

**The New Great Green Wall Strategy**

*Sowing the Seeds of Prosperity, Peace and Stability in Africa’s Drylands*

December 2022

# Abbreviations & Acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AFR100 | African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative |
| AI | Aridity Index |
| AMCEN | African Ministerial Conference on Environment |
| AU | African Union |
| AUC | African Union Commission |
| AUDA | African Union Development Agency |
| BRICKS | Building Resilience through Innovation Communication and Knowledge Services |
| CAADP | Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program |
| CBD | United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity |
| CBO | Community Based Organization |
| CILSS | Interstate Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel |
| COP | Conference of the Parties |
| COP15 | 15th session of the Conference of the Parties |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| ECCAS | Economic Community of Central African States |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| GGW | Great Green Wall |
| GGWI | Great Green Wall Initiative |
| GGWSSI | Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative |
| IGAD | Intergovernmental Authority on Development |
| MEAs | Multilateral Environmental Agreements |
| NEPAD | New Partnership for Africa Development |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NTFP | Non-timber forest products |
| OSS | Sahara and Sahel Observatory |
| PAGGW | Pan African Agency of the great green wall |
| PIDA | Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa |
| PRC | Permanent Representatives Committee |
| R&D | Research & Development |
| RECs | Regional Economic Communities |
| RFD | Results Framework Document |
| SADC | Southern African Development Community |
| SAFGRAD | African Union Semi-Arid Food Grain Research and Development |
| SAWAP | Sahel and West Africa Program |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SEBE | Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy |
| SMEs | Small and Medium Sized Enterprises |
| STC | Specialized Technical Committee |
| UMA | Maghreb Arab Union |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCCD | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification |
| UNCESD | United Nations Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development |
| UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| VNR | Video News Releases |

# Executive Summary

The Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) is a global game changer which provides the nexus and common platform for a multitude of global and regional processes and initiatives. It serves as Africa's contribution in addressing the myriad of global and regional challenges. It provides a point of convergence for the Rio conventions, namely, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nation Convention on Biological Diversity. It is also critical for the attainment of several of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, it is an important component of the 2063 Agenda of the African Union where it contributes to several of the aspirations set as targets to be achieved.

As a specific program tailored towards arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid zones, the GGWI complements and cooperates with other flagship programs of the African Union, and will seek to create synergies and complementarities with other flagship programs and initiatives of African Union Commission as well as the African Development Bank's High 5s operational priorities. In this context, the objectives of the new Strategy for the implementation of GGWI are: i) promote an integrated landscape and partnership approaches, ii) promote a regional approach, iii) promote the recognition of the poverty-environment-climate nexus, and iv) build a stronger network for sharing experiences and inspiring changes.

The development of the African Union new Strategy and Ten-Year Implementation Plan was preceded by a detailed SWOT analysis which was shared among a wide variety of stakeholders for comments and further inputs. The Strategy sets the mission, vision, the values and guiding principles for the coming decade of 2023 -2030. It positions the GGWI as flagship program for the AU Agenda 2063 which aims to transform Africa. The Strategy aims to capitalize on the potentials of drylands to address the daunting issues of poverty, vulnerability, underdevelopment, conflicts and insecurity in the drylands.

With regards to the values and guiding principles, the new Strategy promotes the nexus-thinking approach whereby minds within the different sectors, particularly the government, are sufficiently cross-pollinated that the differences become technical and not normative or hierarchical. It emphasizes the nexus approach to sustainable land, water, and soil management integrating biodiversity conservation and governance across sectors and scales. This approach is based on the understanding that environmental resources are inextricably intertwined. The new Strategy and its Ten-Year implementation plan are meant to promote synergies and complementarities in the implementation of the Initiative more than ever before.

On coordination and governance, the new Strategy proposes new institutional arrangements; defining and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the key players including the African Union Commission, the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall, the Regional Economic Communities and Member States. The roles and responsibilities of development partners, local governments, and Civil society organizations are also defined as they are all central to the effective implementation of GGWI. The need for Africa to take the political leadership of the Initiative has been duly underscored.

As funding has been one of the main obstacles for GGWI implementation, the new Strategy laid emphasis on the imperative of African Union Commission, the Regional Economic Communities as well as the Member States to own and show undiluted leadership to mobilize the necessary funding to upscale and consolidate achievements. Africa should take full responsibility for financing the implementation of the Initiative. The Strategy therefore proposes several investment and resource mobilization mechanisms that the African Union Commission, the Regional Economic Communities and Member States can deploy to raise the pre-requisite funding for the implementation of the Initiative to ensure minimum dependence on donor funding.

The mainstreaming of GGWI in the national and regional development planning processes should assume center stage to narrow the budget deficit. Moving towards flexible mechanisms that combine sustainable land and water management, climate change adaptation and mitigation with other priority issues for the international community that would allow access to potential sources of funding is a good option. The case of Nigeria, setting aside a certain percentage of the oil revenue for GGWI implementation is a move that should be emulated by others.

The implementation plan offers possible access to financial opportunities under peace and security, migration, gender equality and decentralization portfolios that might even be under other sectors and agencies. The strategic intervention areas/components provide a wide-range of activities, which, if adequately implemented would set the GGWI on a new course as an instrument for sustainable development in the dry zones of Africa and serving as an important pillar for the actualization of the African Agenda 2063.

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# **INTRODUCTION**

## Background

The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI), since its inception in 2007 by the African Union, has become a household name across the globe, earning the admiration and support of African Union member States, African regional institutions and partners at all levels. The Initiative is seen as Africa’s contribution to finding sustainable solutions to the myriad of environmental crisis affecting the world be it climate change, desertification, biodiversity loss, poverty, food insecurity, political instability and unguided large-scale migration of the youth to Europe and the Middle East.

Currently, the initiative is being implemented in all geographical regions of the African continent with more than thirty countries at various stages of implementation, especially in the west and the southern regions. The GGW currently has several categories of countries participating in:

* + The 11 Sahelian countries that are members of the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall (PA-GGW). Many of these countries were the pioneers of the Initiative;
  + Pioneer members who are not part of the Pan African Agency; Algeria, Egypt, The Gambia and Tunisia;
  + The countries that were part of the SAWAP and BRICKS projects "in support of the GGW", financed by the GEF and the World Bank: Benin, Ghana, Sudan and Togo (in addition to the other SAWAP countries that are members of the PA-GGW already mentioned), and
  + The southern African countries under the auspices of SADC and with support from the FAO and the Global mechanism of the UNCCD. This includes: Angola, Botswana, and the Union of the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Many countries have set up specialized national agencies or using existing governing bodies to bring the implementation of the initiative to scale. Regional institutions have also been created or strengthened to leverage its implementation. At the level of the African Union Commission, a specific program unit is put in place to coordinate the continental implementation alongside with AUC's core mandates of resource mobilization, partnership building and capacity development of member states.

The Pan African Agency for the Great Green Wall was established by eleven Sahelian states to serve as an executive technical institution guiding the implementation of the initiative in these countries, in close collaboration with the African Union Commission. The African Union Development Agency (AUDA/NEPAD) has also over the years, developed programs supporting the implementation of the GGWI. The role of the Regional Economic Communities has been particularly prominent in consolidating and expanding the GGWI concept. This is particularly so in the ECOWAS and the SADC regions.

