



Latin America



THE BONN CHALLENGE: CATALYSING LEADERSHIP IN LATIN AMERICA

The Bonn Challenge has received unprecedented support in Latin America with 18 pledges of over 35 million hectares. An additional 16 million hectares of restoration on agricultural lands not involving trees and non-territorially-defined pledges are included as part of Initiative 20x20 – a regional platform supporting the Bonn Challenge with the goal of bringing 20 million hectares of land into restoration by 2020.

The Bonn Challenge and forest landscape restoration

The Bonn Challenge is a global effort to bring 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested land into restoration by 2020 and 350 million by 2030. To date, 40 governments, companies and organisations have committed over 148 million hectares to this restoration ambition. It is an implementation vehicle for national priorities such as boosting landscape productivity, improving water and food security, conserving biodiversity, and combating desertification, while facilitating the implementation of existing international commitments including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, climate change commitments under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement related to emissions reduction from the forest and land-use sector, as well as the Rio+20 land degradation target.



Countries in Latin America that have made commitments to the Bonn Challenge have been at the centre of the global restoration movement, creating the political momentum necessary to drive changes in policy and national plans that enable early action on restoration at different levels. There is increased interest from countries in adapting forest landscape restoration (FLR) to their national context, as FLR has proven to be an effective mechanism for integrating multiple objectives, including those aligned with reducing emissions from deforestation, increasing adaptation, facilitating sustainable rural development and unlocking climate-smart private sector investments.

What is forest landscape restoration?

Forest landscape restoration is the process of regaining ecological functionality and enhancing human well-being across whole deforested or degraded landscapes. It means restoring “forward”

to offer multiple benefits and land uses over time. Restoring forests is more than just planting trees – a restored landscape could include naturally regenerated areas, agroforestry, on-farm trees, mangroves, protected wildlife reserves, plantings of trees and other woody plants such as bamboos, soil management, and more. Importantly, restoration takes place through an active process that brings local communities and other stakeholders together to identify and implement appropriate restoration activities to achieve long-term success.



Landscape near Santa Maria,
Tacana, Guatemala

Photo: Intu Boedhihartono / IUCN

Assessing forest landscape restoration opportunities and unlocking action in Latin America

FLR is receiving priority attention in many countries in Latin America, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is supporting them in the design of restoration strategies that can transform rural landscapes. Although government-driven, these strategies depend on the involvement of all relevant stakeholders who agree beforehand on the objectives, criteria and indicators of the restoration process (for example, through the establishment of a technical committee that contributes to a national/subnational restoration roundtable). As a result of these multi-stakeholder dialogues, a set of restoration transitions or activities to be applied in landscapes can be determined – based on sound spatial models combined with policy, legal, economic and financial analyses. The Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM), developed by IUCN and the World Resources Institute (WRI), guides this decision-making process.



In **Brazil**, IUCN focusses on supporting the identification of sub-national restoration opportunities by integrating a comprehensive ROAM into stakeholder-driven planning. The assessment of restoration opportunities and restoration planning informs the National Plan on Native Vegetation Recovery (PLANAVEG) and Brazil's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) target for restoration and reforestation – as well as other national and sub-national policies. In addition, IUCN builds the case for unlocking financial flows for restoration by profiling and connecting the demand and financial supply channels in Brazil and in Latin America, while strengthening local capacity which is essential for accelerating action on restoration and REDD+. Brazil made a pledge of 12 million hectares to the Bonn Challenge in 2016, while Brazil's Atlantic Forest Restoration PACT has been working in the Mata Atlantica region since 2011 in order to implement its one million hectare pledge to the Bonn Challenge.

In **Colombia**, IUCN is assisting the government in identifying areas where interventions to restore degraded landscapes in Antioquia can contribute to water and food security, ecosystem-based adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable livelihoods. The application of ROAM is providing valuable insight into the importance of FLR in post-conflict Colombia, and is especially relevant to avoid degradation, restore ecological integrity, and provide alternative livelihoods for displaced people. Ultimately, this assessment will support Colombia in achieving its Bonn Challenge pledge of one million hectares by 2020.

