talk about Coffee \(Again\)](#),” highlighted insights from Elijah K. Gichuru, chief principal research scientist and the institute director of the Coffee Research Institute, and Anne Fidelis Itubo, head of the Participatory Forest Management Division at the Kenya Forest Service. These insights focused on how Kenya can build sustainable value chains and implement a landscape approach in its agricultural sector, specifically with regard to coffee and cocoa production.

### *GLF Live: Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building*

To achieve sustainable food production and value chains, collaborative learning and the sharing of lessons learned must take place to foster the exchange of various voices and perspectives. The GLF Live discussion, “[How Can We Transform Our Food Systems?](#)” the resulting article, “[Experts Call for an Integrated Approach to Transforming Food Systems](#),” and related podcast episode gathered experts in discussions who had attended the GEF Assembly, including key takeaways from the event and how conservation can be made more inclusive.

The GLF Live interview, “[How Can Financial Disclosures Support Sustainable Business?](#)” and resulting podcast episode, “[Financial Disclosures: All You Need to Know](#),” furthered the endeavour of capacity building by bringing together David Craig, co-chair of the [Taskforce for Nature-Related Financial Disclosures](#) and Jingdong Hua, vice-chair of the [International Sustainability Standards Board](#) in a discussion on how various financial reporting standards can work together to achieve sustainable food systems.

FOLUR pavilion at GLF Nairobi.

Photo by Global Landscapes Forum.

The Spanish language GLF Live conversation, “[How Can Public Incentives Help Build Sustainable Value Chains?](#)” discussed the implementation of ILM practices through capacity building, such as with the Landscape Policy Accelerator.

The five GLF Live interviews conducted during the period in review were potentially watched by more than 10,000 thousand people on YouTube; LinkedIn; Facebook; and X, formerly known as Twitter. The #FOLURImpact hashtag has reached over 1.5 million people on social media, generating over 800 engagements and over 5 million impressions.





## Themes

### PRIVATE SECTOR

With regard to private sector engagement and finance, the FOLUR GP continues to build out a coordinated program to bring value chain actors into FOLUR landscapes in support of sustainable management.

In particular, partners convened around the topic of the EUDR and opportunities for FOLUR to support a cross-sector response. Since the EUDR is unprecedented, there is limited clarity about its possible impacts on farmers. In most value chains, the implications for the producers, the challenges for implementation, and the best responses to this regulation remain unclear, generating concern among stakeholders of the affected sectors. This concern is especially acute among smallholders, who, despite their importance for food production, environmental conservation, and local livelihoods, constitute one of the most marginalized groups within global supply chains.

Anticipating the effects of the EUDR and identifying possible responses so that smallholders do not bear the burden of negative consequences is fundamental as stakeholders prepare for this regulation to come into effect. FOLUR's Private Sector Working Group has been connecting the dots on global and country-level responses and positioning the FOLUR approach in its countries as a solution for both immediate compliance and the long-term transition to sustainability.

Through the GP, FOLUR has also engaged with the [Team Europe Initiatives](#) on Deforestation-Free Value Chains. Launched at the 28th [Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#), the initiative will invest €70 million (US\$75.3 million)

Above: Cocoa farm in Indonesia.

Photo by CIFOR-ICRAF.



to facilitate partner countries in transitioning to sustainable, deforestation-free, and legal agricultural value chains. The initiative encompasses: (1) the [Sustainable Agriculture for Forest Ecosystems](#) project, serving as a critical cooperation pillar supporting partner countries and producers, especially with regard to traceability and smallholder assistance; (2) the [Zero Deforestation Hub](#), an integral part of Sustainable Agriculture for Forest Ecosystems, acting as a central resource for information and coordination; and (3) the [Technical Facility on Deforestation-free Value Chains](#), which offers on-demand analysis and technical support for the transition to sustainable supply chains, with a specific focus on smallholders. FOLUR will complement efforts under the TEI to support EUDR compliance by informing policies and investments to meet EUDR and identifying opportunities for knowledge exchange across each program's respective country portfolios.