There has also been no shortage of partners' support, both financially and technically. Indeed, with the successes achieved in the Sahel region, the GGWI is seen and used as a model for the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and for the achievement of the SDGs in drylands. The European Union through its partnership with the African Union has been supporting the coordination efforts of the AU Commission for the past ten years. The World Bank, FAO, UNDP, UNEP, and the Global Mechanism of UNCCD have all been consistent in their support to strengthen the implementation of GGWI.

Another unique feature of the GGWI is a large number of related and complementary technical programs and projects implemented by different collaborating partners at both continental and global levels. The projects include but not limited to: the Africa landscape Restoration program (AFR100), Regreening Africa program, Greening Alliance, Africa Restoration Initiative, Creating Lands of Opportunity project, the Global Ever greening Alliance, and the upcoming “Middle East Regreening Initiative”.

The geographical scope of the GGWI and the numerous partners involved at both national, sub-regional, regional and continental levels has intensified **the need to develop a more coherent and encompassing global strategy backed by a clearly defined and well-resourced long-term implementation plan. This is necessary, not only for enhancing AUC's leadership and coordination roles but also to improve synergies and complementarities among stakeholders leading to a more efficient utilization of the limited resources**.

## Lessons learnt from the field: the need for a paradigm shift

The implementation of the GGWI has suffered from weaknesses and threats over the past ten years that need to be addressed for a smooth and successful implementation. The most critical weaknesses which need urgent actions are:

* **Inadequate Governance**.
  + Unclear definition of roles and responsibilities between the African Union Commission (AUC), the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the Pan African Agency for the Great Green Wall. The seemingly lack of coordination and the impression of rivalry between AUC and the PAGGW, especially in the dialogue with partners, **have been used to weaken Africa's leadership on the GGWI**.
  + **The decentralization process** in almost all countries and the willingness of local governments to play a full role in integrating the GGWI concept into their planning and budgeting processes as brought into focus the essential role of local governments and communities in sustainable development and conflict resolution.
  + **Insecurity and wars have considerably reduced the possibilities of intervention by public structures** in many countries (Burkina, Chad, Cameroon, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Ethiopia**).** In these countries, it is essentially local institutions that can continue to work. A **paradigm shift in the implementation of the GGW is needed to put local authorities, or institutions, whatever their name or denomination, at the heart of the GGW implementation**.
  + **Weak coordination and engagement with other relevant sectors.** National agencies of the GGWI have difficulties to adopt a "landscape approach", cross-sectoral approach that transcends jurisdictional boundaries and traditional sectors (agriculture, environment, forestry, water, energy, land use and decentralization). Despite the existence of best practices in various countries to enhance the agro-pastoral potential of the initiative and its linkages with energy and water issues, decision-makers from these different sectors (agriculture, livestock, energy, water, etc.), are not that much involved in the definition of the intervention axes and in the operational and strategic management of the initiative. In most of the countries, there is no operational link between the GGWI and the action plans developed under the UNCCD, the UNFCCC, the UNCBD, and the Sendai framework. In other words, national coordinating entities are facing **real challenges in ensuring synergies, coordination and synergistic approaches in the implementation of the Initiative**.
* **The scope and geographical coverage of the initiative**. Despite the fact that the GGWI was adopted as an African solidarity with people living in arid and semi-arid zones, it is presented by many actors, including AU member states, as an initiative for the Sahel region only. Moreover, the vision of a line of trees spanning from Dakar to Djibouti, is still put forward by many institutions. As a result, and in **the absence of this wall of trees, the GGW is seen in some corners as a failed project**.
* **Inability to secure long-term financing /funding.** The GGWI is, by definition, a long-term and ambitious initiative. It may take decades for some of the benefits of the actions in drylands to become apparent. In fact, the GGWI should not be evaluated on the basis of time criteria, but rather as a catalyst for adaptation to changing conditions in drylands. However, most of the countries and donors are using a project approach, rather than a program approach. Funding from technical and financial partners is cosmetic, essentially oriented towards the implementation of specific or pilot projects and not global, comprehensive and integrated programs. The political will of African leaders that is the foundation of the GGW has not been matched with the level of national budgetary commitments for the implementation of the initiative.
* **The changing climate:** Since the inception of GGW, drought, aridity and unreliable rainfall have become more persistent and severe. Conditions for tree planting and forest management in general continue to deteriorate in many parts of the Sahel.

A more comprehensive SWOT analysis is presented in annex 1

# VISION, MISSION, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, AND OBJECTIVES

## VISION

### Declared and shared objectives: the 2030 SDGs and Agenda 2063

AGENDA 2063 (the Africa we want), Africa's blueprint and master plan for transforming Africa into a global power of the future, was adopted in 2013. It has the ambition of transforming Africa by eradicating poverty and inequality through ecological and inclusive transition by 2063. It is the continent's strategic framework for achieving the goal of inclusive and sustainable development, through a long-term (over 50 years) development trajectory based on (i)sustained peace and stability; (ii) renewed economic growth and social progress; (iii) people-centered development, gender equality and youth empowerment.

The situation in Burkina Faso, Chad, Cameroon, Mali, Niger and Nigeria, marked by the massive recruitment of young people without jobs or prospects by terrorist gangs, underlines the imperative for special attention and increased investments in the drylands. In **this context, the Great Green Wall initiative should be understood as a specific program to achieve the aspirations of Agenda 2063 in the continent's arid and semi-arid ecosystems, including**:

* **Aspiration 1:** A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
* **Aspiration 4**: An Africa living in peace and security and
* **Aspiration 6**: An Africa with people-centered development that builds on the potential of its people, especially women and youth, and cares for the well-being of children.

Furthermore, the GGW contributes to several Sustainable Development Goals, in particular, SDGs 1 (no poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 3 (good health & wellbeing), 5 (gender equality), 6 (clean water & sanitation), 7 (affordable & clean energy), 8 (decent work & economic growth), 9 (industry, innovation & infrastructure), 10 (reduced inequality), 11 (sustainable cities & communities), 13 (climate action), 15 (life on land), 16 (peace, justice & strong institutions), and 17 (partnerships to achieve the goals).Within this context, the GGW serves as a bridge between sustainable natural resource management and sustainable socio-economic development in drylands.

### A defined intervention area: the dry zones of Africa

UNCCD defines land degradation in Article 1 as: "The reduction or loss in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas of biological or economic productivity, and of the complexity of rain-fed agricultural land or large-scale pasture, forest and woodland as a result of land use or any process or combination of processes, including those arising from human activities and settlement patterns".

The aridity index (AI) is used here for the definition of drylands: it is the ratio of average annual precipitation to potential evapotranspiration. Between 0.5 and 0.65, dry areas are classified as dry or sub-humid. Semi-arid areas (0.2 < AI < 0.5) are characterized by potential evapotranspiration between 2 and 5 times the average rainfall. Dry zones (0.05 < AI < 0.2), have a potential evapotranspiration loss at least 20 times greater than the actual average rainfall and allow only minimal vegetation development.

