



OFFICIAL PARTICIPANT – AFRICAN UNION

Spotlight on Africa

**Report of the
6th Steering
Committee
of the Great
Green Wall
Initiative for
the Sahara
and the
Sahel.**



The Great Green Wall Initiative.

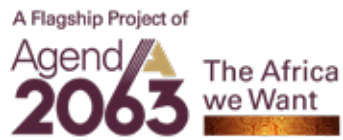


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Summary

The 6th Regional Steering Committee Meeting (RSCM) of the Great Green Wall for the Sahel and Sahara Initiative (GGWSSI), 21st - 23th November, 2021, on the theme, *“Enhancing Broad-based synergies and partnership for effective implementation,”* Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti. The theme came from the general call for closer working relationships in supporting Member States, synergies and coordination of actions, activities, in order to improve implementation and ensure sustainability and value for money.

The meeting was hosted by the Republic of Djibouti and co-organized by the African Union Commission, and the Government of Djibouti. The meeting brought together over 80 delegates from across the continent to review progress made in the implementation of the Great Green Wall initiative, and agree on the way forward to accelerate implementation. The delegates in attendance included, representatives of Member States, African Union Commission, Regional Economic Commissions, United Nations organizations, civil society organizations, private sector academia, youth and women groups, media, local communities, and land restoration practitioners.

The highlights of the meeting included a range of work sessions, side meetings and presentations, the launching of the Green dam project by the delegation from Algeria, the presentation of certificates of recognition to Stakeholders and other activities.

The Steering Committee Meeting was officially opened by His Excellency Mohamed Abdoukader Moussa, Minister of Environment, Republic of Djibouti. Other dignitaries included representatives of African Union Commission, United Nations Convention on Combatting Desertification, African Development Bank, Global Environment Facility, United Nations Environment Program, One Billion Trees for Africa, United Nations Development Program, and CIFOR-ICRAF.

Other key events were:

The launch of the Algerian Green Dam initiative an intervention aimed at contributing to Great Green Wall Initiative implementation, the handing of certificates of recognition to individuals and organizations that have supported the implementation of the Initiative over the years, field visits.

The participants also thanked the Republic of Djibouti for hosting the meeting and AUC, for organizing and making the event a success.



Key elements raised

- Coordination issues were raised regarding the implementation of the GGWI between national agencies belonging to the GGW Pan African Agency;
- Strong advocacy was raised for the establishment of a strengthened and more harmonized monitoring and evaluation mechanism;
- Lack of resources (human, material, financial) is a recurrent issue highlighted by the national agencies;
- There is a strong will among stakeholders to find synergies in the different interventions to avoid duplications and work more effectively toward the GGWI implementation
- Need to place more focus on the grassroots, frontline communities impacted by land degradation, desertification, drought and climate change
- Greater collaboration between the CSOs and government departments in the implementation of the initiative
- Better communication and partnerships
- Greater inclusiveness and involvement of genders based organisations (youths, women, physically challenged, other vulnerable).

Recommendations for development of new projects

- i)** Engage with Member States to assess their needs in terms of execution and monitoring and evaluation;
- ii)** Support the Member States in building their capacities to better implement and follow the initiative;
- iii)** Engage with the actors operating in the field of land/natural resource management to identify current actions on the field and find synergies, in order to bring complementarities and avoid duplications;
- iv)** Analyze existing actions to highlight the value added of the 10CI;
- v)** Engage with UNCCD to ensure the alignment of the 10CI with the harmonized framework (including indicators) that will represent the reference document for M&E;
- vi)** Enhance the use of earth observation and mapping technology
- vii)** Request for a new AU implementation strategy and framework, and general institutional audits to enhance implementation

INTRODUCTION

Context and objectives of the mission

The 6th Regional Steering Committee Meeting (RSCM) was officially opened on the 22nd of November 2021 by the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Republic of Djibouti in Djibouti. The Minister welcomed the participants and expressed satisfaction of the Government of Djibouti with the progress made so far in the implementation of the Initiative, the contributions of the various, partners, the recent support for the initiative led by the French government, and the extension drive to the Southern Africa led by the Africa Union Commission. He welcomed especially representatives from the Southern Africa Member states and encourage everyone to make use of the events for networking and ideas sharing. He went further to point out the global challenges of Drought, Desertification, Land Degradation, Drought and Climate change in the dry lands of Africa, pointing out that these have become existential threats and their impacts are no longer limited to the environment and biodiversity, but has led to massive climate related migration and conflicts. The representative of the Africa Union Commission, Dr Elvis Paul, Coordinator of the GGWI spoke on the importance of the GGWI in the achievement of the AGENDA 2063 and the reforms that have taken place at the AUC and how it will be a long in enhancing support to Member states in the implementation of the environmental, natural resources and biodiversity and climate change agenda. He also provided an update of the activities undertaken within the framework of the implementation of the GGWI,



future plans and reiterate the unflinching engagement of the AUC in supporting Member states in the implementation of the initiative. Other speakers at the opening included, the representative of the Africa Union Commission, UNCCD, AFDB, UNEP, and others.

Adoption of Agenda and Terms of Reference of the Steering committee

Dr. Elvis Paul Tangem, Coordinator of the GGWI at the AUC introduced the Agenda (see Annex II) noted that the RSC should adopt its Terms of Reference at the 6th RSC meeting, introducing a proposed text that contains simplifications relative to the proposed Terms and agenda. The RSC Terms of Reference were adopted.




1. Presentation of the Great Green Wall initiative and objectives of the committee

The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI) is an African Initiative launched in 2007 to address challenges posed by Desertification, Land Degradation, Drought, Climate Change and loss of biodiversity in the circum Sahara regions. In 2007 and 2009, two AU Summit Decisions, mandated the African Union Commission (AUC) to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the Initiative in AU Member states and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and technical institutions (Assembly/AU/Dec.376 (XVII)).

To fulfill its mandate, the Commission of the African Union has established a continental hub to facilitate the

coordination. Another AU summit decision, called for Member states to create structures that can enable the smooth implementation of the Initiative, the Pan African Agency for the GGWSSI was created based on this decision,

Currently, over 15 Member states and several partners are implementing the initiative including, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroun¹, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Ghana, Mali, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Nigeria, Niger, Gambia, Sudan with the support of several Partners. An extension of the GGWSSI approach to the Southern Africa region was



initiated by the Africa Union and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) secretariat to build on and leverage the experiences of the Sahara and Sahel Member states to enhance the implementation of initiatives and projects to combat desertification, land degradation and drought in the region.