## GENDER

In the latter half of 2023, the FOLUR gender theme often took center stage at conferences, meetings, and events, amplifying powerful voices that have traditionally not been heard at global meetings.

Examples include the eloquent calls for more investment in equality from Indigenous and rural community women at the gender-focused event at the GEF Assembly, described above. This event was attended by 1,500 delegates from 185 countries and opened its doors to a record number of women, youth, and Indigenous peoples to influence the way forward for new environmental programs that are inclusive and sustainable.

Voices from the field recounting their gender challenges and approaches in landscape and commodity value chain-related projects are increasingly being amplified by FOLUR. The Africa Regional Dialogue event in Nairobi heard from several FOLUR country project teams about what gender-responsive actions they are taking, and what challenges remain. The gender learning program is sharing these and other practical solutions with all FOLUR country projects, as well as the gender community of practice on the FACS Community website.

Innovative approaches to incentivizing and rewarding gender-responsive project activities have also been part of all outreach and knowledge-sharing activities of FOLUR's gender-related efforts. The gender learning program includes examples and voices from project implementers that are implementing the new and innovative, internationally recognized, [W+ Standard, which measures women's empowerment](#). Capacity-strengthening efforts that enhance investment in such approaches are key to finally being able to recognize and, more importantly, value and reward, the efforts of so many women that are conserving and restoring forest landscapes and changing agricultural practices toward more sustainable environmental and livelihood outcomes.



Above: FOLUR in  
Papua New Guinea.

Photo by FOLUR.

## Country Spotlights

### BURUNDI: BUILDING RESILIENCE INTO COFFEE SYSTEMS

The Landscape Restoration and Resilience project in Burundi is implementing a sustainable land management system for coffee, distributing agroforestry plants and crop seeds such as soya, vegetable seeds, banana shoots, and fruit plants, and distributing organic manure and cattle to amplify the amount of manure on farms to increase production. The project also issues certificates to land users, facilitating access for beneficiaries to financial services for the self-financing of microprojects that identify, delineate, and register properties and efforts toward the amicable settlement of land conflicts. These efforts support the government policy of decentralized land management in the project communities. At least half of the land certificates produced and issued bear the name of a woman alone or with her spouse.

Activities across project components are disbursing adequately. Visible replanting of target degraded hill landscapes where progressive terraces, climate-smart agriculture within FAO-led Farmer Field Schools, agro-forestry replanting, and riverbank tree replanting are underway across all project sites. In the hilly Matongo area, 1.2 million forestry species and 110,025 agroforestry species were planted; 253,721 fruit plants—specifically, maracuja, plum, and grafted avocado—and 300,000 indigenous plants were planted in the Teza sector of the Kibira National Park. The Farmer Field Schools for shaded coffee crops are currently under implementation in Matongo, with a targeted 20 percent increase from 100 to 120 percent at project end.

Coffee in Burundi.

Photo by Tim Hill/  
Wikimedia Commons.







## GHANA: PARTICIPATORY PRACTICES ENGAGE COMMUNITIES



In Ghana, the project development objective of the FOLUR-supported Landscape Restoration and Small-Scale Mining Project is to strengthen integrated natural resource management and increase benefits to communities in targeted savanna and cocoa forest landscapes. The project focuses on the following core interventions:

- Land-use planning for integrated land management (ILM) to optimize land use
- Restoration of degraded lands for agricultural productivity
- Strengthening of sustainable management of forest landscapes for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services.