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*Africa Drylands. Source: UNCCD | World Lands Overview | Chapter 12 | Drylands.*

It can be seen on the map elaborated by UNCCD, that almost all African countries are covered by this definition, with the exception of a few countries in Central Africa. Indeed, Dryland ecosystems include savannahs, woodlands, grasslands, semi-desert, and desert. According to the World Bank, “in Africa, dryland regions make up 43% of the total land area, and is comparable only with Asia, which has 39% of its landmass as dry land, indicating that Africa is the driest of the world continents. Drylands in Africa account for 75% of the area used for agriculture (defined to include production of both crops and animals), and are home to 50% of the population. Poverty is heavily concentrated in dryland regions; about 75% of Africa’s poor people live in countries in which at least one-quarter of the population lives in dryland zones.  B**y 2030, the number of Africans living in dryland regions will increase from 460 to almost 800 million, putting increased pressure on the natural resource base and leading to increased competition for land and water resources”**.

Unpredictable climate and challenging socio-ecological conditions have shaped societies with astonishing and innovative coping capacities. For instance, dryland pastoralists [produce more than](https://www.mamopanel.org/media/uploads/files/Livestock-report-MaMo-2020-def.pdf) half of Africa’s red meat and milk. However, the climate crisis, with temperatures rising [1.5 times faster](https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/aac3e5) than anywhere else in the world, threatens the balance communities have created in this landscape. Conflicts over resources are [on the rise](https://www.americanscientist.org/article/dying-for-a-drink) and so is [migration](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjqwrKlg5nxAhV8EWMBHWi3DEEQFjAAegQIAxAD&url=https%3A%2F%2Freliefweb.int%2Freport%2Fmali%2Fdesert-conditions-and-risks-mixed-migration-routes-through-west-africa&usg=AOvVaw3IHlEDe2xQM32Kg8QTULt0). **Investments in Africa’s drylands are needed to restore this balance and sustain productivity while catering for the next generation’s aspirations: providing job opportunities and turning local business into engines for development**.

As a game changer in UNCCD implementation in Africa, the GGWI should be considered as an initiative for all Africa Drylands, including the Sahara Region, The Sahel Region, the Horn of Africa and the Namib – Kalahari regions. Thus, a new name is required: **the Great Green Wall Initiative which does not tie the Initiative to any particular region of the continent.**

### The Great Green Wall we (Africa) Want

By 2030, Africa Arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid regions (Sahara, Sahel, Horn of Africa, Miombo region, Namib – Kalahari region) are transformed into stable, habitable and resilient regions through:

* Investment in sustainable land use practices to strengthen the regions' fight against land degradation, climate change, and biodiversity loss;
* Effective solutions to renewed economic growth and social progress, reducing poverty and ensuring environmental security and sustainability;
* Economic infrastructure and an effective state presence in drylands;
* Creation of decent jobs, a high standard of living, quality of life and welfare for youth and women.

## MISSION

As a specific program tailored towards arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid regions, the GGW complements and cooperates with other flagship programs of the African Union, and will seek to create synergies and complementarities with other flagship programs and initiatives (PIDA, Trans Saharan Road, Lagos-Algiers gas pipeline, Lagos-Algiers optical fiber, AFR100...), as well as the African Development Bank's High 5 operational priorities: i) light and power Africa, ii) feed Africa, iii) industrialize Africa, iv) improve governance, and v) improve the quality of life of the people of Africa.

In this context, the missions of the GGWI are:

* To promote an integrated landscape and partnership approaches, based on the fact that no one sector or one institution can do it alone.
* To promote a regional approach, because no one country can do it alone.
* To promote a deeper recognition of the poverty-environment-climate nexus by opening up economic opportunities through land restoration, biodiversity conservation. Restoration alone won’t work. More is needed to solve the underlying economic problems of insufficient income opportunities in the drylands.
* To build a stronger network for sharing experience, and inspiring changes.

## VALUES/GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Nexus-thinking should be at the forefront of the GGWI. That means, a future culture and ideology where the mindset within the different sectors is sufficiently cross-pollinated that the differences become technical, not normative, and hierarchical. The Nexus Approach to sustainable land, water, and soil management integrates biodiversity conservation and governance across sectors and scales. This approach is based on the understanding that environmental resources are inextricably intertwined. **The new strategy and implementation plan of the GGWI is meant to put nexuses at the center of the implementation more than ever—at the level of performance and nexuses amongst stakeholders and partners from different thematic areas**.

Ten values guide the actions and partnership in the Great Green Wall Initiative:

1. African strong sense of ownership and leadership, including full responsibility for financing the GGW development goals and Strong coherence with Agenda 2063 and to significantly reduce dependency on donor funding;

"If we stop being beggars and spend African money within the continent, Africa will no longer need to ask for respect from anyone, we will get the respect we deserve. If we make it prosperous as it should be, the respect will follow" (Nana Akufo-Addo at the opening of the U.S.-Africa Summit, December 2022)

1. Solidarity among African Nations and institutions and reduced inequalities between drylands and other areas in each country and across the continent;
2. Inclusive approach: Strengthening local governments, local communities and CSOs and giving them primary responsibility, through the integration of GGW Actions in local development plans and corresponding budgets of local governments, support to local mechanisms of consultation and coordination between local public actors, local communities and CSOs;
3. Interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral collaboration;
4. Gender equality in benefits sharing;
5. Scientific research focused on meeting the needs of local actors and not perceived as a grafting exercise. Need to combine science and traditional knowledge: Science acknowledges the importance and usefulness of traditional knowledge in the production and preservation of biodiversity. The valorization of traditional knowledge is particularly necessary in water and soil conservation, in the production of traditional medicines and in the production of traditional food plants. This contributes to the food security of these populations, in the face of a growing need for imported products;
6. Promote secure access to land: Enable poor rural men and women to gain secure and equitable access to land to enhance their food security and combat poverty and vulnerability;
7. Promote African integration through the implementation of transboundary projects and joint projects between sub-regions: North Africa-Sahel; Sahel-Central Africa; etc.
8. Promote the cultural values of African peoples which underpin social cohesion, peace, and security;
9. Develop and enhance partnership, including transboundary risks management.

## OBJECTIVES

### Overall objective

Eradicate poverty and build shared prosperity in drylands, through social, cultural, economic and ecological transformations.

### Strategic objectives / axes of intervention

1. Increase the level of political commitment to facilitate the efficient implementation of the GGWI.
2. Strengthen and streamline GGWI governance and participatory processes and ensure Africa leadership on the implementation.
3. Ensure High standard of living, quality of life and well-being for people living in arid zones.
4. Improve risks preparedness, risks management of rural communities, smallholder farmers, and agri-businesses to environmental degradation, climate change, and loss of biodiversity impacts.
5. Forge/promote Strategic knowledge alliances for actions and innovations for the Great Green Wall success.
6. Promote Full equality between men and women in all spheres of life.
7. Ensure that Africa takes full responsibility in mobilizing and leveraging financial resources for the implementation of the GGWI.