To ensure synergies, harmonization and sharing of experience, amongst stakeholders, a Regional Steering Committee meeting was put in place by the AUC. This annual meeting brings together the principal stakeholders involved in the implementation of the GGWSSI to undertake an assessment of progress and challenges; recommend necessary actions and measures to be taken by stakeholders; provide general guidance to the Africa Special Hub, national and regional focal persons and implementing partners; adopt joint implementation work plans; and recognize the contribution made by the partners.

The 5th Regional Steering Committee meeting in Dakar, resulted in a series of action points to be undertaken in 2020. However, the resurgence of tensions between local communities, natural resources related conflicts and terrorism that have forced many into internal displacement, and the outbreak of the COVID -19 impacted the development of several initiatives, partnerships, the launching of the impact assessment report on a decade of implementation of the Initiative made by UNCCD, the development of several projects to support the initiative and the outcomes of the One Planet Summit and creation of GGW Accelerator and the outcomes from the COP 26 with launching of GGWI Frontline etc.

The main objectives of the 6th Regional Steering Committee meeting were therefore to a) bring together Members of the Steering Committee implementing partners and potential partners to facilitate a broader consultation on the implementation of the various projects, annual plans and strategies, and b) review the current status of implementation of the GGWSSI, the opportunities, challenges, threats and weaknesses and to provide a general orientation for the activities to be undertaken in 2022.



2. Status of implementation of the Initiative

This section deals with presentation of Member states and key Stakeholders, showcasing implementation, achievements, challenges and way forward.

2.1. Presentation by UNCCD

Achievements and challenges for the GGWI: presentation of the GGWI impact assessment report by UNCCD

UNCCD elaborated an assessment to serve as reference point for the further development of the GGGWI in the coming decade and to support countries to create synergies and effective coordination of activities and policies.

The executive resume “The GGW Implementation status and way ahead to 2030” is available here: <https://www.unccd.int/publications/great-green-wall-implementation-status-and-way-ahead-2030>

2.2. Launch of the Great Green Wall Accelerator

The GGWI Accelerator being one of the new mechanism to support and enhance the implementation of the GGWI, it was one of the key focus of the 6th Regional steering Committee meeting. The participants requested for appropriate time to be dedicated in the presentation and explanation from UNCCD representative on the Accelerator. Mrs. Birguy Lamizana undertook the presentation on the Initiative and other UNCCD programmes.

Background: To respond to these challenges, the Great Green Wall multi-actor Accelerator, announced by the President of France Emmanuel Macron and other world leaders at the One Planet Summit on January 11th, 2021, seeks to facilitate the coordination and collaboration of donors and stakeholders involved in the Great Green Wall Initiative. From an initial 14.3 billion US dollars pledged in January 2021, to over 19 billion US dollars to date, pledges in funding for the initiative, until 2025 were made by several multilateral and bilateral organizations at the Summit – a major boost for the Great Green Wall.

The Great Green Wall Accelerator aims to help all actors for the Great Green Wall Initiative to better coordinate, monitor and measure the impact of their actions. The Great Green Wall Accelerator will be coordinated through the Pan Africa Agency for the Great Green Wall (PAAGGW), with initial support from the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

The report estimates that financial resources needed to achieve 2030 objectives to restore 8.2 Mha per year stands between USD 3,6 and 4,3 billion per year, meaning at least USD 33 billion in the next decade to achieve the ambitions of the Great Green Wall by 2030 to:

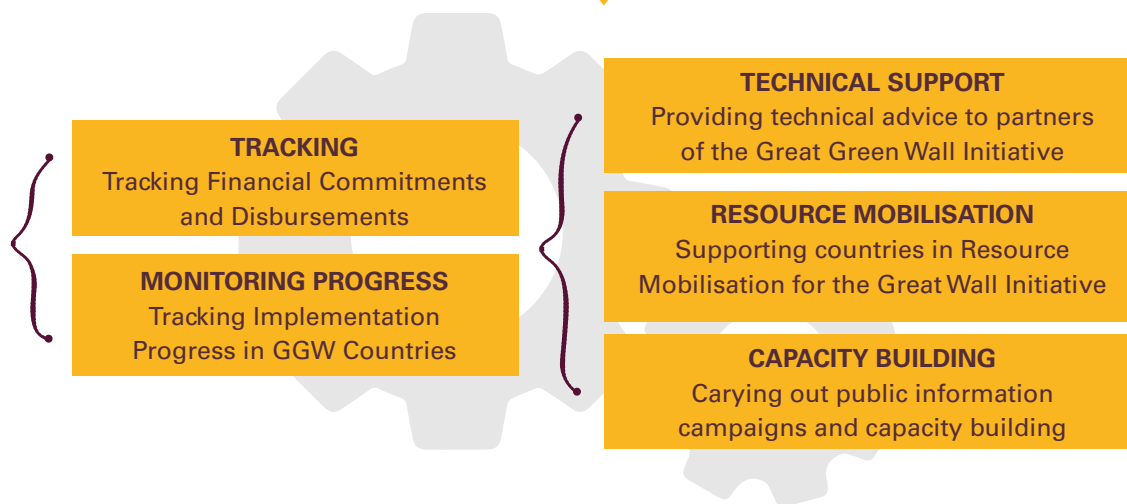
- Restore 100 million hectares of degraded land;
- Sequester 250 million tons of carbon;
- Create 10 million green jobs in rural areas.

To address these challenges and funding gaps, the GGW Accelerator will be consolidating progress made to date and supporting and scaling up ongoing efforts of the Great Green Wall Initiative and its 2030 ambitions. The Accelerator will monitor and promote investments towards five pillars:

- PILLAR 1:** Investment in small and medium-sized farms and strengthening of value chains, local markets, organization of exports
- PILLAR 2:** Land restoration and sustainable management of ecosystems
- PILLAR 3:** Climate resilient infrastructures and access to renewable energy
- PILLAR 4:** Favourable economic and institutional framework for effective governance, sustainability, stability and security
- PILLAR 5:** Capacity building

The Accelerator should provide a comprehensive mapping of the available funding and monitor and evaluate the impact of projects. It will ensure a tracking of progress towards achieving the 2030 ambition of the GGW. The UNCCD will support the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall to monitor, track progress and ensure a more coordinated support to the existing GGW member states, structures and institutions amongst others.

