



IMPACT REPORT

JULY 2021 - JUNE 2022

CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL

Africa





**THANK YOU
FOR STANDING WITH
AFRICA'S NATURE &
PEOPLE!**





MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT



Michael O'Brien-Onyeka

I am excited to share this report that summarizes our key achievements for nature and people in Africa during the financial year ending June 2022. It also highlights a few of our priorities for the coming year.

In the face of the global climate crisis that is disproportionately impacting Africa, and rising poverty levels on the continent, protection, restoration and sustainable management of Africa's ecosystems at scale offers compelling solutions that are yet to be fully tapped. Robust action to halt and reverse the rapid loss and degradation of Africa's nature is therefore critical.

In this context, Conservation International's Africa Field Division is striving to scale up protection and restoration of the forests, rangelands and oceans that are essential for resilient livelihoods, biodiversity conservation, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

This year, we launched a new \$73.4 million project to boost protection of west Africa's largest remaining forests in Liberia, even as we look to restart our work within the Congo Basin, home to the planet's second largest tropical forests.

We are also scaling our rangeland restoration and community development work across southern and eastern Africa. Implementation of our largest rangelands project in Africa is underway in Botswana. Meanwhile, momentum is growing for our nascent oceans work in Africa. We recently led efforts to triple the size of a marine protected area in Madagascar, and secured funding to amplify our ocean conservation programs in Liberia.

As I transition out of Conservation International, I could not be more proud of the achievements of our teams across Africa and beyond! Let's keep up that spirit!



OUR AFRICA TARGETS



PROTECTING FORESTS AND MANGROVES FOR CLIMATE

Mitigate **.43Gt of Co2** emissions by protecting and restoring biodiversity and carbon rich forest and mangrove ecosystems and creating climate finance to sustain them



DOUBLING OCEAN PROTECTION IN AFRICA

Effectively protecting **2.5 million km²** of key coastal and marine habitats in West and Southern Africa and the Western Indian Ocean to continue to provide benefits such as food, climate stability and healthy ecosystems



DEVELOPING PLANET POSITIVE ECONOMIES FOR AFRICA'S RANGELANDS

Transform **20M hectares** of globally important but degraded rangelands in East and Southern Africa to a planet-positive model that produces lasting conservation results, restored ecosystems, improved livelihoods and sustained economic development



HIGHLIGHTS OF SUCCESSES



PROTECTING FORESTS AND MANGROVES FOR CLIMATE

- **Contributed to deforestation reductions** within two key protected areas in Madagascar by between 55%-71% in 2021 compared to 2020.
- Finalized key processes for the **gazettement of a 25,000-hectare protected area** in Liberia to conserve mangrove-rich coastal wetlands.



DOUBLING OCEAN PROTECTION IN AFRICA

- Led efforts to **expand the Seven Bays Marine Corridor, a Marine Protected Area in Madagascar**, from 36,000 ha to 113,000 ha.
- **Generated foundational research** on biodiversity, blue economy, plastic pollution and gender that will inform ocean conservation in Liberia.



DEVELOPING PLANET POSITIVE ECONOMIES FOR AFRICA'S RANGELANDS

- Facilitated market access that **generated US\$1.6 million for 1839 rural farmers in South Africa** who are implementing regenerative livestock and rangeland management.
- **Invested nearly \$1 million into two enterprises** that are contributing to rangeland restoration and improved livelihoods in South Africa and Kenya.



PROTECTING FORESTS & MANGROVES FOR CLIMATE



© BENJAMIN DRUMMOND

Deforestation Dips in Madagascar Key Forest Regions

Conservation International-Madagascar contributed to **deforestation reductions of between 55% to 71%** in 2021 within two protected areas it manages. The Ankeniheny-Zahamena Corridor (CAZ) and Ambositra-Vondrozo-Corridor (COFAV), which host some of the country's last remaining tropical forests, recorded deforestation rates of 0.8% and 0.5% respectively in 2021 compared to 2.78% and 1.12% in 2020. This was partly due to enhanced community forest patrols, use of drones, and sustainable agriculture support. In a country that has experienced high deforestation rates due to slash and burn farming, this outcome is encouraging.