# Strategic Components and actions

| **Strategic components** | **Actions** |
| --- | --- |
| Political commitment | 1. Raise the GGWI to the highest political level to make it a multisectoral national initiative in each country indicated as a priority to improving the living conditions of people in all degraded drylands. 2. Getting an AU Assembly decision to recognize the GGWI as a flagship program of Agenda 2063 and to establish a special committee of heads of states for the monitoring of the program as well as helping key African players speak with one voice. 3. Appoint a high-level political figure as a champion for the GGWI. 4. Engage AU member States in allocating a given percentage of national budget or mining revenues for the implementation of the GGWI. 5. Integration of the GGW in the RECs programs. RECs to put in place the necessary financial and institutional arrangements that are required to guide the implementation processes at regional and national levels. 6. AU Assembly decision on the renewed vision and mission of the GGWI as an initiative for the implementation of AU flagship programs in Arid Zones. 7. Follow up of AU decisions on the implementation of the GGW. |

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| **Strategic components** | **Actions** |
| Governance and Leadership | 1. Clarify the respective role and functions of AUC, PAGGW, and the RECs. 2. SEBE to transfer the GGWI Coordination unit in the specialized institution for Arid and semi-arid zones (SAFGRAD) and improve the staffing, as well as the budget. 3. Establish a Partnership Coordinating Committee under the leadership of the AUC. 4. Establish mechanisms for multi-stakeholder, multi-sector dialogue and ownership of the objectives of the Great Green Wall. 5. GGW member States to establish a national coordination mechanism between the GGW National Entity and the National Rio Conventions Focal Points, in view of improving synergies and complementarity. 6. Build the GGW in collaboration with producers' organizations and take into consideration their natural resource management strategies. 7. Create a GGWI CSOs Alliance and Strengthen the involvement of Non-State Actors to enable them influence the course of the initiative. 8. Build the GGWI in close collaboration with local authorities and give them a central role in mobilizing stakeholders, planning and monitoring development; managing natural resources. 9. Establish practical dialogue and consultation mechanisms for planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation at the local and national levels. |

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| **Strategic components** | **Actions** |
| Improve livelihoods, and well-being for people living in arid zones | 1. Promote a green economy through the valorization of natural resources within the framework of economic diversification, on-site processing of products and marketing, the creation of value chains at local level, including the implementation of NTFP processing infrastructures and the creation of green jobs. 2. Build necessary infrastructures and take socio-economic and legislative measures and actions to overcome market-entry barriers to national and international markets arising from complex standards and regulations. 3. Promote and popularize the large-scale use of renewable energies, particularly solar energy and luminescence techniques (nano-pates and nano materials). 4. Enhance local communities’ access and tenure over natural resources. 5. Build necessary infrastructure to ensure communication connectivity and end the isolation and marginalization of drylands. 6. Seeking synergies with other AU flagship programs. |
| Land restoration and sustainable management of ecosystems | 1. Improving land productivity to enhance global food security. 2. Promotion of integrated natural resource management and sustainable delivery of ecosystems services. 3. Development of initiatives for synergistic implementation of Rio Convention and Sendai Framework. 4. Water supply security. 5. Promotion of inclusive land governance. 6. Build climate resilience and disaster preparedness. 7. Integrate agriculture with natural resource management and conservation. |

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| --- | --- |
| **Strategic components** | **Actions** |
| Sciences, Technologies, Innovation and Science & Policy Interface | 1. Promotion of Natural Resources accounting. 2. Networking among researchers and policy makers at national and regional levels. 3. Support of national Multi actors’ platforms including local actors, scientists, policy makers, and CSOs. 4. Promote participatory research and the R&D. 5. Conduct problem-solving- oriented research based on local communities’ needs. 6. Establish a Science/Policy group to promote collaboration between scientists and policy makers. 7. Promote a multidisciplinary approach to the GGWI taking into account the socio-economic aspects that may arise from the adoption of results. 8. Broadening research to address governance issues. 9. Contribution of national scientific institutions in impact assessments, in cooperation with international scientific partners. 10. Reporting on climate change medium and long-term projections as well as on LDN. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strategic components** | **Actions** |
| Gender Equality and Women’s and Youth’s Empowerment | 1. Promote economic empowerment to enable rural women and men to participate in and benefit from profitable economic activities. 2. Enable women and men to have equal voice and influence in rural institutions and organizations. 3. Achieve a more equitable balance in workloads and in the sharing of economic and social benefits between women and men. 4. Establishment of polyvalent vegetable gardens for women for income generation and ensuring food and nutrition security. 5. Ensure women’s rights and access to natural resources. 6. Support youth participation in rural development. 7. Undertake activities to create jobs and opportunities for the youths to curb illegal migration. 8. Establishment of business incubation centers for women and youth. |
| Resource mobilization | 1. AUC to develop a resources mobilization strategy focusing on the principle of “Africa taking full responsibility for financing the initiative” and taping on traditional, innovative, and carbon resources. 2. AUC Members States to commit to allocate a percentage of their National Budget to the implementation of the GGWI. 3. AUC to advocate for climate finance funding based on the GGWI contribution to the Global Environmental Benefits. 4. Establish an appropriate funding framework for local governments, CSOs and CBOs. 5. Promote Public-Private-Philanthropic Partnerships (PPPP) in favor of local communities and indigenous people. 6. Promote funder-grantee relationships built on the foundation of trust (trust-based philanthropy). 7. Linking humanitarian programs and funding to local development projects. 8. Ensure the mainstreaming of GGWI in the national development planning processes and its explicit integration into the National Budget as a National Priority. 9. Build national and local capacities to mobilize domestic and international financial resources with a view to mastering the procedures for accessing the main sources of financing. |

# Cross-cutting Strategic intervention axes

## Financing and Resources mobilization

According to the Global Mechanism of UNCCD, the amount of money estimated to achieve the GGW 2030 goals for the PAGGW member states (only) is +40Billion USD. Total amount for all participating countries should exceed the double of what is needed for the eleven countries. AUC is called to play an important role in advocating for the next fundraising phase that must start in 2023, and also to call upon AU member States to take full responsibility for financing the implementation of the GGWI. Indeed, as already stated, there is a need to secure long-term funding, instead of the current project and short-term funding approach.

Resources mobilization for the implementation of the GGWI can be done through several channels, including:

* Investments related to infrastructure, notably those of the PIDA, Trans Saharan Road, Lagos-Algiers gas pipeline, Lagos-Algiers optical fiber, AFR100...), as well as the African Development High 5s operational priorities. Social investments, including those made to respond to social and climate crisis
* Private investment to foster economic development, through long-term investment policies
* Carbon finance
* Funding mechanisms inspired by UNCBD, UNFCCC and Sendai Framework

For the GGW initiative to be scaled up, there is a need to consider its nature of Global Benefit program and:

* Ensure the mainstreaming of GGWI in the national development planning processes; GGWI should thus be integrated into the national budget as a priority program. The financing of the Great Green Wall Initiative can be inspired by the example of CAADP, another flagship program of agenda 2063, which instituted an obligation to invest at least 10% of the national budget in agriculture. It can also be inspired by the example of Nigeria, which has set aside 2% of oil revenues to finance the GGW.
* Build national capacity to mobilize domestic and international financial resources with a view to mastering the procedures for accessing the main sources of financing;
* Move towards flexible mechanisms that put focus on the communities, their needs, their skills and knowledge, such the Trust based grants and the Public – Private – Philanthropic – Partnerships (PPPP);
* Linking humanitarian programs and funding to local development projects

AUC should envisage developing a resource mobilization strategy (see component 7).