Key functions of the GGW Accelerator

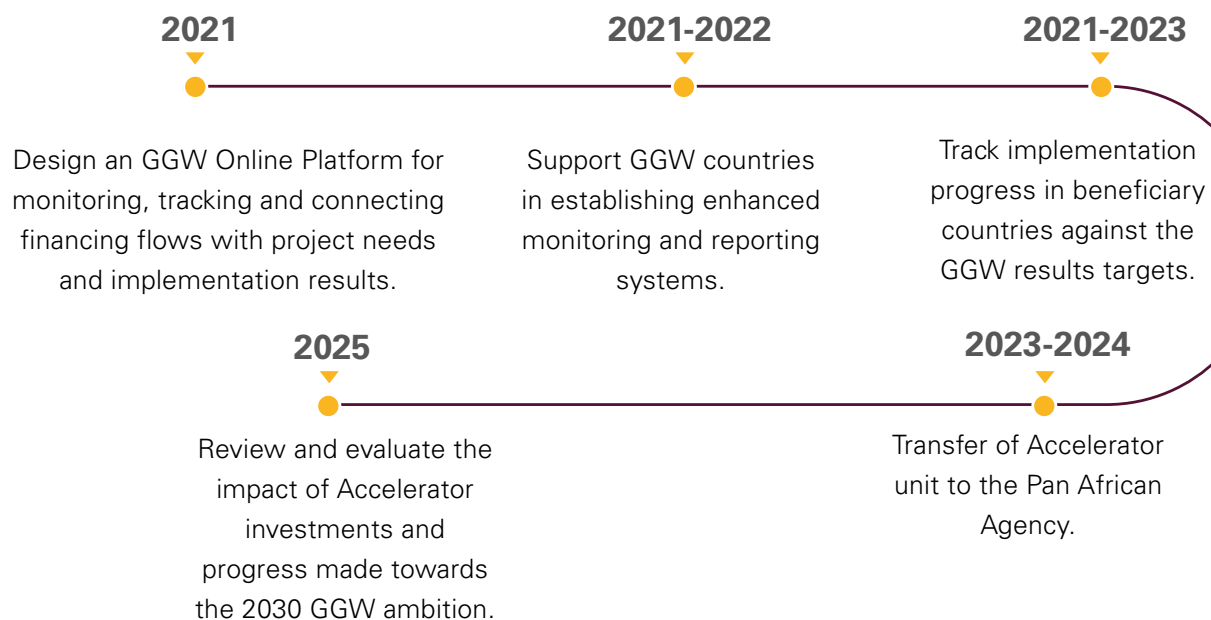


Recommendations to respond to the GGW identified challenges:

- Improve GGW governance, policy frameworks and institutions to support the GGW
- Interventions and enhance capacity building for national actors;
- Improve coordination with relevant actors to accelerate progress for the GGW;
- Continue advocacy and global awareness raising;
- Accelerate and scale up project generation;
- Strengthen monitoring, research and verification, and establish an integrated and
- Harmonized M&E and reporting system;
- Create a structured approach to resource mobilization, targeting private and public finance.



Timeline



The Accelerator is working on the creation of a harmonized M&E framework gathering several indicators to be used as a reference document for measuring progress of the GGWI in the eleven countries.

2.3. Summary of presentation of activities, results, impacts and challenges of Member States implementing the GGWI

Heads of Agencies of the PAAGGWI or Directors of Environment / Agriculture environment of Niger, Mauritania, Ethiopia, Algeria, Nigeria, Djibouti and Cameroon intervened to present the achievements made in their respective countries regarding the implementation of the GGWI, and the challenges they encountered.



General objectives from the Member states

- Improve reforestation and increase ecosystem and population resilience to climate change;
- Improve food security via sustainable land management/ restoration actions and promotion of income-generating activities;
- Diversify production systems;
- Address negative impacts of the climate change on the environment and strengthen capacities of the beneficiaries;
- Consolidate the sustainable land management via knowledge management and institutional communication on the benefits of the GGWI;
- Ensure the coordination, execution, and M&E of the GGWI actions.

Actions implemented in the context of GGWI

- Restoration and rehabilitation of degraded lands;
- Creation of green jobs and promotion of green entrepreneurship;
- Production of plants;
- Planting and set up of deferred grazing areas;
- Securitization of access to water resources;
- Promotion of clean technologies to restore degraded lands;
- Development of National strategies and engagement in resource mobilization;
- Advocacy and sensitization at National Levels.



Common challenges identified

- Lack of legal and institutional framework defining the GGW implementation;
- Absence or lack coherence of M&E systems;
- Drastic decreasing in government's financial contribution for the initiative's implementation;
- Lack of technical/financial capacities of small-scale organizations;
- Lack of sensitization of populations that represents an obstacle to GGWI implementation;
- Lack of resources (human, material and financial) to execute the initiative;
- Lack of ownership of countries to implement this initiative, reliance on technical and financial partners;
- Sustainability of management of degraded lands due to a lack of commitment and follow-up > Difficulties in capitalizing on lessons learnt.

Main recommendations for the following 5 years:

- Mobilize more resources to scale up and out best practices;
- Strengthen policy, education, research and extension linkage;
- Strengthening knowledge management system in the forest sector;
- Enhancing value addition and market linkage for forest products;
- Packaging, demonstrate and disseminate best practices;
- Properly value the benefits of forests (monetary and ecosystem services);
- Strengthen coordination among stakeholders;
- Promote good governance of natural resources and the development of technical capacities of national actors;
- Promote sustainable local development in the areas of intervention of the GGWI;
- Sustainable management of agrosylvopastoral and halieutic production systems and focus on food security at national levels;
- Establish a harmonized M&E system for the GGWI;
- Design a joint funding mechanism to support preparation and to ensure funding for countries and needs in Africa GGW region;
- Reinforce capitalization to allow skills transfers and the development of tools to establish a harmonized M&E system and ground for reporting.



Presentation by the Africa Union Commission

The presentation of the AUC was undertaken by the Coordinator of the GGWI unit in the Directorate of Sustainable Environment and Blue economy. The focus of the presentation was on the contribution of the AUC in the implementation of the initiative as an apex political organization of the continent with the mandate to support its Member States in the implementation of the GGWI.

After reminding the audience of the factors that led to the establishment of the initiative, and the place of the initiative in AGENDA 2063 attainment, the emerging challenges and opportunities that faces the dry lands of the continent also the richness and economic potentials of the areas.