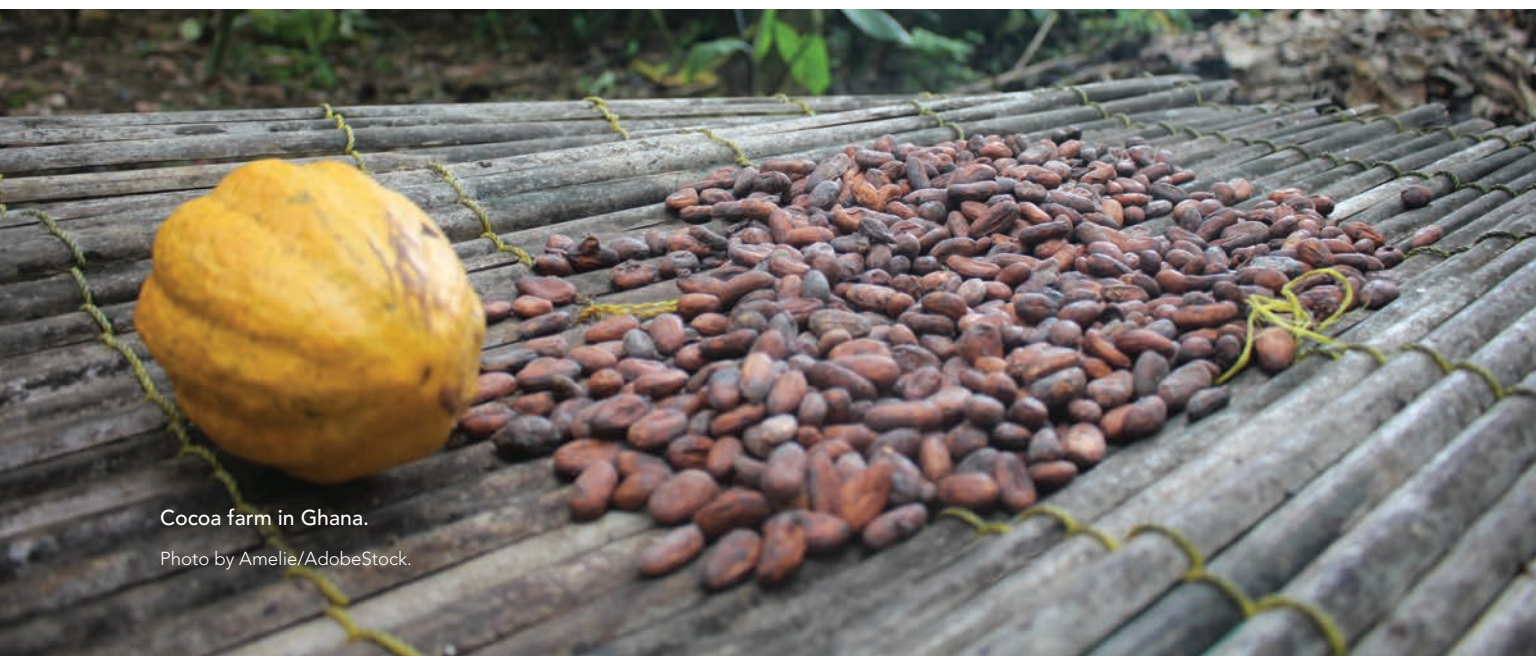
Key achievements to date include the use of a Participatory Community Watershed Planning Process to engage communities in the management of their natural resources. The planning process provides a platform for engaging all members of the community, including the vulnerable.

The process enables the community members to plan how they will solve challenges within their community to better manage their resources. A total of 182 community watershed plans have been developed and are under implementation. So far, 2,411 farmers, including 1,337 men and 1,074 women, have received support with farm inputs to implement sustainable management practices on 1,889.64 hectares.