Local community members employed as forest patrollers to prevent and stop illegal activities in forests. ©CI Madagascar

Mangrove Restoration in Madagascar

To restore degraded mangroves in the Seven Bays Marine Corridor, a Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Madagascar, Conservation International (CI)-Madagascar and partners **planted at least 120,000 mangrove propagules**. This will regenerate nursery and shelter areas for fish and other biodiversity. It will also shield communities from heightening storms due to climate change. The MPA, which CI Madagascar is co-managing with local communities, hosts the bulk of mangroves in the country's east coast.



Mapping Liberia's Forests To Support Conservation

Conservation International (CI), US space agency NASA, and the Government of Liberia developed **the first high-resolution map of Liberia's forests and other ecosystems**, and how they have changed over time. The map and accompanying data is empowering policy and decision makers to better value, conserve and sustainably manage the country's ecosystems amid the urgent need for socioeconomic development and poverty reduction. Liberia hosts most of the remaining tropical forests of West Africa.



CI Liberia Country Director Dr. Peter Mulbah (left) handing over the map to President George Weah. Photo © Berexford Jallah

Securing Mangrove-Rich Wetlands in Liberia

Conservation International-Liberia, government agencies, and local communities have concluded key steps towards the **gazettement of a new 25,000-hectare protected area** to conserve the Marshall Wetlands. These include conducting biological, ecological and socioeconomic assessments, protected area mapping and demarcation, and community engagements. The gazettement documents will soon be submitted to the government for consideration and final approval. Dominated by mangroves and rich in biodiversity, the wetlands provide food, building materials and other vital benefits to locals.



Photo © David Diggs

New Oil Palm Strategy to Tackle Forest Loss in Liberia

Conservation International-Liberia and partners played key roles in the development of **Liberia's new Oil Palm Strategy** that will inform the sustainable and inclusive development of the country's nascent oil palm sector. Oil palm has the potential of driving economic development and lifting many Liberians out of poverty, but may lead to significant deforestation if not managed well. The strategy provides the framework for deforestation-free palm oil, and maximizing benefits to local communities.



Photo © Rob McNeil



Carbon Offsets Protect Kenya's Chyulu Hills Forests

Funds raised from the Chyulu Hills carbon offset project hired 88 additional forest and wildlife rangers, constructed 240 kilometres of fire breaks, restored 50 hectares of forests, and bought 930 beehives to support livelihoods of local communities. It also provided \$158,000 of bursaries to school children. These measures are helping to **ease pressure on the Chyulu cloud forests**, which are critical for carbon storage, sheltering biodiversity and providing water to millions of people and wildlife.



Photos © Charlie Shoemaker & the Chyulu Carbon Project

Priorities for our Africa Forests Program (2022-2023)

- Implement a new **\$73.4 million project to protect forests** and boost sustainable agricultural production in northwest Liberia, home to west Africa's largest forest blocks.
- **Quantify the contributions of Liberia's mangrove** ecosystems to the country's economy to build the case for their conservation.
- Lobby for the **gazettement of a 25,000-hectare Protected Area** to conserve Liberia's Marshall coastal wetlands.
- **Drive down deforestation** further in Madagascar's last-remaining tropical forests.
- **Support Kenya to conserve forests** by maximizing opportunities in the United Nations framework of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+).
- **Restart our forest program within the Congo Basin**, home the planet's second largest tropical forests.