On the emerging challenges, the increasing conflicts and climate security challenges in the drylands, climate migration, seasonal internal displacement of people, increasing competition on access and use of natural resources, terrorism, armed conflicts etc. He pointed on emerging opportunities like improvement in technology, social media, indigenous knowledge, enabling political environment for restoration, the availability of resources and increasing awareness of the challenges of climate change and the outbreak of the COVID -19 Pandemic as a challenge, but more an opportunity to correct the dysfunctional relationship between man and nature and as an opportunity to sort a more sustainable pathway. In addition, he pointed out that the GGWI provides an opportunity to make use of the abundant resources to provide Nature Based Solutions to the Socioeconomic

and environmental challenges in the dry lands of Africa. On the contribution of the AUC in the implementation of the Initiative, his presentation pointed out to the efforts of policy advocacy, resource mobilisation, provision of policy and technical support to the Member states and diverse publications and media presence.

On enhancing the initiative, the AUC pointed out the efforts at expanding the initiative to the Southern Africa region in collaboration with the SADC secretariat, support to the Republic of Cameroon in the production of a strategic plan and implementation framework, the inception initiated in Ghana amongst others. The future plans include the development of a new strategy for the AUC, continue support to the SADC region, resource mobilisation, enhance partnership and enhance the application of nature based solution and ecosystem services for post conflict reconstructions in the dry lands. The conclusion called on all to support the extension drive of the GGWI to other dry lands and enhancement of synergies, coordination and collaboration amongst all Stakeholders.



Summary of presentations from Member States

I. NIGER

Established a national Agency for the Great Green Wall Initiative in 2019 by presidential decree. It involves eight (8) administrative regions and covers 35% of the land surface of the country. The objectives and strategic areas are well defined and some achievements.

II. MALI

Established a national Agency for the Great Green Wall Initiative in 2019 by presidential decree. It involves eight (8) administrative regions and covers 35% of the land surface of the country. The objectives and strategic areas are well defined and some achievements include in restoration of over 3000 hectares of degraded land, improved cooking stoves and in water production. Integrated agroforestry systems with over 300 jobs for youths and women.

III. MAURITANIA

A national agency for the Great Green Wall Initiative was established in 2015 within the Ministry of Environment which stands alone with its functional team and budget. It has been carrying out activities in the communities in various divisions and districts, and enhancing community integration with women, management of sand dunes, re-forestation, creation of green jobs and economic improvement for the population.

IV. DJIBOUTI

Creation of a national agency for the Great Green Wall Initiative in the Ministry of Environment. It has establishment of clear objectives and some field projects that have been carried out.

V. ETHIOPIA


There is improved environmental awareness with massive landscape restoration programmes with the communities with the slogan - we do not want to inherit land degradation, there is the creation of nurseries, encouragement of farmers to cultivate commiphora and sell to the state for the production of MYRRH, etc... among others.

VI. ALGERIA

A national agency for Great Green Wall Initiative was established in the Ministry of Forestry. Some milestones in implementation include, projects in watershed management, biological control of erosion, fruit trees plantations, forest plantations and there are ongoing programs in 48 districts of the country.

VII. SENEGAL

A national agency for the Great Green Wall Initiative was created in 2008 and a unique structure was established in 2019 for that purpose. Three (3) regions are involved from coastal to pastoral areas that cut across 8 municipalities. An integrated ecosystem management has been adopted with the planting of various trees species, reforestation, creation of multifunctional farms and production of food crops and legumes. There has also been the engagement of



17000 youths to work in tree planting. A presidential meeting held in 2020 to discuss the Great Green Wall Initiative with the aim of creating a consultative committee for the Great Green Wall Initiative at National level.

VIII. NIGERIA

There is a national agency for the Great Green Wall Initiative with well-defined objectives. It has achieved the restoration of degraded landscapes and improvement of livelihoods in Nigerian. In 2021, 10 million plant seedlings were produced, 405 km of shelter belts created including community orchards created, acacia plantations created, landscape restoration carried out, tree planting established in schools and solar lighting for community households.

IX. DJIBOUTI

An inter-ministerial committee was created in 2019 to include all Great Green Wall Initiative actors. This was meant to foster sustainable management of natural resources restoration of pastoral lands and corridors for animals (Pastoral activity), 300,000 hectares earmarked for agro pastoral area, to electrify small villages with solar energy, to support rural infrastructure to increase access to the Great Green Wall Initiative localized areas of intervention. Djibouti is in the process of developing its first Great Green Wall Initiative project that will be piloted by FAO.

X. CAMEROON

Cameroon, with the support of the Africa Union, GIZ has developed a strategy and Action plan for the implementation of the initiative. Five regions are involved in the Great Green Wall Initiative. A strategy and action plan with six axes has been developed by the ministry of Environment and Nature Protection. Funding for the activities of the various areas are to come from the national budget, and donor agencies. The Ministry is in the process of developing projects for short and long terms.

SADC Secretaria

Representing Member states of southern Africa. The SADC region received support from the Africa Union Commission, FAO as a catalyst to implement Great Green Wall Initiative activities in the region, and support for SADC secretariat to produce a GGWI – SADC implementation strategy and are supporting countries to produce Great Green Wall Initiative national action plans, as well as appointment of Great Green Wall Initiative national focal points.



The Africa Union Commission:

The Representative of the AUC, in his presentation provided the background on the creation of the initiative as a way of reminding the audience of the fact that the GGWI is an African Union Initiative. He provided report on the activities undertaken since the last GGWI Regional Steering Committee meeting that was held in Dakar in 2019, and activities undertaken during the COVID 19 pandemic lock down including several virtual workshops with Member states, RECs and other key stakeholders in diverse theme including the impacts of the social distancing measures on the implementation of the initiative. He further provided updates of the reforms at the AUC and impacts of the reforms on the implementation of the initiative, the support progress made in the extension of the GGWI in the SADC region etc. He further reported efforts made in the domains of policy advocacy, fundraising and partnerships including the setting up of the GGWI Accelerator, the 1T.org, the setting up of GGWI Frontline, the funding proposals summit to the German parliament's committee for development and cooperation, the cooperation with UNDP West Africa in the production of the 10 CUBED programme. Other collaboration includes with Trees for the Future, Future Agriculture Business (FAGRIB), TREE AID, CIVIC UK etc.

He also pointed out the emerging challenges affecting implementation including the Pandemic, climate related migration, insecurity, and other challenges related to extreme climatic conditions and others. He also pointed emerging challenges including the increasing recognition, endorsement, the resources mobilized, new and affordable technology, and leveraging social media and others.