Other highlights include:

- Developing a spatial development framework for six project districts, Sene West, Kwahu Afram Plains South, Kwahu South, Kwahu West, Kwahu East, and Bosome Freho, within the cocoa landscape to guide planning of the district.
- Training 106 Community Extension Volunteers to assist the Agricultural Extension officers in providing assistance to their farmer colleagues.
- Training more than 200 community fire volunteers and providing them with fire suppression equipment to assist in controlling bush fire, which is a major challenge in some of the project areas.
- Training 720 farmers in cocoa hand pollination techniques. This initiative is an integral component of the support provided to farmers within the six project areas, aimed at boosting their productivity while mitigating illegal expansion into forest reserves.
- Forming 33 community resource management committees in communities using the community resource management areas concept to sustainably manage and protect wildlife biological corridors. These communities have also been trained on different strategies in the management of human-wildlife conflict.
- Revegetating about 133.8 hectares of riparian sites.
- Establishing an operational project monitoring and reporting system.



Cocoa farm in Ghana.

Photo by Amelie/AdobeStock.



## INDONESIA: A DYNAMIC LEARNING PLATFORM FOR COLLABORATION

The FOLUR Project Indonesia, rooted in the 4C principles—Collaboration for Community, Commodity, and Conservation—has made steady progress since its launch in August 2022. The project focuses on strengthening ILM and promoting sustainable agricultural practices at both the national and site levels.

To ensure that project interventions benefit local communities and optimize commodity productivity without compromising biodiversity, the project has initiated Targeted Scenario Analysis and High Conservation Value assessments in three locations: North Sumatera, South Sulawesi, and Aceh. The results will support decision-making and inform the integrated planning process in these respective locations. Additionally, a comprehensive Environmental and Social Impact Assessment is being finalized to prevent unintended impacts on social and environmental aspects.

Gender mainstreaming is also a priority for the project, with gender and safeguard training scheduled for 2024 to enhance the capacity of the project team and government stakeholders to integrate gender aspects into all project activities.

Although no restoration activities have been conducted to date, the project has continuously supported and mainstreamed various national regulations aimed at minimizing land conversion and reducing degradation. This includes promoting good agricultural practices for land intensification to increase the productivity of FOLUR commodities, thereby discouraging land extensification and reducing land conversion.

Throughout 2024, the project plans to progress with other key aspects of FOLUR. This includes advancing jurisdictional dialogue, effective collaborative action, system leadership, value beyond the value chain, and farmer support systems.

Working with four ministries across five districts, and focusing on four FOLUR commodities, implementing this project is undoubtedly challenging. However, project implementation to date has become a dynamic learning platform for collaboration. Multi-stakeholder dialogues in all FOLUR locations have been significantly reinforced, with discussions focusing on topics relevant to the specific conditions of each location. As stakeholders at project locations enhance their capacity regarding FOLUR issues, and trust gradually builds through consultations and dialogue, ownership of the FOLUR project strengthens in the regions. This progress lays the groundwork for the project's long-term sustainability.

**Oil palm fruit and kernel.**

Photo by Flore de Preneuf/  
World Bank.



## NIGERIA: CLIMATE-SMART COCOA AND OIL PALM VALUE CHAINS

Nigeria's position as one of the largest producers of cocoa and oil palm globally has not been without challenges posed by deforestation and poor land use practices.

The FOLUR Nigeria country project successfully engaged with all relevant stakeholders through a national workshop in November, and through state-level interactions across the landscapes where the majority of cocoa and oil palm producers are situated in Cross River and Ondo states, both of which are located in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

With a clear objective of reaching 100,000 small holder farmers during the project cycle, the Central Bank of Nigeria and commercial banks have reaffirmed their commitment to the national management unit during recent engagements. It is important to note that a local government-facilitated land title shall serve as basic collateral for smallholder farmers, minimizing cumbersome risk mitigation measures from the banks.

The country project has begun profiling of farmers and forest areas in view of developing an updated geospatial reference system, which will enable relevant private sector actors, such as cocoa processors, marketers, and exporters, to efficiently track the source of produce.

With a target to restore 18,800 hectares, the CP through the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria has established nurseries and kicked off production of seedlings for eventual collection by smallholder farmers for the restoration of degraded forest areas in Ondo and Cross River states.