Photo © Joel Vodell



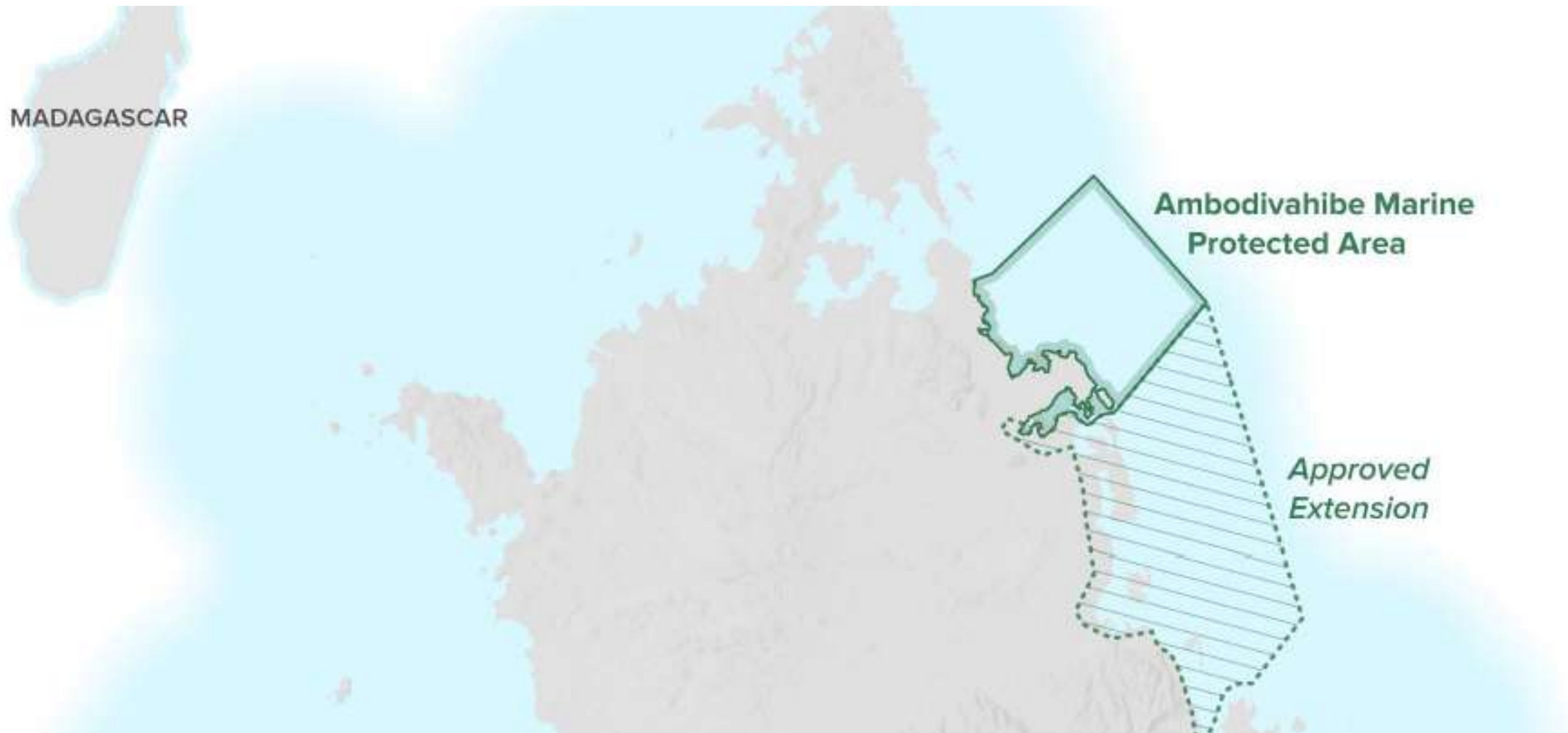
DOUBLING OCEAN AND COASTAL PROTECTION

Photo © F. Mira



Expansion of Madagascar's Seven Bays Marine Corridor

Conservation International (CI)-Madagascar and local communities led efforts to secure government approval to **expand the Seven Bays Marine Corridor from 36,000 hectares (nearly 89,000 acres) to 113,000 ha (279,000 acres)**. This followed requests by a growing number of communities to be part of the MPA (previously named Ambodivahibe) after seeing its benefits to local livelihoods. This development energizes our efforts to support Madagascar's plan to expand national MPA coverage tenfold.



Turning the Tide against Marine Plastic Pollution in Liberia

With plastic pollution increasingly harming Liberia’s marine ecosystems, a campaign by Conservation International-Liberia and partners is helping to raise awareness and galvanize action against problematic plastics. The campaign has included beach cleanups, community engagements and media publicity. CI Liberia also provided technical support to the Government of Liberia to endorse a recent United Nations resolution to forge a global, legally-binding treaty on plastic pollution.