On the next steps for the initiative in the AUC, they are plans to,

- Continue supporting the GGWI SADC expansion
- Continuous collaboration in resource mobilisation
- Development of an upgraded version of the implementation strategy



3. Presentation from Civil Society Organization, International Development Partners on contributing to the implementation of the GGWI

3.1. ICRAF – “Reversing Land Degradation in Africa by Scaling-up Evergreen Agriculture”

Regreening Africa (Patrick Worms, *P.Worms@cgiar.org* and Mieke Boume, *M.Bourne@cgiar.org* – *Research officers*)

World Agroforestry (ICRAF) is a centre of science and development excellence that harnesses the benefits of trees for people and the environment.

Background

Regreening Africa is a five-year project that seeks to reverse land degradation among 500,000 households, and across one million hectares in eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. By incorporating trees into croplands, communal lands and pastoral areas, regreening efforts make it possible to reclaim Africa’s degraded landscapes.

Overall Goal

Regreening Africa aims to improve livelihoods, food security and increased resilience to climate change of smallholder farmers, by restoring ecosystem services, particularly through agroforestry.

Expected Outcomes & Outputs

- 500,000 households adopting evergreen agriculture in over 1 million hectares;
- 5% decrease in soil erosion;
- 10% increase in tree cover;
- 5/8 countries independently applying new tools and approaches;
- Improved opportunities for women and youth;
- Impacts at scale that have a significant return on investment for restoration and improvement of livelihoods;
- 10% average increase in household income.

Objectives

Objective 1: Sustainable Land Management

Led by The Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) Initiative together with its partner institutions and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Objective 1 aims to enhance the national ability of each country to assess the economic costs of land degradation and enhance awareness of the economic benefits of investment in Sustainable Land Management (SLM).



Objective 2: Strategic Decision-Making

Led by World Agroforestry (ICRAF) and supported by NGO partners, the project aims to equip target countries with surveillance and analytical tools on land degradation dynamics (LDD), that support strategic decision-making and monitoring in the scaling up of agroforestry.

Objective 3: Scaling Up Evergreen Agriculture

Led by NGO partners with support from ICRAF, Objective 3 aims to accelerate scaling up of evergreen agriculture using locally appropriate techniques including Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), tree planting and other forms of agroforestry, along with the development of agroforestry value chains.

3.2. Presentation of the GEF support to GGWI

(Adamou Bouhari, *Task manager Adamou.bouhari@un.org*)

GEF supports the GGWI since inception – it has gathered resources and worked with the World Bank to start the GGWI when the initiative was launched by AU.

Today GEF has mobilized USD 800 million and facilitated the leverage of USD 6 million from different partners for programmes contributing to the GGWI:


- Terra Africa, in partnership with the WB and other partners to promote integrated landscape approaches (restoration, soil health, increasing of soil productivity) > USD 150 million and 1 billion from partners;
- Programme SAWAP (Sahel and West Africa) > USD 1 billion with WB and AU;
- A Flagship programme on food security.

For the GGWI, GEF has launched the GEF-7 project, a USD 2 million project being implemented with the support of UNEP as implementing actor. The project includes the following components:

- **C1:** strengthening the institutional framework for GGWI coordination and partnership;
- **C2:** identifying and prioritizing investment opportunities to transform key economic systems in the Sahel region;
- **C3:** Stakeholder's consultation to launch shared vision for the GGWI and the Sahel region.

The objective of the project is to provide an opportunity to engage with all the GGWI partners to foster meaningful dialogue with countries, flesh out a longer-term vision and serve as the vehicle to design a program with potential to mobilize larger investments in GEF-8.

Through the GEF, the Least Developed Country Fund (LDCF) for climate change adaptation also presents an opportunity for GGWI member countries. The LDCF has already contributed immensely to the Sahel countries, with the region accounting for over 50% of the portfolio. There are significant opportunities for countries to leverage LDCF resources in the context of promoting systems transformation for sustainable and resilient growth.



GEF will keep partnering with GGWI. It also works in strong collaboration with the GCF (via a memorandum) to avoid duplications and leverage efforts. GEF stands for the need of a strong coalition that must involve all the GGWI stakeholders (governments, decentralized authorities, marginalized groups).

The UNCCD assessment report of the GGWI highlighted key gaps, such as:

- Coordination issues;
- Difficulties to analyze the progress achieved;
- Weak capacity to plan credible interventions;
- Issues with private sector engagement;
- Issues with the implementation of youth, women and local communities orientated interventions;
- Absence of deeper analyze on thematic areas: ideas are still vague and do not allow for focus investments.
Consequence: remain in the traditional project approach development with no particular aim of resolving issues and focusing on real investment needs;
- Lack of capitalization of experiences and other initiatives, which is key for progress.

In response, GEF approached UNEP to see how to improve the situation after the UNCCD report:

- Need to lead national and regional institutional analysis and capacity needs assessment (for the Pan African agency, African Union and other partners) to address coordination issues and other institutional aspects;
- Need to lead national baseline assessment reports (expected to be multifocal to provide entry points for all possible donors) to set up a credible base line situation and identification of major issues to tackle through bankable projects > countries need to have a strong and valid baseline to analyze key issues to go to analysis of solutions.

There is a strong advocacy for regional dialogue to validate the assessments results, generate partners interest on key areas of support and positioned the countries and the Pan African Agency to identify projects according to donors indicated eligibility criteria. GEF suggests to gather all the stakeholders, to define a common action plan and bring all the countries at the same level in terms of execution processes and monitoring.

Africa Development Bank

G5 Sahel Heads of State throw their weight behind African Development Bank's Desert to Power initiative



- acknowledged that much progress had been done but highlighted the work to be done at various local, national and regional scales as major stakes for which a multi-sectoral investment policy will serve as a good road map.
- Reaffirmed the engagement of the President of the Bank in supporting implementation as the Champion of the Initiative
- The Desert to Power initiative, keystone project of the AfDB is aimed at harnessing solar energy and generates an additional 10 GW of capacity to provide clean electricity to 250 million people. This initiative is part of the African Development Bank's New Deal for Energy in Africa and a key pillar of the Great Green Wall initiative.
- Within the framework of the GGWI Accelerator, the AfDB pledged a total of USD 5.3 Billion to support Member states in the implementation of the Initiative. There is a need to improve capacity is the development of projects and need for synergies with other sectors like Agriculture, renewables, youth employment and migration.