## PAPUA NEW GUINEA: A LANDMARK SHIFT IN POLICY

Papua New Guinea's New Britain Island is known for its exceptional biodiversity, but the island has experienced increasing deforestation due to harmful agricultural practices in recent decades.

The FOLUR project, which focuses on palm oil, cocoa, and coffee, aims to restore 50,000 hectares of forests on the island by supporting local authorities to establish a plan for sustainable land use. These efforts are projected to benefit over 66,000 inhabitants and reduce the island's carbon emissions by around 32 million metric tons.

Results will be achieved through interrelated components:

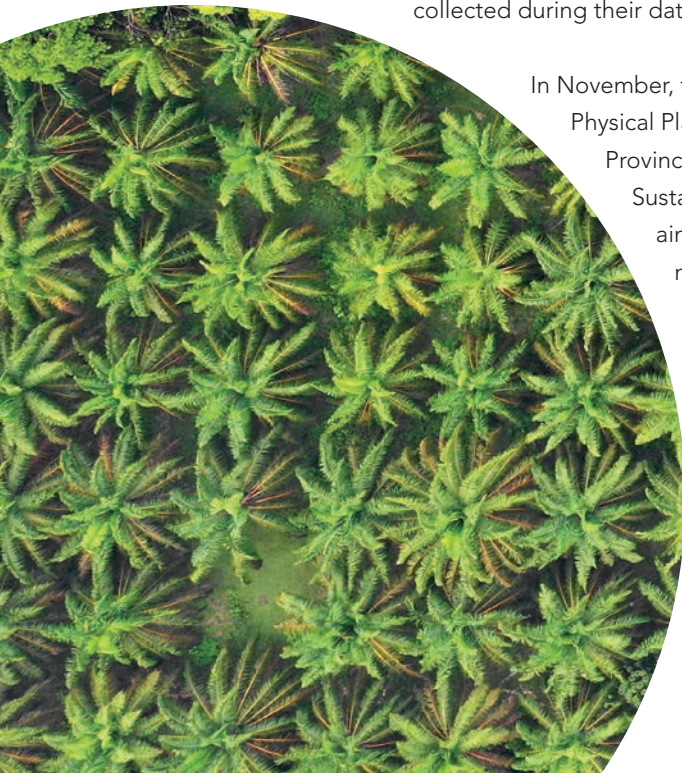
- Development of integrated ILMs
- Promotion of sustainable food production practices and responsible value chains to reduce land stress and avert degradation and deforestation
- Conservation and restoration of natural habitats
- Knowledge management and impact monitoring

The East New Britain Provincial Administration officially committed to support the implementation of the FOLUR project with a co-financing contribution of K1.25 million (US\$329,000) over the next five years.

The project hosted two validation workshops for government representatives from Pomio, Gazelle, and Nakanai Districts. The purpose of the workshops was to review and validate the data for the project's Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, Environmental and Social Management Plan, the Indigenous People's Plan, and Gender Action Plan, which the team collected during their data collection trip to 38 villages earlier in the year.

### Palm oil plantation.

Photo by Richard Carey/  
AdobeStock.



In November, the FOLUR project team and the Department of Lands and Physical Planning hosted two roadshows in East and West New Britain Provinces to raise awareness of the government's new National Sustainable Land Use Policy for 2022–32. The new landmark policy aims to chart a course toward greener and more sustainable land management practices across Papua New Guinea by harmonizing the country's need for both stronger economic development and environmental conservation.

Representatives of the provincial administrations, the private sector, civil society, nongovernmental organizations and community-based organizations participated. Residents shared knowledge and concerns about land use in their respective communities.

## PARAGUAY: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR RESTORATION

Representatives of the Central Nacional de Cooperativas–UNICCOOP, Cooperativa Pindó, and the municipality of Naranjal who work in the Bosque Atlántico Alto Paraná, or Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest ecoregion met in July with the FOLUR Paraguay Project technical team to plan joint activities. The main objective was to implement better agricultural production practices that promote sustainability, efficiency, and profitability in the agricultural and livestock sectors.