Photo © Mike Olendo

Science to Drive Ocean Conservation in Liberia

Conservation International-Liberia has produced a range of **comprehensive baseline research studies that are informing the country's ocean management and policy long into the future.** The studies cover biodiversity, blue economy, marine plastic pollution, artisanal fisheries, and gender and conflict within coastal communities. In a country where dearth of data impedes effective, evidence-based conservation, the studies are critical.



Photo © Trond Larsen

Priorities for our Africa Oceans Program (2022-2023)

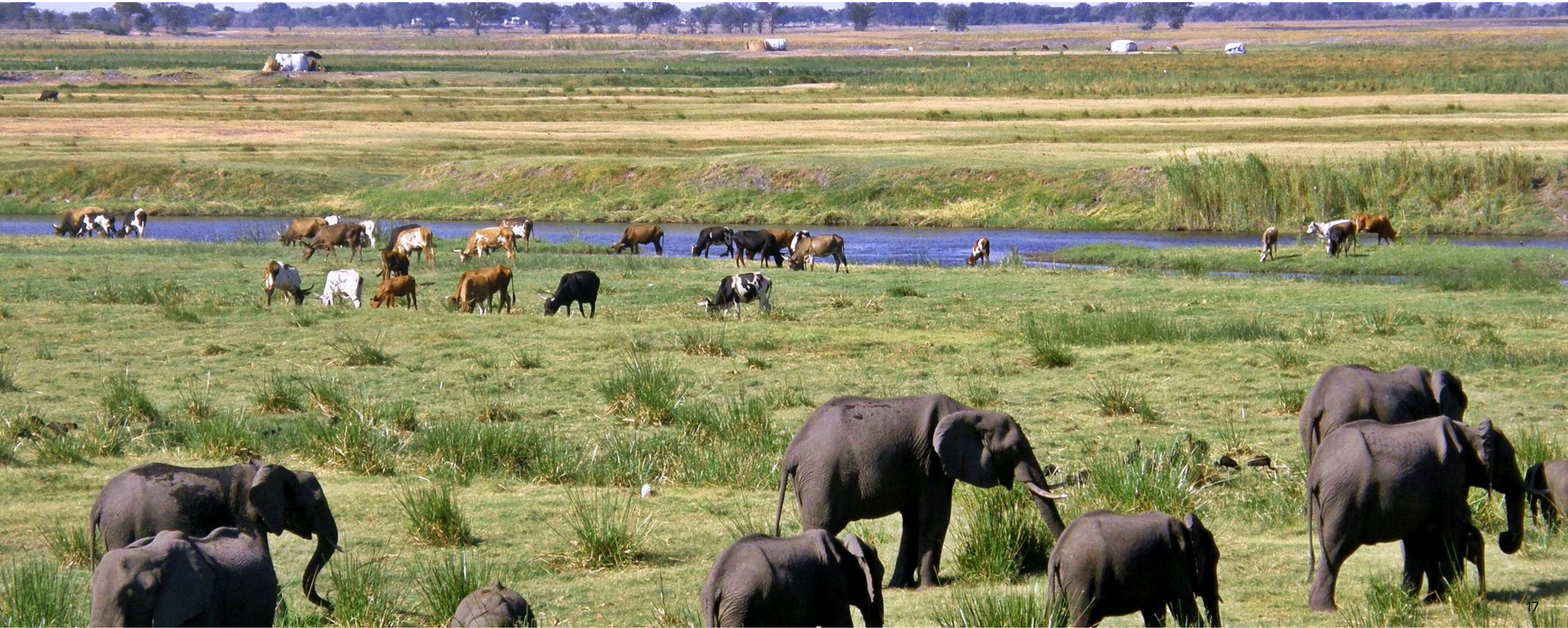
- Develop a **new strategy** to guide our growing ocean conservation work in Africa.
- **Expand ocean conservation** and sustainable blue economy in Liberia through our Blue Oceans program.
- Improve the production, sustainability and rights of **artisanal fisherfolk** in Madagascar and Liberia.
- Advocate and provide technical support for **policies to address marine plastic pollution in Liberia.**
- Expand ocean protection in the **Western Indian Ocean** via the Blue Nature Alliance.
- Lobby the South African government to **commit to the protection of 30 percent of the country's oceans.**



Photo © Johnson Rakotoniana



RESTORING RANGELANDS AND ECONOMIES



More Rangelands Under Improved Management

Our teams have **improved the management of 661,900 hectares of communal rangelands** across 11 sites in 5 countries. This is after engaging and supporting more than 4,000 farmers to implement regenerative livestock and rangeland management practices such as planned livestock grazing and corralling. These practices help restore vegetation cover and carbon storage. They also improve animal health and farmer incomes. This work is in line with our vision to restore Africa's degraded communal rangelands.