3.3. RESAD – Réseau Sahel Désertification

RESAD is leading a few projects in the Sahel region that contribute to the GGWI:

- Project REFEDÉ au Mali aims at strengthening women’s resilience to climate change by mobilizing against environment degradation;
- Production of sensitization tools (music, films) and exhibition of drawings about GGWI (2019, Ouagadougou)

Achievements:

following the launch of the GGWI Accelerator, RESAD is leading:

- Informative actions targeting CSOs and advocacy for their activities (dialogue with UNCCD, French public politics and donors of the Accelerator, for example during the UICN summit in September and the Africa – France summit);
- Advocacy toward stronger partnerships and subsidiarity between Governments (GGWI Agencies), CSOs, scientific and research institutes, technical and financial partners, which are complementary.

Key messages:

- i) the initiative of the GGW will only be effective if it responds to field needs > the actions of the Accelerator must lay on an a clear and harmonized accountability framework to measure the performance of financial engagements and offer opportunities to conduct an independent follow-up.
- ii) It is essential to promote a broader territorial planning and coordination among projects.

3.4. Wetlands International

The NGO Wetlands International intervenes in three sub-regions: Western African and Gulf of Guinea, Sahel and Eastern Africa. Its Initiative “Blue lifelines for a secure Sahel” 2021 – 2030 implemented by the consortium of NGOs CARE, International Alert, IWMI focuses on water management in the region of the GGW. Its mission is to restore and safeguard Sahelian wetlands, thereby improving the safety and strengthening the resilience of rural communities, supporting inclusive governance and benefiting biodiversity, by mobilize a range variety of actors and catalyzing change to adapt to CC and prevent climate-related risks.



3.5. SOS Sahel International

France, (Ange Mboneye, Advocacy manager / ange.mboneye@sossahel.org)

With the support of GEF, UNEP, UICN, AFD and partnership with UA, SOS Sahel has developed a regional platform to target and identify non-governmental actors in the GGWI countries and support initiatives from the civil society.

3.6. The Network for Gums and Resins in Africa (NGARANGARA)

The mission of the NGARA NGO is to assist and position African producer countries and partners as major global players in the sustainable production, processing and marketing of gums, resins and allied dryland commodities.

3.7. International Union for Conservation of Nature - IUCN

(Chris Magero - Programme Officer / Chris.Magero@iucn.org)

Objectives of IUCN:

- Restoring degraded landscapes;
- Mobilizing resources for sustainable rangeland;
- Supporting countries to implement their LDN targets;
- Supporting sustainable pastoralism development in the GGW.

As a contribution to the GGWI, the project “Closing the gaps in GWW: linking sectors and stakeholders for increased synergy and scaling-up”, financed by the GEF targets three components:

Adaptive management and learning > the implementation of effective projects in the region requires appropriate investment from private businesses, including financial services to land managers and value chain development. Progress towards the goal of the GGW is also progress towards commitments to LDN and to forest landscape restoration under the Africa 100 initiative of the Bonn challenge. There is a strong need to strengthen knowledge and capacity for innovation, but building on the existing initiatives. Other areas for enhancement include; Participation, diversity and equity: Inclusive and gender sensitive

3.8. AUDA NEPAD

Missions:

- Support the implementation, coordination of the GGWI;
- Contribute to the fight against desertification and drought;
- Fight against food insecurity;
- Promote knowledge production and capacity building;
- Mobilize financial and technic resources.



3.9. Tree Aid

(Tom Skirrow – CEO / Tom.Skirrow@treeaid.org)

Mission:

Creating thriving communities and ecosystems and recognizing that the human relationship with nature can provide benefits. The NGO works in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. The vision is to have a broader intervention in the GGWI area.

Four (4) key areas of work:

- Governance and management of systems;
- Natural resource management > skill building in rural communities;
- Improve access to natural resource as a way to fight poverty in rural livelihoods;
- Nutritional value of natural resource to alleviate food insecurity.

Programmes:

1. Major programme in Burkina Faso, working with the government in collaboration with the Swedish government on decentralizing the natural resource governance. Policy enacted by the government to put the power of management into the hands of local communities and local authorities. Tree Aids has been supporting building capacities of local communities and authorities to ensure that this delocalized management is effective.

Results: better community ownership in restoring the lands and manage their resources.

2. Tree Aid also works on short-term option to be able to benefit from natural resources.

Programme in Mali: 3 projects working with communities on forest management but also on livelihood development. 3 thousand people. Results of supporting them to valorize their non-timber forest products, improve their income annually by 350% in three years. skills to manage natural resources, grew 700 000 trees.

The NGO has the ambition to expand the nutritional aspect. In Burkina Faso, the NGO is developing a system to provide information to make people understand the nutritional value of tree food and have a better access to tree food.

Results: the support of the NGO has helped reduce chronic malnutrition by 42% over 3 years.

Challenge: How to move forward by including people and not only bureaucrats. How to improve ownership to population to lead the GGWI.



3.10. Future Team

(Alhadj Ali Oumar Abdoul – Project manager / *ao.abdoul@gmail.com* / *futureteamchad@gmail.com*)

Future Team is a Chadian NGO aiming at the preparation and implementation to facilitate land restoration and address climate change impacts.

Project “Cordon Vert/ Green Belt” in partnership with the Chadian agency of the GGW.

Objectives of the project:

- Plant 200 000 tree feet to contribute to reduction of impacts of climate change;
- Fight against desertification;
- Diversifying of production systems;
- Prevent rural exodus;
- Providing job opportunity and skills at the local level.

Activities:

- Management of land-related conflicts;
- Sensitization and information on land restoration to rural communities;
- Solar panels for plants irrigation.

3.11. One Billion Trees for Africa

Mission:

Innovative land restoration + food sufficiency + employment + income.

Community-based innovative land restoration with youth, women and community leaders

Need a strong harmonized framework to be effective on the implementation on the field and monitoring operations.

Challenges:

- Local community inclusion;
- External often unclear experiences and knowledge on African reality;
- Weak synergies;
- Negligence of indigenous solutions;
- Access to markets;
- Family constraints alongside other duties;
- Weak considerations for domestic solutions.

Recommendation:

African solutions for African challenges including local community’s inclusion



3.12. Cooperative Women in Djibouti

(Fihima Mohamed Ismail – Coordinator / womeninitiatedj@gmail.com)

The global objective of land restoration is the creation of a “Green podcast” to talk with everyone to hear communities’ voices.

3.13. IUCN, Introduction to the Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology (ROAM)

ROAM is a methodology to identify and prioritize FLR opportunities at the national and subnational level.