At the meeting, an agreement was made to work collaboratively to identify and apply innovative solutions that benefit local producers with the aim of promoting the use of sustainable technologies and processes that improve the quality of farm worker livelihoods and contribute to the region's economic development.

This initiative reflects the commitment of the organizations and the municipality of Naranjal to sustainable development and the continuous improvement of agricultural production in Paraguay. It is hoped that these actions will have a positive impact on the community and serve as an example for other regions of the country.

The FOLUR Project is committed to supporting women producers in the Paraguayan Chaco. In collaboration with the Governor's Office of Boquerón and the Municipality of Loma Plata, at the end of September 2023, the project delivered materials and equipment to the 12 de Noviembre Committee (November 12 Committee) in Villa Urunde'y, District of Loma Plata, Department of Boquerón, Chaco.

This delivery included equipment for the community vegetable garden of the 12 de Noviembre Committee, such as a reservoir tank, a hatcher for 120 chicks, and an incubator for 240 eggs, as well as the respective supplies.

Cattle grazing in Paraguay.

Photo by zaschnaus/AdobeStock.





The committee, which is mainly made up of women, is in a peri-urban area with scarce resources. A community garden was implemented using appropriate technologies to maximize yields, produce healthy food, and conserve resources—especially soil.

FOLUR Paraguay got underway in November 2023 in the Bosque Atlántico Alto Paraná ecoregion with a survey and diagnostic work on the state of restoration of forests protecting watercourses in the municipalities of Tavai and Naranjal. The objective was to understand the current situation in these vulnerable areas and propose effective strategies for their restoration and preservation.

The information gathered and the results reported during this work will provide a solid basis for the formulation of concrete strategies and actions aimed at the effective restoration of protective forests in the watercourses in the FOLUR project area.

These activities will contribute to the environmental improvement of the region and to strengthening the community's relationship with its natural environment.

The Chaco, at 246,925 square kilometers, is Paraguay's largest yet least-populated region. It is the country's largest cattle-raising area. The region is known for its arid and semi-arid climate and experiences prolonged periods of low rainfall. Despite the environmental challenges, the Chaco region has managed to consolidate itself as an important productive center.

With the aim of supporting sustainable development in the Chaco area, the Asociación Agropecuaria de Agua Dulce and the FOLUR Paraguay Project signed an agreement in November that focuses on scientific and technical cooperation, addressing crucial issues such as agricultural, livestock, and forestry production, with the primary objective of promoting practices that are harmonized with the environment. The measurement indicators are productive, environmental, and economic, and include avoided deforestation according to the amount of kilograms of meat produced per hectare and carbon balance. The total project area is 5,000 hectares. This cooperation agreement provides a platform for the exchange of knowledge and technologies that will support sustainable development in the Chaco.

The FOLUR Paraguay project works with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and UNDP to develop national and local capacities to support the development of Urban and Territorial Management Plans in its areas of intervention, which are the Chaco, a Western region, and the Atlantic Forest of Alto Paraná, an Eastern region.

Within the framework of the management and implementation process of the Urban and Territorial Management Plan of the Paraguayan Chaco, a work coordination meeting was held in December 2023 with authorities and technical teams from the municipalities of Boquerón, Mariscal Estigarribia, Loma Plata, Fuerte Olimpo, Filadelfia, and Bahía Negra. The objective of these plans is to regulate land use, buildings, and activities in the cities and their surrounding areas, considering such approaches as environmental preservation, social equity, economic efficiency, and the quality of life of the population.

## UKRAINE: RESTORING PEATLANDS WITH PALUDICULTURE

The project team organized an inception workshop, providing participants and stakeholders with the opportunity to delve into the project's components, implementation stages, and the significance of embracing sustainable agricultural practices while conserving biodiversity in the northern regions of Ukraine. Much of the peat soil in the northern part of the country is degraded or drained.