## Communicationand visibility

Communication is key for supporting the GGWI implementation, including strengthening the commitment of actors through advocacy, awareness raising and education to support resource mobilization efforts.

The overall communication strategy for the GGWI aims to:

* Sensitization and advocacy to garner support for resource mobilization;
* Promote the effective implementation of the Initiative;
* Inform the main interest groups (African Governments, technical and financial partners, local actors in the areas of intervention of the initiative, public opinion at national, regional, continental and international levels) on progress and performance in implementing the Initiative at local, national and continental levels, as well as the results and impacts registered;
* Enhance understanding of the implementation of the GGWI;
* Share lessons among stakeholders, Member States and project partners;
* Ensure political buy-in;
* Inform the decision-makers (policy/science interface);
* Promote synergies and complementarity;
* Enhance coordination among stakeholders;
* Ensure evidence-based design, decisions, project development and implementation, and results-based management

Any communication action at national, regional and international level should be based on the following messages:

* Importance of enhancing the natural and human resources of Drylands in Africa;
* Drylands are areas of opportunities and not marginal areas. There is potential for structuring the territory due to the emergence of small towns: the markets are no longer far from the producers;
* The GGW is a development plan for drylands, not a tree planting initiative;
* Support to decentralization, to the territorial approach, with a social and economic dynamic;
* Narrative of success stories from drylands;
* Removing the environmental silo perception of the GGWI;
* The Great Green Wall Initiative aims to prevent, control and curb desertification and land degradation, mitigate the effects of drought in arid and semi-arid zones, contribute to reducing the effects of climate change and to adapt to climate change, while improving food security of people in these areas.

Under the leadership of the AUC a joint communication plan should be develop and implemented at the continental level with the support of partners and in coordination with RECs, PAGGW, and National GGW focal points. The following communication tools could be used:

* Developing a joint website hosted by the African Union Commission, with links to websites of RECs, AU specialized agencies, Member States, and the PAGGW;
* An information charter could be negotiated by the AUC with all the actors so that documents produced at national, regional and continental levels and all relevant GGWI information are posted on the joint website;
* Developing a new, unique and shared GGWI label and logo (branding)to identify activities, efforts or projects implemented under the GGWI. The current logo representing the wall to be built is counterproductive;
* Production of a quarterly newsletter “News from the Great Green Wall” under the responsibility and supervision of the AUC to exchange information on GGWI implementation, the schedule of events, partners’ activities, ongoing projects, etc.
* The media – e.g., producing timely video news releases (VNR), press releases, interviews – on GGWI implementation, when they are likely to get media attention.
* Producing content for communication products (e.g., videos, publications, brochures, illustrated articles, photo shoots) by organizing field trips.
* Advocacy and awareness-raising through both institutionalizing the African Drylands Week and organizing field trips for journalists or side events during conferences such as the COPs of the different Rio conventions, the UN Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development (UNCESD), the sessions of the African Union Assembly, etc.
* Goodwill ambassadors;
* Digital communications

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Monitoring and evaluation for the GGWI is primarily about ensuring that the program delivers results through the appropriate selection of activities. It is imperative that the program supports improved priority setting and investment to ensure appropriate resource allocation between thematic and sectoral areas. It is also important that accountable and transparent systems are encouraged and facilitated through the relevant structures around all activity selections for the GGWI.

The monitoring and evaluation will be based on a revised Results Framework Document (RFD), taking into account SDGs and Agenda 2063 Indicators. This new results framework for the GGWI should seek to:

* Establish the biophysical and socio-economic baselines to design monitoring and evaluation systems;
* Provide an opportunity to build consensus and ownership around shared objectives among the key stakeholders of the Initiative (countries, continental and regional organizations, partners, CSOs and CBOs);
* Facilitate agreement on the expected results and resources necessary to achieve those results;
* Function as an effective communication tool because it succinctly captures the key elements of the intent and content of the GGWI;
* Identify the objectives that drive project design by stakeholders.  
  Assist in the labeling of GMV projects to recognize non-agency initiatives as GMV initiatives.

Once it is finalized, the RFD is part of the strategy document for the implementation of the GGWI, which serves as a blueprint for the Initiative.

GGWI Member States, RECs and the Pan African Agency will be required to prepare an annual physical and financial report to the AU on the status of implementation of the GGWI, using a common format based on the RFD’s structure and indicators,

# Implementation arrangements

## Implementation arrangements at continental level

### Role and responsibilities of AUC, RECs, the Pan African Agency & member states

With the extension of the Initiative to all Africa Drylands, the overall coordination role and political guidance should remain with the AUC. Indeed, the Pan African agency covers only 11 countries and extending its membership may create overlaps with the RECs which are official structures of the African Union.

**AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

Many stakeholders are pointing out the inadequate staffing of the GGW coordination unit. AUC could take advantage of AU specialized agencies, including SAFGRAD and AUDA to fulfill the followings:

1. Overall coordination role and political guidance
2. Resources mobilization
3. Capacity development, especially on resources mobilization
4. Over all Technical support role through SAFGRAD, including:
   1. Knowledge sharing;
   2. Designing standardized land restoration practice modules (for water detection & supply, plant production, planting, coppicing, combined land management) and attribute a specific volume of resources (labor, equipment, material) necessary for their operationalization;
   3. Assisting funding agencies to adapt land restoration standards and funding requirements under the GGWI regime;
   4. Providing modular instruction kits for disseminating knowledge & skills for implementing land restoration practices under specific conditions;
   5. Assisting RECs and the PAGGW to introduce and implement land restoration practice packages on a massive scale;
   6. Strengthen the uptake of research results.
5. Report regularly (every two years) on progress made to AU Assembly or to the Executive Council.

**ECOWAS, ECCAS, SADC, UMA, and IGAD**

1. Coordination of the GGW implementation in their respective regions, taking into account the existing institutional arrangements made by their member states (ex. PAGGW)
2. Technical support role, including:
   1. Monitoring and Evaluation;
   2. Capitalization and dissemination of knowledge & skills for implementing land restoration practices under specific conditions;
   3. Assisting countries and member states to meet funding requirements set up by funding agencies;
   4. Advising and assisting AUC in the dialogue with funding agencies to adapt land restoration standards and funding requirements under the GGWI regime;
   5. Assisting the national coordination entities to introduce and implement land restoration practice packages on a massive scale;
   6. Mainstreaming the GGWI in their respective programs, including the regional action plans under the Rio’s Conventions, the Sendai Framework and Forestry programs.
3. Report every year on progress made to AUC.

**PAN AFRICAN AGENCY**

Several member states and partners are pointing out the inadequate capacities of the PAGGW for the coordination and the support to member states for the implementation of the initiative. The PAGGW could take advantage of the existence of political and technical institutions (ECOWAS, ECCAS, IGAD, CILSS, OSS) to perform in the following fields:

1. Coordination of the GGW implementation in its eleven member states;
2. Technical support role, including:
   1. Monitoring and Evaluation;
   2. Capitalization and dissemination of knowledge & skills for implementing land restoration practices under specific conditions;
   3. Assisting countries and member states to meet funding requirements set up by funding agencies;
   4. Advising and assisting AUC in the dialogue with funding agencies to adapt land restoration standards and funding requirements under the GGWI regime;
   5. Assisting the national coordination entities to introduce and implement land restoration practice packages on a massive scale.
3. Report every year on progress made to AUC.

