

New hub to support Action Against Desertification in ACP countries

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Brussels, 22 February 2016/ FAO/AU/ ACP: A special hub will support critical efforts to combat land degradation, desertification and drought in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific, through an agreement signed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

The FAO and AUC stated that the special hub will provide assistance in coordination, monitoring and evaluation, capacity development, resource mobilisation, knowledge management for the implementation of the Action Against Desertification.

The Action Against Desertification is an initiative of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) to promote sustainable land management and restore drylands and degraded lands in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, implemented by FAO and partners with funding from the European Union in the framework of the 10th European Development Fund (EDF).

The project builds on the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, in which more than 20 African countries, international organizations, research institutes, civil society and grassroots organizations have come together to tackle the detrimental social, economic and environmental impact of land degradation and desertification.

With a total budget of € 41 million, ACP, the EU, FAO and partners such as the African Union Commission, the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and the Walloon region are supporting six African countries - Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal – as well as Fiji and Haiti in improving the state and health of production landscapes affected by desertification and land degradation.

Scaling up

Plans for large-scale restoration efforts in West Africa are currently being drawn up by restoration experts from several African countries, using plant-based solutions to increase land productivity, food security, to support livelihoods and income generation for communities and importantly to help mitigate and adapt to future environmental shocks and climate change.

Central to these plans is the restoration approach, which puts communities at the heart of restoration efforts and starts with consulting the communities in order to identify their needs for useful plant species and preferences for restoration in support of their livelihoods.

Scaling up this approach is core to the Great Green Wall vision of building on best practices, which in the case of restoration has already been rolled-out in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, where 120 communities have used over two million seeds and seedlings of fifty native species to restore over 2500 hectares of land benefitting some 50 000 people.

- Source: FAO

More about the Action Against Desertification project

Action Against Desertification assists local communities, government and civil society in the sustainable management and restoration of their dryland forests, range and croplands affected by desertification, land degradation and drought.

Areas of intervention include:

- Sustainable management of natural resources, including soils, water, forests, rangelands
- Promotion of sustainable rural production systems in agriculture, pastoralism and forestry
- Sustainable production, processing and marketing of agricultural products and forest goods and services
- Diversification of economic activities, for example through rural production centers, to stimulate job creation and offer income generation activities, in particular for youth and women.
- Knowledge exchange about the causes of desertification and the best ways to combat and prevent it.

Visit the Action Against Desertification website via FAO ^[1]

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