The project team, accompanied by a Ukrainian Peatland Restoration Expert and a local coordinator, visited the Rokytniv district in Rivne Oblast to explore the innovative agricultural practices implemented by the Ukrainian agricultural company Frenedt, which could be a promising project partner in the future.

During the field mission, the company shared its activities, including a small free-range farm on degraded lands, and shared their experience in cultivating willow trees, a renewable source of energy. They also showcased degraded lands from amber mining that require years to restore. The company expressed interest in implementing paludiculture practices—the cultivation of agriculture and plants in damp conditions—and, during the meeting, learned about the possibilities of support from FOLUR experts.



Peat field in Ukraine.

Photo by Gryniuk P./Wikimedia Commons.





## APPENDIX A

### Status of Country Projects

*The status of each country is updated in consultation with the implementing agency.*

Country	Project Name	Agency	Implementation Status	GEF Grant (US\$)	Co-Finance (US\$)	Project Updates
Brazil	Sustainable Multiple Use Landscape Consortia—Vertentes Project	World Bank	Not Yet Effective	24,577,982	172,000,000	FOLUR Annual Report 2023  FOLUR Spring Update 2023
Burundi	Burundi Landscape Restoration and Resilience Project	World Bank	Under Implementation	6,000,000	31,000,000	FOLUR Annual Report 2023
China	Innovative Transformation of China's Food Production Systems and Agroecological Landscapes	FAO/ World Bank	Under Implementation	13,461,468	402,190,000	FOLUR Annual Report 2023  FOLUR Annual Report 2022
Côte D'Ivoire	Scaling Up Cocoa-Based Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration/ Transformative Innovations in Côte d'Ivoire	UNDP/ UNIDO/ FAO	Under Implementation	5,354,587	65,231,987	No inception workshop held  Not yet reported
Ethiopia	Preventing Forest Loss, Promoting Restoration, and Integrating Sustainability into Ethiopia's Coffee Supply Chains and Food Systems	UNDP	Under Implementation	20,342,202	208,478,969	FOLUR Annual Report 2022

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Country	Project Name	Agency	Implementation Status	GEF Grant (US\$)	Co-Finance (US\$)	Project Updates
Ghana	Landscape Restoration and Ecosystem Management for Sustainable Food Systems	World Bank	Under Implementation	12,756,881	129,500,000	FOLUR Annual Report 2022
Guatemala	Promoting Sustainable Landscapes in the Motagua River Watershed	UNDP	Not Yet Effective	11,162,802	60,017,006	FOLUR Annual Report 2023 FOLUR Annual Report 2022
Guinea	Integrated Management of Degraded Landscapes for Sustainable Food Systems and Livelihoods in Guinea Forest Region and Upper Guinea	FAO	Under Implementation	9,498,165	43,395,420	No inception workshop Not yet reported
India	Transforming Rice–Wheat Systems in India	FAO	Under Implementation	20,366,973	342,427,048	FOLUR Spring Update 2023
Indonesia	Strengthening Sustainability in Commodity and Food Crop Value Chains, Land Restoration, and Land Use Governance through Integrated Landscape Management for Multiple Benefits in Indonesia	UNDP/FAO	Under Implementation	16,213,762	132,510,462	FOLUR Annual report 2023

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Country	Project Name	Agency	Implementation Status	GEF Grant (US\$)	Co-Finance (US\$)	Project Updates
Kazakhstan	Promotion of Sustainable Food Systems and Improved Ecosystems Services in Northern Kazakhstan Landscape	UNDP	Not Yet Effective	10,467,000	132,307,166	FOLUR Annual Report 2022
Kenya	Integrated Landscape Management for Conservation and Restoration of the Mt. Elgon Ecosystem in Western Kenya	FAO	Under Implementation	5,354,587	46,506,320	Not yet reported
Liberia	Reducing Deforestation from Palm Oil and Cocoa Value Chains	CI	Under Implementation	7,139,450	66,999,065	FOLUR Annual Report 2023 FOLUR Annual Report 2022
Madagascar	Integrated Landscape Management for a Zero Deforestation Coffee Value Chain in the Central South and Eastern Coast of Madagascar	FAO	Not Yet Effective	10,980,788	28,884,587	Not yet reported
Malaysia	Integrated Landscape Management of Heart of Borneo Landscapes in Sabah and Sarawak	UNDP	Not Yet Effective	7,368,807	90,000,000	Not yet reported