In **Costa Rica**, the restoration assessment process identified areas that, if restored, will help Costa Rica achieve its commitments under the country's Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA), NDC, REDD+ Strategy, and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). Areas of opportunity were determined according to six criteria of key importance to the country: biodiversity recovery, sustainable wood production, resilience, soil conservation, food security, and provision of water services. Prioritising which areas to restore was then based on the impact of these services in relation to the recommended restoration actions. One million hectares of this opportunity area represents Costa Rica's pledge to the Bonn Challenge.

In **El Salvador**, the National Programme for Restoration of Ecosystems and Landscapes was developed in coordination with the country's REDD+ national strategy, which resulted in setting an ambitious and comprehensive pledge to the Bonn Challenge: almost 50% of El Salvador's territory. IUCN and El Salvador's Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources worked together to produce key elements of the National Programme, which included the elaboration of a national land-use map and economic costs and benefits analyses for each of the restoration transitions to be prioritised. As a result of the assessment, over one million hectares that could benefit from restoration were identified.

In **Guatemala**, the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the National Strategy of Forest Landscape Restoration is in the hands of the multi-stakeholder Forest Landscape Restoration Roundtable – coordinated by the National Forest Institute with technical support

Current Latin America pledges under the Bonn Challenge*

(in millions of hectares)

- Argentina: 1**
- Brazil: 12**
- Brazil's Atlantic Forest Restoration PACT: 1**
- Chile: 0.5**
- Colombia: 1**
- Costa Rica 1**
- Ecuador: 0.5**
- El Salvador: 1**
- Guatemala 1.2**
- Guatemala Private Natural Reserves: 0.04**
- Honduras: 1**
- Mexico: 8.5**
- Campeche State: 0.75**
- Quintana Roo State: 0.7**
- Yucatan State: 0.55**
- Nicaragua: 2.7**
- Panama: 1**
- Peru: 3.2**

from IUCN. The country's restoration assessment resulted in the identification of 3.9 million hectares under eight land-use categories, including riparian forests, mangroves, protection forests, permanent and annual agroforestry crops, silvopasture systems and protected areas. Guatemala is a leader the region, having established an in-country fund and finance structure to cover initial costs of restoration activities through the recently enacted PROBOSQUE law. Further financial assessments under ROAM are being conducted with IUCN's support, also leading towards the achievement of Guatemala's 1.2 million hectare Bonn Challenge pledge.

In **Honduras**, IUCN is assisting the State Secretary of Energy, Natural Resources, Environment and Mining (MiAmbiente+) in preparing a national restoration opportunities map, which involves identifying current land uses and the best potential restoration actions to help transition from traditional livestock and agricultural production to sustainable practices, recover degraded forestlands, and expand forest cover. IUCN is carrying out an economic analysis of these actions, which will feed into a national restoration plan being developed by the Secretary and support the country's one million hectare pledge to the Bonn Challenge.

In **Mexico's** Yucatan Peninsula, the restoration strategies for the states of Campeche, Quintana Roo, and Yucatan were developed in support of the National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR) and the Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA)'s commitments at the federal level to the Bonn Challenge. IUCN worked closely with these states and stakeholders at all levels to carry out restoration assessments. The assessments identified 3.35 million hectares where restoration would produce a positive rate of return through the application of nine transition models that, in turn, are backed by technological packages and business models. In addition, the Bonn Challenge targets of the three states (0.95 million hectares by 2020 and 2 million hectares by 2030) could generate net economic benefits up to \$US 2.1 billion per year with a minimum net carbon capture of 107.1 Mt CO₂e, representing 30.7% of Mexico's NDC target. These economic and financial analyses make the application of ROAM in the Yucatan Peninsula the most advanced and complete to date.