Photo © CSA

Expanding Mobile Auctions To Support Rangeland Restoration

Conservation International–South Africa (CSA) and affiliated social enterprise partner **facilitated mobile livestock auctions for over 1800 farmers within our priority communal rangelands netting them US\$1.6 million.** This market access support is provided to partner farmers implementing sustainable livestock and rangeland management. Such auctions are boosting livelihoods and providing strong incentives for improved rangeland stewardship among farmers.



Training & Deployment of Professional Herders

Skilled livestock herders (dubbed ecorangers) are at the heart of our work to restore degraded communal rangelands. Using science and indigenous knowledge, we train them to support partner communities to manage their livestock and rangelands optimally to reverse degradation, biodiversity and carbon loss. We recently **trained and deployed an additional 200 professional herders and 70 volunteer herders** in key sites in South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia. More will be trained in 2022.



Clearing Alien Trees That Degrade Rangelands

Conservation International-South Africa (CSA) has heightened efforts against alien invasive trees that are depleting water within vital grasslands. In collaboration with the Presidency and the South African National Biodiversity Institute, CSA has rid **2,310 hectares** of communal rangelands in the Umzimvubu Catchment of the alien species. This initiative created 770 local jobs, and demonstrates restoring rangeland health can be an avenue for delivering economic benefits to rural communities.



Photo © CSA



Photo © Trond Larsen

Creating Rangeland Jobs for Youth

Conservation International-South Africa (CSA) has **supported at least 700 youths, including girls, to gain valuable job skills and experience** related to rangeland restoration, climate resilience, and ecotourism. Some of the youth are now in permanent positions within CSA and elsewhere. This initiative is being implemented under the Youth Employment Service, a government internship program sponsored by the private sector. It is contributing to job creation and poverty alleviation within communal rangelands.



Innovative Wildlife Conservancies Fund Wins Award

Conservation International's African Conservancies Fund (ACF) that provided emergency \$2 million lifeline to wildlife conservancies in Kenya's Mara region at the height of the pandemic-related tourism crash was feted with a global award. After demonstrating success in Kenya, the fund aims to invest \$50 million in additional conservancies across Africa over five years. It is also supporting conservancies to develop carbon offset projects to diversify their income. [Read more](#)



Investing in Rangeland-Friendly Enterprises

A \$950,000 investment by our impact investing fund [Conservation International Ventures](#) (CiV) is enabling two enterprises to boost their impact for nature and people within our priority rangeland landscapes. One of them is **Nambu**, a South African insect protein company that uses Black Soldier Fly farming to process organic waste into high-value, biodiversity-friendly animal feed. The other is **Angama**, a tourism operator looking to develop a tourist lodge to harness luxury ecotourism to conserve an important wildlife corridor in Kenya, and improve indigenous livelihoods.



Nambu investment: \$450,000



Angama investment: \$500,000

Restoration of Degraded Rangelands in Chyulu Hills

Vegetation is regenerating well across 3000 hectares (7413 acres) of degraded rangelands in Kenya's Chyulu Hills. This follows the digging of nearly 9000 bunds (shallow pits) to maximize rainwater retention, and limit soil erosion. This work is not only restoring rangelands but also the hopes of Indigenous communities of seeing their grasslands green again. It demonstrates that assisted natural regeneration method can deliver results. Next step? Extend restoration work to 11,000 ha in 2022/23.



