

Presentation of the UN Decade for restoration

The United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration is a call to all countries of the world to join to protect and restore ecosystems for the benefit of nature and people. It aims to halt the degradation of ecosystems and restore them to meet global goals. According to the United Nations, only with healthy ecosystems can we improve people's lives, combat climate change and halt biodiversity loss.

The UN Decade runs from 2021 to 2030, the target date for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the last chance, according to scientists, to avoid catastrophic climate change. The UN General Assembly proclaimed the UN Decade following a proposal for action from more than 70 countries from all latitudes.

Led by the United Nations Environment Program and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, one of the goals of the UN Decade will be to create political momentum for restoration and to put in place thousands of initiatives on the ground. Through communications, events and a dedicated online platform, it should enable all those interested in restoration to find projects, partners, funding and the necessary knowledge.

The United Nations Environment Program estimates that we must cut greenhouse gas emissions by nearly half by 2030 to keep global warming below 2°C and avoid its most dangerous effects. This goal cannot be achieved without restoring ecosystems and their carbon stores. Ambitious restoration of ecosystems and decarbonization of national economies must go hand in hand. By halting and reversing land and ocean degradation, the loss of a million threatened species could be avoided. Scientists say that restoring just 15% of ecosystems in priority areas can reduce extinctions by 60% by improving habitats.

States have already committed to restoring nearly one billion hectares of degraded land - an area larger than China. The European Commission was expected to present a proposal for legally binding nature restoration targets in 2021.

The UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration focuses on different major types of ecosystems that have been dangerously degraded. Among them, agricultural lands are the most vital ecosystems. In addition to providing food, fodder, and fiber, they are home to an amazing variety of organisms and considerable vegetation cover.

Combating desertification and restoring ecosystems

According to the UNCCD, ecosystem restoration on a global scale is important to mitigate the ecological crisis and protect biodiversity for future generations. The year 2030 is the deadline for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which is only possible through the deployment of evidence-based land restoration designed to deliver multiple benefits. Delay is no longer an option: the vital role of land as an effective carbon sink is rapidly diminishing.

According to the UNCCD, land restoration is a multi-benefit strategy that creates jobs, generates prosperity, and helps build the resilience of communities and ecosystems to climate change, drought, floods, fires and other natural disasters. It removes carbon from the atmosphere, improves water quantity and quality, and expands habitats for wildlife. Land restoration can also be part of a coordinated effort to accelerate the transition to a circular economy and significantly reduce pollution and waste generation.

Working on ecosystem restoration at a national workshop Désertif'actions 2022

Question to be addressed: How does agroecology contribute to the regeneration of degraded ecosystems and the conservation of intact ecosystems?

Learn more about ecosystem restoration:

- [The site of the decade](#)
- [The UNEP website](#)