Inambari, Tambopata, Peru
Photo: Roberto Ariano

In **Nicaragua's** North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region, IUCN is providing substantial support in the development of a three-level consultation and validation process of the region's restoration strategy: first, a technical team; second, a Forestry and Environmental Consultative Committee that contributes to political, territorial, social and environmental topics; and, third, representatives from 16 indigenous territories. The restoration priority areas identified in this process respond to a comprehensive array of topics, including ecosystem services, sustainable use of indigenous territories, protection of upstream water sources, disaster risk reduction, and buffer zones for natural protected areas. The transitions being considered include silvopasture and agroforestry systems, reforestation, and assisted and natural regeneration. The final result of this process will be a restoration strategy validated by stakeholders and approved at the regional level. The country has pledged 2.7 million hectares to the Bonn Challenge.

In **Peru**, IUCN supports the National Forest and Wildlife Service and Authority in facilitating a participatory process to identify interventions to recover degraded ecosystems in an ecologically, economically and socially compatible way. The project explores opportunities for scaling up appropriate restoration interventions that provide a bridge between mitigation and adaptation, while maximising co-benefits and improving sustainable livelihoods. This will support the country's 3.2 million hectare pledge to the Bonn Challenge.



Supporting the achievement of Bonn Challenge commitments

Members of the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR) (forestlandscaperestoration.org) are building global political support for restoration as well as providing policy and technical support to the definition and implementation of Bonn Challenge commitments around the world.

This includes IUCN through its regional FLR Hubs in Kigali - Rwanda, Yaoundé - Cameroon, Bangkok - Thailand, San Jose - Costa Rica, Quito - Ecuador, Suva - Fiji and Washington DC - US. As a union of State and non-State members, IUCN is able to support the restoration process from the identification of restoration opportunities and commitments, to carrying out real and measurable restoration action in landscapes. In Latin America, IUCN has 195 members, including State or State Agency members in seven countries.

IUCN is currently active in FLR in over 40 countries, with ROAM assessments completed or underway in 25 countries. FLR has been identified as a priority nature-based solution in the IUCN Programme of Work for 2017-2020, adopted by IUCN's 1,300 members during the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2016.

Multi-country programmes such as The Restoration Initiative (TRI), supported by the Global Environment Facility and led by IUCN in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), are also strengthening implementation and providing models for collaboration.

Building regional support for the Bonn Challenge

A growing suite of “home grown” high-level processes is emerging in support of the Bonn Challenge, driven by the political will of countries and regional institutions. In Latin America, this started with the Ministerial Bonn Challenge Regional Meeting in El Salvador in August 2015, and continued in Panama in August 2016. Honduras will be the host for the 2017 Bonn Challenge Regional meeting, Guatemala in 2018, and Cuba in 2019. This strong evidence of regional support for the restoration movement is mirrored by similar processes in Africa and in Asia.

The Ministerial Bonn Challenge Regional Meeting in Honduras in June 2017 will promote the topic of restoration at a regional level and enable the refinement of a roadmap to mobilise technical and financial partners from the region and international community.

An agroforestry system in Zuleta, Ecuador

Photo: Sergio Garrido / IUCN



* Brazil: 12 M ha dedicated to restoration and reforestation activities have been pledged to the Bonn Challenge whereas an additional 10 M ha of integrated crop, livestock and forest management, as well as recovery of degraded pastures under the Low-Carbon Agriculture Plan have been pledged to Initiative 20x20. Brazil's Atlantic Forest Restoration Pact includes the territories of Espirito Santo, Mato Grosso and Sao Paulo states, which are counted separately under Initiative 20x20. Mexico: its national pledge is supported by state-driven actions therefore Yucatan, Campeche, and Quintana Roo States' pledges support the achievement of the federal pledge.



Limoncocha Biological Reserve, Sucumbíos - Ecuador

Photo: Sergio Garrido / IUCN





La Zafra, Antioquia - Colombia
Photo: James McBreen / IUCN

How you can make a commitment to the Bonn Challenge

Start a conversation on forest landscape restoration in Latin America by reaching out to one of our focal points:

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bit.ly/2ImlyHn

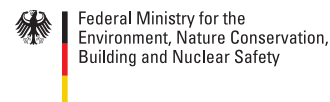
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