



Briefing on the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) to the Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Implementation Progress and Flagship Initiatives

14 December 2021

Led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration \(2021-2030\)](#) continues to build a strong, broad-based global movement to ramp up restoration and put the world on track for a sustainable future. Successfully [launched](#) on [World Environment Day](#), 5 June 2021, the UN decade [launch week](#) included more than 50 events held across the globe by 41 partners, featuring over 300 inspiring speakers, from Ministers and CEOs to youth leaders, indigenous activists, and musicians. These celebrations mobilized hundreds of millions of people to *'prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide'*.

Since the last briefing to the CPR in May 2021, we have seen important progress of the UN Decade with a revised [partnership framework](#) and growing [partner network](#) of now over 90 organizations, a new Action plan to concretize the UN Decade's [strategy](#), and the continued work of the UN Decade's [Task Forces](#) of Best Practices, Finance, Monitoring, Science and Youth bringing together over 500 experts. [The Monitoring Task Force](#) brings together experts from 100 organisations to develop the [Framework for Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring](#), a platform which will enable transparent monitoring and reporting of the progress of restoration throughout the duration of the UN Decade by providing monitoring tools and geospatial information related to ecosystems. The UN Decade is guided by an [Advisory board](#) of 25 outstanding individuals offering relevant perspectives and different schools of thought in response to implementation challenges. Support has also come from major media houses, mainstream production film-makers, street artists, musicians and many more in celebrating the promise of restoration and reaching hundreds of millions worldwide.

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is now entering the next implementation phase with the operationalization of the UN Decade's [Multi-Partner Trust Fund](#) (MPTF) through the first Executive Board meeting on 16 December 2021 and the launch of the nomination process for the **UN Decade's Flagship Initiatives**. UNEP and FAO would like to thank **Germany** as the first donor to contribute to the Fund in 2021, and **Denmark** for a senior secondment to UNEP's Ecosystems Division/UN Decade team, as well as a pledged contribution to the Fund in 2022. UNEP would also like to thank **Finland** for the generous contribution to the Healthy and Productive Ecosystems Sub-Programme in 2020, which enabled UNEP to launch the UN Decade successfully in 2021, develop the Multi-Partner Trust Fund, build the UN Decade partner network, and kick-start implementation of the UN Decade through UNEP's Regional Offices.

Member States will be invited to **nominate and submit Flagship Initiatives** which will accompany the UN Decade from the year **2022** onwards. The UN Decade [partner network](#) will support Government and Regional Organizations in developing countries.

What are Flagship Initiatives?

Restoration Flagship Initiatives of the UN Decade are the **first, best, or most promising examples of large-scale and long-term ecosystem restoration** in any country or region, embodying the [10 Restoration Principles of the UN Decade](#).

Flagships will enable the UN Decade to make Ecosystem Restoration **tangible** for a broad audience and **inspire** a global movement to *scale up efforts to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide and raise awareness of the importance of successful ecosystem restoration* ([A/RES/73/284](#)). These **geographic focused restoration areas** will be featured prominently on the UN Decade's [Digital Hub](#) and link with knowledge products, advocacy and communication tools, and support for convening dialogues with stakeholders to discuss results, lessons learned and coordination.

The Flagship Initiatives should represent an important, inspiring restoration area, and have wider **learning and restoration potential** and **scalability**. Flagships could facilitate coordination, learning, scaling and bring more attention to the area and the obstacles it faces; they should be strategic and innovative in nature and have the potential for triggering transformational change. UN Decade [partners](#) will also be encouraged to support Flagship Initiatives through their means.

How can Flagships be supported?

- 1. Selected Flagship Initiatives.** These are flagship Initiatives representing different ecosystems and geographic areas with proven initial restoration results, which can be promoted globally and bring lessons learned to a wider audience. They will be an important source of information and inspiration for stakeholders and inspire pride in citizens. The barriers encountered as well as successes achieved in such initiatives will be systematically analyzed and shared, enabling new initiatives to optimize their approaches based on worldwide experiences. They will be presented in the Secretary-General's report to the UN General Assembly at its 81st session and showcased at high-level political events such as Stockholm+50 and UN General Assembly. These Flagships will be featured prominently on the UN Decade [website, in collaborations with media, artists and film-makers](#), and in events and reports, but UNEP or FAO will not be in a position to provide financial or technical support to these Flagships through the [Multi-Partner Trust Fund](#).
- 2. A subgroup of financially supported Flagship Initiatives.** From the above group, a limited number of Flagship Initiatives will be selected by FAO and UNEP where substantial activities on the ground can be supported directly through the [Multi-Partner Trust Fund](#) of the UN Decade, for example through technical assistance by Implementing Partners at country or regional level. **Only developing countries will be eligible**, based on available resources. Depending on the country and stakeholder demand and commitment, and on priorities of the [Multi-Partner Trust Fund](#), the interventions to support Flagship Initiatives could include strategic gap filling and the scaling up of dedicated Flagship Initiatives through a range of targeted interventions.

Nomination process

An **invitation to stakeholders in Member States** and regional organizations to propose Flagship Initiatives will be sent by the heads of the co-leading organizations, FAO and UNEP in the coming weeks with details on criteria and nomination process. The first selected Flagship Initiatives, if submitted before **31 March 2022**, will be presented concurrently with the opening week of the **77th session of the United Nations in 2022**.

Assessment of all received Flagship nominations will be carried out by the UN Decade's [Science Task Force](#) (led by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN) and the [Best Practices Task Force](#) (led by FAO) between **April and June 2022**, in consultation with the submitting entity and implementing partners. The final approval will be confirmed by UNEP and FAO. Approval of the selected sub-group of flagships receiving financial support by the [Multi-Partner Trust Fund](#) will be given by the Fund's Executive Board.

From 2022 onwards, the call/invitation will be repeated each year and might move to an open-ended call starting at the end of 2022.

More than one Flagship Initiative per country can be selected, but we will seek to ensure diversity of ecosystems and balance at global scale. Any proposal of a Flagship Initiative by a non-state actor will require endorsement by the Government(s) of the country/countries that the Flagship target(s).

Note: To secure a fast-track process for MPTF funding already available, a first group of 2-3 Flagships with support by the [Multi-Partner Trust Fund](#) will be directly proposed by the implementing partners, FAO and UNEP, in consultation with Regional Organizations and countries to the MPTF Executive Board for decision in its first meeting on 16 December 2021.