Our Indigenous Women Fellow Wins Global Award

Conservation International Indigenous Women Fellow and Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) Peace Coordinator **Josephine Ekiru** won the **U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) Women Building Peace Award**. She is among the first women leaders who are successfully promoting peace within community conservancies in northern Kenya where conflicts contribute to significant biodiversity loss and poverty. [Read more](#)



Photo: © NRT

Mentor Teachers Supporting Next Generation of Women Leaders

Amid high school dropout rates due to early marriages and other cultural norms, **23 mentor teachers** that Conservation International and the Northern Rangelands Trust recruited and placed in schools in community conservancies in northern and coastal Kenya **are helping to keep girls in schools**. These girls have the potential of being the next generation of women leaders in the region, and contributing to effective nature conservation and livelihood improvement.



Photo: © Jessica Baillie

New Science to Advance Sustainable Rangeland Management

Our scientists have co-authored six peer-reviewed, open-access publications that have **filled vital knowledge gaps** on rangeland, livestock and wildlife management in Africa. More research studies are in the pipeline.

- Mapping the soil organic carbon stocks and trends in South Africa. [Link](#)
- The effects of short-duration kraaling (corralling) in a mesic grassland. [Link](#)
- The impact of fire and herbivores on soil arthropods ([Link](#)) and on soil fungi and bacteria in savannas. ([Link](#))
- The effect of livestock grazing frequency and severity on plant productivity in an Eastern Cape grassland. [Link](#)
- The ‘Holistic Management’ approach to rangeland stewardship. [Link](#)
- A community-based approach to addressing illegal wildlife trade in northern Botswana. [Link](#)



Priorities for Our Africa's Rangelands (2022-2023)

- Implementation of a **\$97.6 million project in Botswana** to boost climate adaptation and livelihoods via restoration of degraded communal rangelands.
- **Piloting our Herding for Health (H4H) rangeland restoration and community development program** to new sites in Mozambique, Zambia and Madagascar.
- Accelerate implementation of the **€11.6 million (\$11.5 million) project** to conserve 1 million hectares of habitats, and directly benefit 30,000 people in South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- **\$30 million investment by our African Conservancies Fund** to support wildlife conservation and livelihoods in Kenya and southern Africa.
- Finalizing **South Africa's first rangeland carbon study** that focuses on the role of planned livestock grazing, fire and changed herd structure on rangeland soil carbon.
- Implement a key component of a **\$34.5 million project** to reduce the cost of drought emergencies in Kenya's rangelands.