A ROAM assessment can be undertaken by a small team through collaborative engagement with stakeholders, and can deliver the following products:

Identified priority areas for restoration;

A shortlist of the most relevant and feasible restoration intervention types across the assessment area;

Quantified costs and benefits of each intervention type;

Estimated values of additional carbon sequestered by these intervention types;

Analysis of the finance and investment options for restoration in the assessment area; and

A diagnostic of ‘restoration readiness’ and strategies for addressing major policy and institutional bottlenecks.

By implementing ROAM, decision-makers and stakeholders can expect to deliver the following types of outcomes: Better information for improved land-use decision-making; High-level political support for forest landscape restoration;

Fundamental inputs to national strategies on FLR, REDD+, climate and disaster risk adaptation and mitigation, and biodiversity conservation and restoration, among others, for a mutually reinforcing convergence between such strategies;

A basis for better allocation of resources within restoration programmes;

Engagement of and collaboration among key policy-makers and decision makers from different sectors, as well as other stakeholders with interests in how landscapes are managed; and

Shared understanding of FLR opportunities and the value of multifunctional landscapes.

After the presentation by our IUCN colleague, the following were the recommendations,

- Encourage Member states and implementing partners to adopt and use apply the methodology
- Called on IUCN to work with Member states to enhance capacity for its adoption
- IUCN should make available publications and information on the ROAM

Summary of Key Events

During the 6th RSC meeting of the GGWI, some key events took place

i. The launch of the Green dam project of Algeria

The Green Dam initiative became clearer in the 60s with the rapid degradation of Alfa grass steppe that resulted from overgrazing and cultivation activities.

The main objective of the Green Dam is to combat desertification. After a few years of implementation, the program turned into a big multi-sector project, including

- The protection and enhancement of existing forest re-sources
- The recovery of missing forest stand
- Reforestation
- The development of agricultural and pastoral land
- The fight against sand encroachment and for dune fix-ation
- Resource mobilization in surface and groundwater
- The improvement of accessibility to desertification prone area

In the last two years, the government of Algeria has been working to update and revamp the Green dam project. Using the platform offered the 6th RSC, the new strategy was launched in the presence of the representative of the Embassy of Algeria. There was a general call for the Partners to support the implementation of the project and also to encourage peer to peer learning and sharing of best practices.

ii. The award of certification of recognition

The certificate was presented to individuals and organizations who have made important contribution to the implementation of the Initiative since its inception some

almost two decades ago. Signed by the Minister of Environment and Sustainable development, and representative of the Africa Union Commission, diverse groups of individuals and institutions were represented including Dr Francois Tapsoba (former Advisers) Yousef Brahimi (Consultant, former UNCCD Staff), all the Member states present, UNCCD, UNEP etc.

Handing of certificates of Recognition for supporting the GGWI Member states in the implementation of the GGWI to participants, representative of SOS Sahel and TREE AID respectively.





Conclusions and Recommendations

Delegates at the meeting observed the following:

- Acknowledge that much progress has been made in accelerating implementation of the Great Green Wall initiative at different country and communities' levels;
- Observe that in spite of the progress made, there are emerging challenges such as increasing conflicts such as insurgencies, farmer-grazers challenges, much of which did not exist when the Great Green Wall initiative was initiated by African Heads of States and Governments;
- Recognize that the Great Green Wall initiative is a huge opportunity for African countries to leverage to reduce challenges of increasing degradation, desertification, fertile soil loss, youth migration, unemployment and food insecurity;
- Further observe that Sustainable land management and restoration which are the basis of the Great Green Wall creates holistic and cross cutting economic, social and environmental benefits through increasing agricultural productivity, mitigating climate change impacts, and improving biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- Further acknowledge that the Great Green Wall has holistic and multifaceted importance that are not only beneficial to Africa but the entire world especially with climate change and disasters;
- Cited that there is increasing international interest and growing cooperation opportunities for the Great Green Wall Initiative;
- Acknowledge that, African Heads of States and Government encouraged the admission of more African member states in the Great Green Wall Initiative.

Delegates recommendations:

- Encourage the need to strengthen knowledge and capacity for innovation, improved networking and partnership development at all levels for scaling investment in the Great Green Wall;
- Recognize the Great Green Wall as an African Initiative and therefore should be led by African countries;
- Encourage the need for all member states have national and community-led networks to be in the driving seat of implementation of the Great Green Wall Initiative;
- Increase the use of local indigenous knowledge and practices in the implementation of the Great Green Wall Initiative;
- Urged national focal points of related sectors and frameworks such as United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, United Nations Framework on Climate Change to collaborate with national agencies of the Great Green Wall to broaden national multisectoral collaboration and partnerships in accelerating implementation of the Great Green Wall at country and community level;
- Encourage the use of trees to better the life of farmers while taking into consideration the importance attached to the value generated by small farms than wasteful and destructive agricultural systems that deplete the land of trees

- 
- Endorsed the expansion dry of the GGWI to the Southern Africa Region and request Member states present to share knowledge, best practice with the Member states of the Southern Africa region
 - While recognizing the importance and potential contribution of the GGWI Accelerator project in mobilisation of the funds from the One Planet Summit 2021, request the Accelerator to be inclusive and look beyond the 11 Member states of the Pan Africa Agency
 - Member states should be in the driving seats of the initiative through the creation of national networks and enhancing the participation of Grassroots Actors and Community Based Groups
 - While recognizing importance role of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) and Local Experiences reiterated that, IK techniques should be at the forefront of the implementation of projects and activities
 - Call on Partners to support Member states in the enhancement of synergies and creating nexuses with other thematic areas like Agriculture, water, pastoral livestock and energy
 - Recognised the incidence of land degradation, desertification and climate change as conflict multipliers and key factors in Climate and natural resources use and access related conflicts, call on Member states and International community to focus on nature based solutions for conflicts than military interventions
 - Called on the support of the Multilateral forces stationed in the Sahel to undertake counter-insurgency war to put their equipment at the disposal of local communities in order to support restoration activities and ease the burden of manual work.