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Country	Project Name	Agency	Implementation Status	GEF Grant (US\$)	Co-Finance (US\$)	Project Updates
Mexico	Connecting Watershed Health with Beef Production (CONECTA)	World Bank	Under Implementation	13,761,468	99,013,829	FOLUR Annual Report 2023 FOLUR Spring Update 2023 FOLUR Annual Report 2022
Nicaragua	Transforming Food Systems and Reducing Deforestation in the Protected Areas and Biological Corridors Landscapes from the Southern Caribbean Coast and San Juan River Autonomous Region	FAO	Not Yet Effective	5,354,587	48,000,000	FOLUR Annual Report 2022
Nigeria	Promoting Integrated Landscape Management and Sustainable Food Systems in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria	FAO	Under Implementation	5,354,590	67,739,549	Inception workshop held November 2023
Papua New Guinea	Establishing Systems for Sustainable Integrated Land-Use Planning Across New Britain Island in Papua New Guinea	UNDP	Under Implementation	10,709,174	50,566,514	FOLUR Annual Report 2023 FOLUR Spring Update 2023 FOLUR Annual Report 2022

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Country	Project Name	Agency	Implementation Status	GEF Grant (US\$)	Co-Finance (US\$)	Project Updates
Paraguay	Promoting Landscape Integrity and Sustainable Beef and Soy Value Chains in Two Key Biomes in Paraguay	UNEP	Under Implementation	8,189,450	47,568,002	FOLUR Annual Report 2022  Inception workshop held June 2022
Peru	Deforestation-Free Commodity Supply Chains in the Peruvian Amazon	UNDP/FAO/IFAD	Not Yet Effective	13,561,467	112,149,960	FOLUR Annual Report 2022
Tanzania	Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration in Tanzania's Forest Landscapes	WWF-US	Not Yet Effective	7,368,808	72,686,863	FOLUR Annual Report 2023
Thailand	Inclusive, Sustainable Rice Landscapes in Thailand	UNEP	Under Implementation/ Project Management Unit started	5,535,963	67,300,000	Not yet reported  Inception workshop held
Uganda	Promoting Integrated Landscape Management Approach for Conservation of the Mount Elgon Ecosystem in Eastern Uganda	UNEP	Under Implementation	9,433,027	82,014,000	Not yet reported  Inception workshop held January 2023

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Country	Project Name	Agency	Implementation Status	GEF Grant (US\$)	Co-Finance (US\$)	Project Updates
Ukraine	Promoting Sustainable Livestock Management and Ecosystem Conservation in Northern Ukraine	UNDP	Under Implementation	6,756,000	67,385,366	Annual Report 2023
Uzbekistan	Food System, Land Use and Restoration Impact Program in Uzbekistan	FAO	Not Yet Effective; Some Project Activities Implemented	5,992,661	72,754,400	FOLUR Spring Update 2023
Viet Nam	Food System, Land Use and Restoration Impact Program in Viet Nam	FAO	Under Implementation	5,354,587	77,950,000	Not yet reported  No inception workshop

Source: Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) Global Platform, April 21, 2024.

Note: If a country has not yet reported, chart indicates whether an inception workshop has been held. CONECTA = Connecting Watershed Health with Sustainable Livestock and Agroforestry Production; FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations); GEF = Global Environment Facility; IFAD = International Fund for Agricultural Development; UNDP = United Nations Development Programme; UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme. UNIDO = United Nations Industrial Development Organization.











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