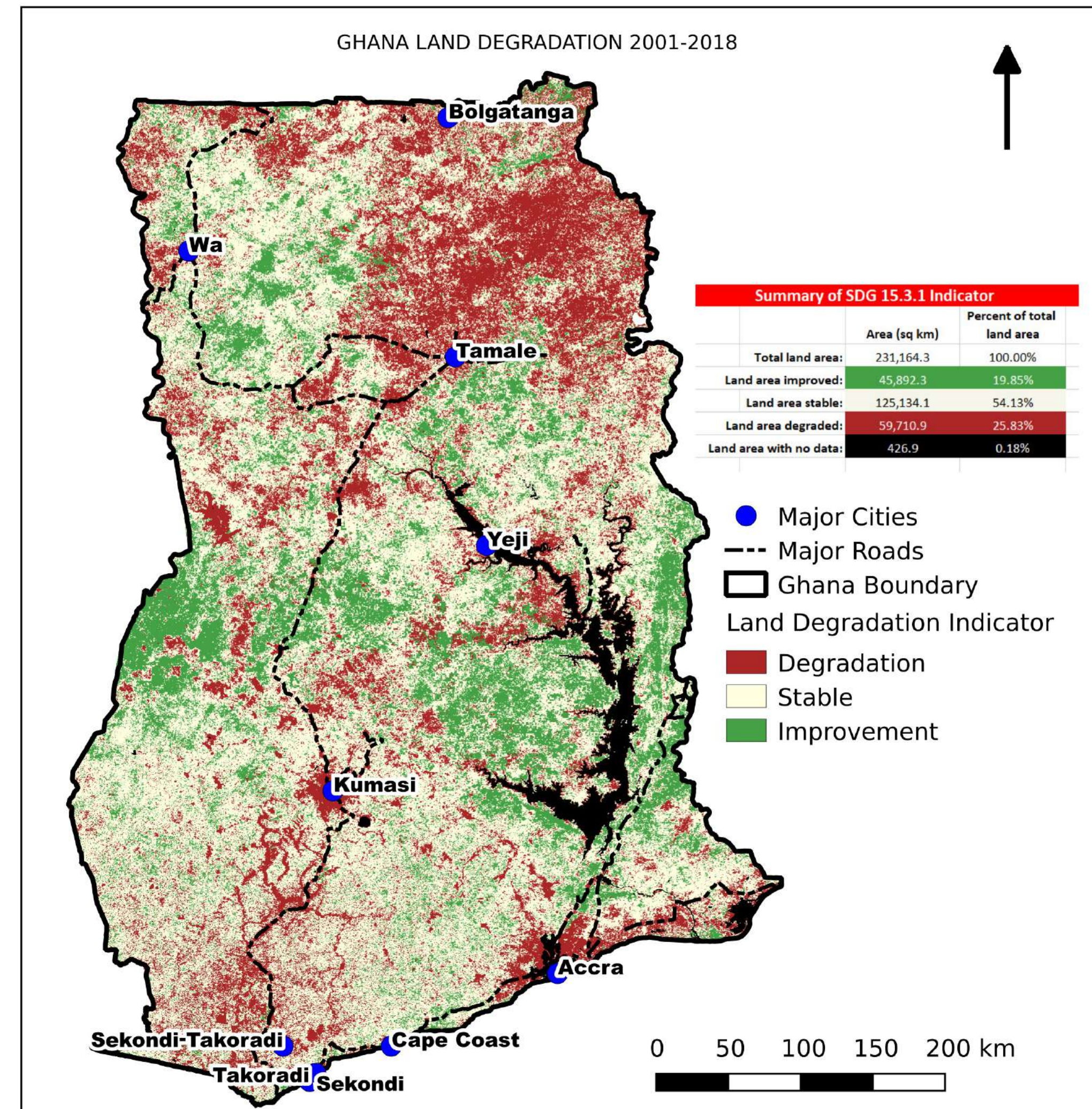


Our staff collecting soil samples for South Africa's first rangeland carbon study.

Photo: © Heidi-Jayne Hawkins

Other Key Impacts Across Africa

- Climate Action Monitoring:** Training of technical teams in Rwanda, Seychelles, Zambia, Comoros, and Eritrea on greenhouse gas emissions data management, climate monitoring and reporting.
- Combating land degradation:** Developed high resolution maps for monitoring land degradation for Kenya, Sierra Leone and Ghana to support efforts to halt and reverse land degradation. (See map on the right).
- Sustainable Aquaculture:** Good progress made in developing Kenya's first aquaculture data platform. This will contribute to boosting production and sustainability of Kenya's aquaculture sub-sector. Government, civil society and private sector are contributing data to the platform.
- Food Security:** Trained Monitoring and Evaluation teams in 12 African countries to support building of resilient and sustainable food systems through effective, science-based monitoring tools.
- Freshwater Conservation:** Completed dialogues and surveys to inform the creation of community conservation areas in Kenya's Lake Victoria to restore native fish species and boost livelihoods.



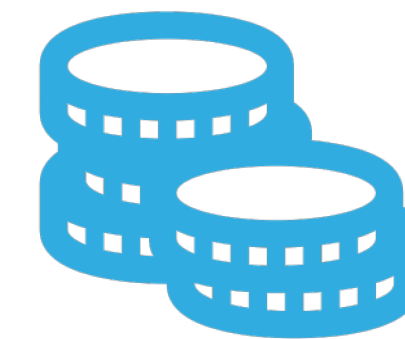
STRENGTHENING INTERNAL CAPACITY FOR IMPACT



Recruited key staff including Leads for CI Kenya, Program Delivery & Impact, Oceans, Restoration, Indigenous Peoples and Carbon.



Formed a **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) special committee** to drive DE&I agenda in line with organizational strategy.



Successfully transitioned to a **new budgeting system** to enhance financial efficiency and program delivery.



Developed technologies and resources to support optimal staff productivity, collaboration, and wellbeing within the context of flexible and remote working.



Created a **Conservation Science and Impact Unit** to effectively track program outcomes and impacts across Africa.



Strengthened internal mechanisms to **advance rights** of Indigenous communities, women, and other project partners.



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