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Conclusions

The incidence of land degradation, desertification, drought and climate change in the dry lands of Africa and the impacts on the human population and biodiversity is on the rise. Of recent, the Great Green Wall Initiative has received strong endorsement and support from international development partners, after years of skepticism and doubt that led to diminutive support and low investment by Member states and development Partners. The 6th Regional Steering Committee meeting, the first after physical meeting after the outbreak of the COVID 19 Pandemic can be described as successful going by the attendance, the richness of the discussions, presentations and the outcomes of the meeting. The presence of Member States and Partners from the Southern Africa region, the presentation from the Southern Africa Development Community on the progress made in extension of the GGWI to the southern Africa region was highly welcomed by the steering committee Members. The increasing natural resources and climate related conflicts on the continent, the impacts of COVID 19 curbing measures, the launching of the GGWI Accelerator, the outcome of the UNFCCC COP 26 and the development of several projects and activities in support of the Initiative were some of the key themes that dominated discussions during the meeting. All in all, the traditional call for enhanced synergies, closer collaboration, increase resource, capacity enhancement, the need for the increase use of indigenous knowledge and innovation were some of the key recommendations from the meeting. Despite the increasing recognition of the effectiveness of the Initiative for sustainability the dry lands and the increasing resources that is following, the committee called for more efforts in resource mobilisation, especially through the GGWI Accelerator. The meeting ended with a vote of gratitude to the government of Djibouti through the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and to the Africa Union Commission for organization and hosting of the meeting respectively.

Appendix

Agenda of the 6th Steering Committee of the Great Green Wall Initiative

Djibouti – November 22nd – 26th 2021

Time	Agenda Items
Arrival of participants	
Day 1(M)	
Opening Ceremony	
8:30-9:00	Registration of participants
	Master of Ceremony: Ministry of Environment, Djibouti
9:00-10:00	<p><i>A word of welcome by the National Focal Point for the GGWI, Djibouti and GGWI Coordinator, Africa Union Commission</i></p> <p>Opening Remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of Africa Development Bank (GGWI Champion) • Representative of the EU Delegation to the African Union
10:00-10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCCD (on behalf of UN institutions) • Pan African Agency GGWSSI • H.E Commissioner, DARBE, AUC • Minister in charge of Environment, Republic of Djibouti <p>Presentation of the meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of participants - All • Overview of workshop aims and objectives (Elvis Paul Tangem, DREA/CUA) • Logistics (Organizers / AUC) • Official Family Photo
10:00-11:00	Coffee Break
Session 1. Status of implementation of the GGWSSI: Results, Challenges and opportunities <i>(Chair: M. Harsen Nyambe, Director SEBE, AUC)</i>	
11:00-11:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation report, AUC, GGWSSI (Dr Elvis Paul Tangem)
11:15-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation & discussion of the report of the Pan African Agency of the GGWSSI: Priority Action Plans (PAP), Mr. Zougoulou
11:30-12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the GGW impact assessment report - UNCCD (The report has never been presented to the Steering Committee)
12:00-13:00	Q&A Series
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break
14:00-14:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the Great Green Wall Accelerator
14:30-15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q&A
15:00-15:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the AU Green Recovery Action Plan • Presentation of the Disaster Risk Reduction / UNDRR Sahel Project

15:45-16:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of AU SAFGRAD strategy AFRICAN COMMON POSITION TOWARDS A LEGALLY BINDING PROTOCOL ON DROUGHT UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 		
16:15-17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Discussions on matters arising 		
17:00-18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report from CENSAD, • CILSS • ICRAF - CIFOR - Re-greening Africa Project 	Moderator: Pan African Agency	
Day 2			
08:30-09:00	Member states presentations reports (Chair: Pan African Agency GGWSSI) Activities, results/ impacts, opportunities, challenges, way forward		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Chad, Djibouti : Discussions • Ethiopia, Eritrea, Mali, The Gambia Discussions • Ghana, Mauritania, Nigeria, Niger : Discussions • Senegal, Somalia, Sudan : Discussions 		
11:00-11:30	BREAK		
11:30-12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report of GGWI inception in the SADC region by SADC Secretariat: Discussions • Presentation of the National Action Plan for Botswana - Discussion 		
15 Minutes each	SOS SAHEL International		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNEP - GEF Programme IFAD, GCF, GEF umbrella programme 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNEP - GEF Programme: Outcome of National Baseline Assessments 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO programme 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uplink Trillion Trees: The Sahel & The Great Green Wall 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Cross and Red Crescent Africa office 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFR100 - AUDA NEPAD 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation IUCN 		
12:00-13:00	Presentation by Community Based Groups and Projects		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widows and Orphans Movement - Value chains Programme • ORGIIS Cameroon: Julius Tangem Takwa • One Billion Trees for Africa - Dr Tabi Joda 		
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break		
14:00-15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JakSally Youth Group: The challenges of NRM in Ghana (Virtually) • ENDA Energie West Africa • The DYTAES Dynamic for agroecological transition in Senegal led by Enda Pronat, • Mrs Mariam SOW • GGWA can provide a list of community based groups and projects to invite to present the challenges and opportunities of those at the frontlines. 		

16:00 - 17:00	Day 3	
08:30 - 09:30	Report on the main points from the two days	Moderator: SOS SAHEL
15 Minutes Presentations	Presentation on BLISS by Wetlands International	
	Presentation of the UNDP 10 CUBED PROJECT UNDP	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARI + Dry net • Presentation from Reseau Billital Maroobe • Tree AID UK, Projects • ORGIIS Cameroon • Presentation, DRYNET and SPONG 	
	Presentation of the UNDP 10 CUBED PROJECT UNDP	
Lunch Break		
Work sessions on presentations and review of strategic documents		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of AU's GGWI Strategic document • Result Framework Documents produced by the Pan African Agency GGWI Accelerator • Discussions on the Concept note for production of a AUC GGWI strategy and implementation plans • Water-energy-restoration nexus workshop: General discussions and recommendations on emerging challenges and opportunities to be captured in the updated strategy 	Africa Union & PAAGGWI
Training of National Focal point on the IUCN ROAM (A guide to the Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM) Training) IUCN		
Day 4		
08:00 - 11:00	Training of National Focal point on the IUCN ROAM (A guide to the Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM) Training) IUCN	AUC & Burkina Faso
	The launching of the	
11:00 - 13:00	Great Green Wall Accelerator CSO meeting	GM-UNCCD
13:10 - 13:30	Presentation from Zander Agro on Innovative Water boreholes	Ruslan L
	FAGRIB Projects in the Sahel	
13:30 - 13:50	Presentation on WATERGEN	
15:00 - 16:00	Launching of the National Initiative to Restore the Green Dam of Algeria	Algerian Delegation
Recognition & Award Dinner		
Closing ceremony		
Day 5		
26th	Departures	

Agenda
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