### Coordination mechanisms

#### The Regional steering committee

The GGWI is being implemented in many countries and at various scales. At continental level, there is a lot of knowledge, know how, information, lessons and best practices to share. Therefore, all GGWI actors could and should agree on a joint dialogue forum on the challenges and solutions to its implementation. Such a forum could also serve to examine progress in achieving the objectives and expected outcomes and adopt a common scoreboard. It could take the form of the annual organization of a single Steering Committee for all multicounty initiatives, and/or the organization biannually of a forum on the opportunities in Drylands (Drylands week), with special invitations addressed to non-African countries experiencing the same realities in their drylands.

The Steering Committee would have the following responsibilities:

* Examine and approve annual reports, work plans and budgets of different initiatives;
* Evaluate progress in implementing the initiative and make recommendations on actions and measures to be taken to ensure achievement of the objectives and operational outcomes of the initiative;
* Technically approve the initiative’s progress report, to be submitted by the AUC at its Summit of Heads of State (Malabo Decision);
* Adopt a common or joint annual action plan.

The modalities and functioning of the Committee are to be discussed between AUC, RECs, and the Pan African Agency. Terms of reference of the Committee are to be adopted during the 8th session of the current steering committee.

#### The CSOs platform

According to a recent UNCCD study, civil society organizations (local communities, producers' organizations, local associations, networks, NGOs) and the national and local private sector (small and medium-sized enterprises, media) are full-fledged actors, largely responsible for the governance and management of natural resources, the production of wealth, and the building of skills. They are therefore key actors in social and economic development in rural areas. Their role is particularly important in the regions where the Great Green Wall is being implemented, regions that are considered difficult and in which there is a lack of investment from the State and the private sector. This is why, individually or collectively, non-state actors have endorsed the Great Green Wall concept and are seeking to engage with the institutions in charge of its implementation. It is important to strengthen the participation of the **non-State actors in the GGWSSI Steering Committee**. Non-state actors are connecting factors between the local level and the national and international levels.

## Implementation arrangements at national level

### Role and responsibility of the national coordination unit or Agency

The GGW is an African initiative open to all interested African countries who organize themselves as they see fit to achieve the objectives of the initiative. Up to day many countries have established institutional arrangements for the coordination and implementation of the GGWI, despite the fact that the same countries have, since the 1990s’, coordination mechanisms for the implementation of the Rio’s conventions. This duplication, and the “environmental silo” perception of the GGWI are limiting the efficiency and performance of the national coordination mechanisms of the GGWI. They are perceived by other stakeholders as competing structures and have, therefore, difficulties to adopt a "landscape approach" encompassing all jurisdictional boundaries and traditional sectors (agriculture, environment, forestry, energy, land use and decentralization).

To make the Great Green Wall a collective initiative, it is important to put in place practical mechanisms for multi-stakeholder, multi-sector dialogue and ownership of the objectives and expected benefits of the Great Green Wall Initiative by all categories of state and non-state actors. The role and functions of the national coordination mechanisms, should include among others:

* Elaboration and adoption of the National GGWI Results Framework Document (NRFD), as the national level of the AU GGWI RFD
* Establishment of the biophysical and socio-economic baseline for monitoring and evaluating progress in the implementation of the GGWI;
* Elaboration or review of national GGW program to align it to the AU new GGW strategy and to integrate it into the National Development Plan and budget;
* Promotion of synergistic approaches, especially in the implementation of the MEAs;
* Monitoring, evaluation and annual reporting on the GGWI implementation, in line with the National GGWI Result Framework Document;
* Introduction and implementation of land restoration practice packages on a massive scale;
* Capacity building of local institutions, CBOs and CSOs;
* Technical assistance to local authorities and institutions for field implementation.

### Field implementation: the central role of local governments

The Great Green Wall concerns all the populations of the drylands and their local representatives. Thus, the local authorities are the guarantors of the management of space and access to resources. The responsibility for planning local development falls on them and they are often equipped with the tools adapted to this responsibility. Local authorities play a central role and are at the heart of the Great Green Wall system. It is therefore important for national coordination mechanisms of the GGW to work closely with local authorities and enhance their capacities and give them a central role in mobilizing stakeholders, planning development and managing natural resources. They must be at the heart of planning and coordination of implementation at the local level. Decentralized government structures and civil society organizations must be service providers to these local authorities.

### Role and responsibilities of CBOs and CSOs

Farmers and herders are the main users and managers of land and natural resources. With the help of their organizations, they are the creators of primary wealth and the champions of food security in arid zones. As such, they are key players in the realization of the Great Green Wall. Their organizations, unions, federations and umbrella organizations are well structured at all levels, from local to regional, and are already present in all territories. Moreover, producer organizations work well with local authorities within the framework of decentralization policies. Finally, the options defended by producer organizations in terms of family farming and agroecology are often very close to the objectives of the Great Green Wall.

However, producer organizations often remain outside the Great Green Wall, feeling that the initiative is not meant for them.

It is therefore recommended that at all levels (local, national, regional, continental), the Great Green Wall get closer to producers' organizations, and integrate them into natural resource management strategies, and involve them in achieving the objectives of the Great Green Wall. The National agencies can enter into performance contracts with CSOs for them to better support GGWI implementation in a more cost-effective way

### National steering committees

*“In the spirit of collective construction, the actors should be able to place their action within an established conceptual and programmatic framework and thus have the assurance of improving the effectiveness and sustainability of their contribution*” (UNCCD).

The establishment of steering committees or national coordinating bodies could serve as frameworks for consultation for:

* Planning, action, and monitoring at the local and national levels, rather than creating or strengthening institutions that are often not effective enough.
* Identification of legislative and regulatory frameworks favorable to local initiatives.
* The establishment of local conventions and rules to be taken into account in the legislative architecture of each country

