

Proposal: A new Issue Management Group on the UN System Response to the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)

Proposed jointly by: FAO and UNEP

Objective: To raise awareness, ensure coordinated response by the UN Environmental Management Group and its constituent organizations to build a global restoration momentum for the protection and revival of ecosystems all around the world, for the benefit of people and nature.

Background: On 1 March 2019, under Resolution 73/284, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2021–2030 to be [the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#), with the primary aim being ***to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide***. All initiatives within the UN Decade will have a dual focus on protecting as well as restoring ecosystems.

By signing the resolution, UN Member States committed to building a new momentum for ecosystem restoration globally, scaling up existing ecosystem restoration efforts, raising awareness of the importance of conservation and restoration, and building synergies between agriculture, urban development, ecosystem conservation and restoration initiatives. Led by the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, The UN Decade is building a strong, broad-based global movement to ramp up restoration and put the world on track for a sustainable future. That will include building political momentum for restoration as well as thousands of initiatives on the ground.

The UN Decade [is expected to contribute](#) to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in addition to the goals of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Land Degradation Neutrality targets supported by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the goals of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the Bonn Challenge's target of restoring 350 million hectares of degraded land as well as other international agreements relevant to conservation and restoration of ecosystems. The UN Decade priorities are already reflected or relevant for the members of UN EMG commitments and processes, including [a Common Approach to integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions for sustainable development into the UN's policy and programme planning and delivery](#) and the [UN System Commitment for Action to assist Member States delivering on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework](#).

While several among over 50 members of the UN EMG are already partners of the Decade (BRS MEAs, CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC, UNDP, UN ECE, UN ESCAP, UNESCO, and WHO), the rest are either in the process of joining or not yet defined their roles. In this context and with the COVID-19 crisis, the accelerating global momentum for ecosystem restoration will be playing a crucial role in building back better and greener for the people and the planet. Considering comparative roles of the UN EMG membership, the establishment of a new Issue Management Group will ensure a more coherent and consistent UN system-wide approach to the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030).

Activities and scope: The IMG will undertake activities to raise the priority given to ecosystem restoration throughout the UN system by:

- Raising awareness among UN EMG members to trigger action on ecosystem restoration by individual organizations, agencies, programs and funds;
- Fostering new partnerships and alliances among UN EMG members and partners to support Decade's priorities;
- Mainstreaming Decade priorities into the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and UN Development System Reform;
- Supporting UN System wide response to green and inclusive recovery after COVID-19;
- Jointly building and enhancing technical capacities across sectors on (i) designing, monitoring and sustaining ecosystem restoration activities, (ii) knowledge management, including integrating indigenous knowledge and traditional practices, and (iii) economics of ecosystem restoration.

If the UN EMG agrees to establish a new IMG on ecosystem restoration, its exact activities and terms of reference would be discussed with all interested members of the EMG prior to and during its first meeting. The IMG will operate for an initial period of 2 years with the possibility of extension. Its activities will be coordinated closely with the overall governance structure established for the Decade.