# Annex 1: SWOT analysis

| **STRENGTHS** | **WEAKNESSES** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **The GGWI is an Africa's own bold development concept** recalling the sentiments of pan Africanism and African renaissance and these give a lot of political good will to the concept by African leaders at least at the start. 2. **The adoption of the Paris Agreement on climate change gives value the GGW concept.** Commitment by states to address the growing climate crisis. 3. **Institutional strengths**  * **Existence of institutional arrangements. Many countries have established institutional arrangements for the coordination and implementation of the GGWI. All of the member countries of the PAGGW have set up either national agencies or national coordination units.** * **Existence of CBOs (Farmers, Women, Youth, Herders, groups) and CSOs** already engaged in the implementation of the Rio’s convention and willing to engage fully in the implementation of the GGW  1. **Technical Strengths**  * **Existence of "success stories"** for the capitalization and popularization of good practices of sustainable land management, including community practices and traditional knowledge. Experiences in the economic valorization and monetization of natural resources (valorization and commercialization of NTFP and Fodder management) strongly encourage local communities to adopt and adapt the concept and operational modalities of the GGWI. * **Existence of proven technologies**. The practices of **reforestation**, afforestation, grazing and water resource management, and the long history of bushfire use and management make the adaptation and domestication of the GGWI concept familiar to the local communities involved in its implementation.  1. **The cross-cutting nature of the GGWI made it attractive** to development partners who saw an opportunity to support their various interventions in the drylands of Africa. The birth of the GGWI concept coincided with the global search for sustainable development models. 2. **Existence of a strong communication at global level:** the GGWI is a globally recognized brand sought after by financial and other partners | 1. **The GGWI remains vague in terms of scope, content and with regard to the national development frameworks**  * **Unclear scope and geographic coverage of the GGWI.** The initiative is presented by some actors as an initiative for the Sahel only, even though its name refers to the Sahara first, the Sahel second. * **Inadequate African ownership and leadership for the Initiative** and a clear communication strategy has led many of the financial partners and the international community to think that the Initiative is only limited to 11 Sahelian countries. * **At the national level, the GGWI remains vague,** both in terms of geographic coverage and content, with regard to the actors involved, as well as its integration into the national development plans. * **Prevalence of the vision of “wall of trees”** leads to Lack of tangible and consistent results.  1. **Governance**  * **Weak coordination and engagement with other relevant sectors.** National agencies of the GGWI have difficulties to adopt a "landscape approach" and to strongly link-up it with the action plans developed under UNCCD, UNFCCC and UNCBD. Decision makers of other non-environmental sectors (agriculture, livestock, energy, water, etc.) are little involved in the definition of the intervention axes and in the operational and strategic management of the initiative. * **Unclear definition of roles and responsibilities between the African Union Commission (AUC), the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the Pan African Agency for the Great Green Wall**. This leads to weaken Africa leadership and voice in the implementation process. * **Coordination of the Initiative is hampered by insufficient human resources** at the RECs and AUC levels. The Coordination Unit created by the AUC does not have sufficient resources, both financial and technical. Most RECs do not even have a coordination unit or even a focal person. The RECs have not yet taken ownership of the GGWI with the exception of SADC. The Pan African Agency for the GGW lacks capacity and the governance is not up to what could be expected  1. **Weak high-level political support for GGW and environmental management**. In many countries, activities are poorly funded from state budgets. **The majority of national GGW entities seek to have field operations** as a mean to access external financial resources. This leads to competition, as well as problems of overlap between GGW structures and other existing operational structures. 2. **Lack of appropriate knowledge management**, **sharing and coordination mechanisms.** Knowledge developed through UNCCD and other SLM, adaptation/mitigation projects is largely unknown and sometimes ignored. In addition, the place and role of science and research in the management of the Initiative is not well emphasized. There is no scientific advisory structure, neither at the African nor at the national level, despite the role played by SAFGRAD in UNCCD implementation at continental level. 3. **A project approach, and not a program approach**: Funding from technical and financial partners is cosmetic, essentially oriented towards the implementation of specific projects and not global, comprehensive and integrated programs |

| **OPPORTUNITIES** | **THREATS** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **The GGWI offers strategic opportunities to sustainably utilize the enormous solar energy potentials** GGW could be an accelerator for the Light up Africa initiative 2. **The GGWI, a unifying platform for sustainable development and poverty reduction policies and activities in drylands of Africa**. Designed as part of the acceleration of the implementation of the UNCCD, the GGWI provides a point of mutual convergence and synergy for the Rio conventions and SENDAI framework for disaster Risk reduction. There are enormous opportunities to leverage GGWI to achieve food security and poverty reduction goals through diversification of agriculture and production systems to boost food production and create employment opportunities, particularly for women and youth in arid zones. 3. **The GGWI has great potential to contribute significantly to the achievement of the aspirations of the African Union's Agenda 2063.** 4. The GGWI can benefit from the existence of existing and active communities’ organizations at the grassroot levels, professional organizations and other farmers groups. 5. **The initiative has the potential to complement the implementation in Arid zones of other African initiatives and flagship programs** (PIDA, Trans Saharan Road, Lagos-Algiers gas pipeline, Lagos-Algiers optical fiber, AFR100) as well as the African Development Bank's 5 operational priorities with the following strategic objectives: i) light and power Africa, ii) feed Africa, iii) industrialize Africa, iv) improve governance, and v) improve the quality of life of the people of Africa. 6. **The creation of the GGW Accelerator to support resource mobilization** and growing interest in GGW-related activities. All countries already have national SLM coordination structures that can support implementation of the initiative. 7. Existence of an **African diaspora that could potentially be mobilized** to invest in GGW and to contribute its expertise. 8. **The transformation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) into the African Union Development Agency (AUDA)** (resource mobilization) should boost the financing and sustainability of the Initiative 9. **The decentralization process** in almost all countries and the willingness of local governments to play a full role in integrating the GGWI concept into their planning and budgeting processes as brought into focus the essential role of local governments and communities in sustainable development and conflict resolution. 10. **The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** in 2015 was a pivotal moment of opportunity for the effective implementation of the GGWI. Strengthening synergies and complementarities between the GGWI and the SDGs has opened up opportunities for scaling up sustainable land management in the drylands of Africa 11. **The external shocks that have affected Africa** (COVID-19, the war in Ukraine and its consequences in terms of food security) have accelerated awareness of the importance of local development, the promotion of family farming and agroecology 12. **The GGWI offers many opportunities for resource mobilization and stakeholder capacity development** 13. **Existence of specialized AUC structures** that can be used to manage the initiative**: SAFGRAD** | 1. **Inability to secure long-term financing /funding.** The inability of African government to provide the necessary funding for GGWI is indeed a serious threat. The GGWI is, by definition, a long-term and ambitious initiative. It may take decades for some of the benefits of the actions in drylands to become apparent. In fact, the GGWI should not be evaluated on the basis of time criteria, but rather as a catalyst for adaptation to changing conditions in drylands. 2. **Poverty, food insecurity and nature-based consumption**. 3. **The inability of partners to meet the funding pledges made to the GGWI.** Huge sums of money have been pledged since COP15 but very littles of that money have reached the ground implementation. 4. **Insecurity and wars have considerably reduced the possibilities of intervention by public structures** in many countries (Burkina, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Ethiopia**).** 5. The seemingly **lack of cooperation and coordination between the African Union Commission and the Pan African Agency** can divide political allegiance to the Initiative. 6. **The lack of clear indication of GGWI in the organogram of the Directorate of Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy** may lead the gradual phasing out of the Initiative as there would be no budget for it. |

# Annex2: Main African Union Decisions on the Great Green Wall

Assembly/AU/Dec.137 (VIII), 2007

[Decision on the Implementation of the Green Wall for the Sahara Initiative](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_d5b7a22477e24c84bc2386909d8eb11e.pdf)

[*Décision sur la mise en œuvre de l’Initiative Muraille Verte du Sahara*](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_d4ebac21c1714aedbad94154e574eaea.pdf)

Assembly/AU/Dec.317(XV), 2010

[Decision on the report of Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee  on NEPAD](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_73c7e30b9db847e79ec2384ab5507ef1.pdf" \t "_blank)

[*Décision sur le rapport du Président du Comité d’Orientation des Chefs d’Etat et de Gouvernement sur le NEPAD*](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_2db240ee18c34a01bf907973f26a9b2e.pdf)

Assembly/AU/Dec.376(XVII), 2011

[Decision on the implementation of the Great Green Wall Program](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_99ee263994144262a23bfc5c8a922b8b.pdf)

[*Décision sur la mise en œuvre du Program Grande Muraille Verte*](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_86ac0a4b197f4b85b4929d1d7a3c0490.pdf)

EX.CL/465(XIV), 2009

[*Plan d’action sur l’Initiative « La Grande Muraille Verte pour le Sahara et le Sahel»*](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_fef630fb196e40bca1aad8a55f31117f.pdf)

[*»*](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_fef630fb196e40bca1aad8a55f31117f.pdf)EX.CL/933(XXVIII), 2016

[Report of the first ordinary session of the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_a1349f416c0c4155b2c640eadcb33cdb.pdf)

[*Rapport de la première session ordinaire du CTS sur l’agriculture, le développement rural, l’eau et l’environnement*](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_c43e3acf06a0461e82538a21b86431a2.pdf)

EX.CL/994(XXX), 2017

[Annual report of the chairperson of the African Union Commission for the period January to December 2016](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_d675e34acb3c43c6bf75697484dc30d5.pdf)

[*Rapport annuel de la Présidente de la Commission de l’Union Africaine pour la période de janvier à décembre 2016*](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_64831c775a9d42e7a16f8fc88ea3a780.pdf)

EX.CL/1041(XXXII), 2018

[Report of the second ordinary session of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment; 02 - 06 October 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_13f9d0cc944e48a9bc8c91f2a0c7969f.pdf)

[*Rapport de la deuxième session ordinaire du Comité Technique Spécialisé sur l’agriculture, le développement rual, l’eau et l’environnement, 2-6 octobre 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopie*](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_e018da664bc44085b6415ca8c9fbc4f0.pdf)

Executive Council, Thirty-Third Ordinary Session, 28 – 29 June 2018, Nouakchott, Mauritania

[Introductory Note of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_9839cdbdc1b44a2bb9c4626a2a541ab2.pdf)

[*Note introductive du Président de la Commission de l'Union Africaine*](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_75c1ab5d333c4ab186d8fe5441a47bc4.pdf)

UNCCD, 2021

[Infographic on the Great Green Wall Accelerator](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_72469f56f8fb412da4370c42dda0280f.pdf)

*I*[*nfographique de l'Accélérateur de la Grande Muraille Verte*](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_3019e9a83e804d0e9d0ae2c96365bbed.pdf)

La Stratégie Régionale Harmonisée pour la mise en œuvre de la Grande Muraille Verte pour le Sahara et le Sahel

[Regional Harmonized Strategy for the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel](https://adf021be-72e6-44ee-a83c-63069673c71c.filesusr.com/ugd/32f47a_1cd54ed9eb4a4417aaab93fcbe6bc375.pdf)

## Assembly/AU/Dec.137 (VIII) 2007: DECISION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GREEN WALL FOR THE SAHARA INITIATIVE

**The Assembly:**

1. TAKES NOTE of the Report of the Commission on the launching of the Green Wall for the Sahara Initiative;

2. ENDORSES the Green Wall for the Sahara Initiative;

3. CALLS UPON the Commission to fast-track implementation of the Green Wall Initiative through development of a Master Plan in collaboration with the concerned Member States, Regional Economic Communities, Private Sector, Civil Society Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations;

4. CALLS UPON Member States and Regional Economic Communities to put in place necessary institutional arrangements that are required at national, sub-regional and regional levels to guide the program implementation process;

5. MANDATES the Commission to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the Initiative by Member States and Regional Economic Communities;

6. CALLS UPON the development partners to support the affected Member States, RECs and the Commission to ensure the effective implementation of the Initiative at national, regional and continental levels.

## EX.CL/Dec.465 (XIV) 2009: Decision on the Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative – Doc.EX.CL/465

**The Executive Council:**

1. TAKES NOTE of the Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative;

2. ENDORSES the Plan of Action including the indicative budget for the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative;

3. REQUESTS the Commission to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative in collaboration with the concerned Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs);

4. CALLS UPON the concerned Member States and their respective RECs to put in place the necessary financial and institutional arrangements, when necessary, that are required at national, sub-regional and regional levels to guide the program implementation process;

5. REQUESTS the Commission while implementing the Plan of Action, to avoid duplication and make use of the existing initiatives and instruments at sub regional, regional and continental levels;

6. CALLS UPON development partners to support the concerned Member States, RECs and the Commission to ensure the effective implementation of the Plan of Action at national, regional and continental levels.

## 2011 – Malabo: DECISION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GREAT GREEN WALL PROGRAM Doc. EX. CL/656 (XIX)

The Assembly,

1. RECALLS its Decision Assembly/AU/DEC.137 (VIII) adopted at its Eighth Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in January 2007 approving the Great Green Wall Initiative, and Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.465 (XIV) adopted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in January 2009 endorsing the Action Plan of the Great Green Wall initiative (GGW);

2. STRESSES the need for coordination of efforts between the Commission, the implementation structures and the Member States of the Great Green Wall project;

3. COMMENDS the efforts of Member States concerned in the implementation of the GGW, including the establishment of an Executive Agency of the project located in N'djamena;

4. REQUESTS the Commission to play its coordinating role in mobilizing resources for the GGW and provide the necessary support to the Executing Agency of the GGW;

5. ALSO REQUESTS the Commission and the Agency to monitor, evaluate the project and report regularly to the Assembly through the Executive Council

## 2012 – AMCEN - DECISION 14/7: THE GREAT GREEN WALL FOR THE SAHARA AND THE SAHEL INITIATIVE

We, African ministers of the environment,

*Having met in Arusha*, United Republic of Tanzania, from 12 to 14 September 2012 at the fourteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

R*ecognizing* the efforts made by the African Union Commission, the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall and member States to operationalize the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, which led to its validation at the experts meeting held in Ouagadougou from 27 to 29 August 2012,

*Considering* the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative as an African flagship program to address issues related to desertification, land degradation, drought, climate change and loss of biodiversity in the Sahara-Sahel zone in Africa,

*Calling* for urgent action to reverse land degradation and to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world in the context of sustainable development,

*Considering* the commitment made at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) to take coordinated action nationally, regionally and internationally to monitor globally land degradation and restore degraded lands in arid, semi-arid and dry humid areas,

*Recalling* the Bamako declaration of the thirteenth African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, in which African ministers of the environment called for a strategic partnership between the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to foster the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification 10-year strategy in Africa,

*Acknowledging* the efforts of the partners in supporting the elaboration of national strategies and action plans to enhance the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative,

*Concerned with* the need for improving the institutional governance and the coordination of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative by the African Union Commission and the 8 Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall, as stressed in the decision10 of the African Union at its seventeenth session, held in Malabo in June 2011,

*Taking note with* appreciation of the conclusions of the regional experts meeting held in Ouagadougou from 27 to 29 August 2012, at which progress made in the implementation of the Initiative was reviewed,

Decide:

1. To consider the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, in the framework of the Environmental Action Plan of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), as a flagship program that represents the African contribution to the achievement of a land-degradation-neutral world in the context of sustainable development, as recommended by United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development;
2. To adopt the regional harmonized strategy for the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative as a strategy which has been fully aligned with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018);
3. To request development partners to align their support for the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative with the priorities identified by countries in their national action plans;
4. To agree to the transformation of the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel into a specialized agency of the African Union Commission under the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture.