

2021 - 2030 DECADE ON ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION LAUNCHED BY THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

In March 2019, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 2021–2030 as the [United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#).

The aim of the [UNGA Resolution](#), promoted by over 70 countries, is supporting and scaling up efforts to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration unites the world behind this common goal: preventing, halting and reversing the degradation of ecosystems worldwide for the benefit of people and nature. Forests, grasslands, croplands, wetlands, savannahs, other terrestrial and inland water ecosystems, marine and coastal ecosystems and urban environments need some level of protection and restoration to achieve global goals, because of the numerous and varied causes of degradation.

The Resolution stresses that ecosystem restoration and conservation contribute to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as other related United Nations major outcome documents and multilateral environmental agreements, including the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) are tasked to lead the implementation of the Decade.

The official launch of the UN Decade will take place with the next *World Environment Day 2021* (on June 5), taking advantage of this worldwide celebrated event as an opportunity to reach and motivate the widest range of actors to get involved. Meanwhile, the official website of the UN Decade [invites all interested actors to join the movement *Generation Restoration*](#) and sign-up to share latest updates, stories, news and opportunities concerning the Decade.

UN Member States decided to implement a Decade on Ecosystem Restoration to ensure that healthy ecosystems play a critical role towards achieving the SDGs by 2030. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development seeks to end poverty, conserve biodiversity, combat climate change and improve livelihoods for everyone, everywhere. However, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are unlikely to be met unless ecosystem degradation is stopped and ecosystem restoration is undertaken at the immense scale of hundreds of millions of hectares globally.

The UN Decade highlights that restoring damaged ecosystems is an efficient and cost-effective way people can work with nature [to address the most pressing challenges humanity is facing today](#):

- Healthy ecosystems such as forests, mangroves and peatlands, act as carbon sinks, absorbing up to one third of CO₂ emissions.



- Healthy soils can store more nutrients and produce higher quality plants, allowing the world to feed our growing population - 9 billion people expected by 2050 - without cutting down more forests.
- Thriving ecosystems give shelter to a wide variety of wildlife. By protecting and restoring them, we can help save the 1 million animal and plant species currently threatened with extinction.
- Restoring 350 million hectares of degraded landscapes by 2030 presents a boost to rural economies - worth US\$9 trillion in ecosystem services - and contributes to alleviate poverty.
- Restoring coastal and marine ecosystems helps protect and bring back some of the richest biodiversity hotspots on the Earth. These ecosystems also provide storm protection, fisheries and carbon storage.
- Between 20 and 50 percent of global blue carbon ecosystems (highly productive vegetated coastal ecosystems such as mangroves, salt marshes and seagrass beds) have already been converted or degraded, leading some analysts to conclude that restoring wetlands can offer 14 percent of the mitigation potential needed to limit global warming to 2°C.
- The area covered by blue carbon ecosystems is equivalent to only 1.5 percent of terrestrial forest cover, yet their loss and degradation are equivalent to 8.4 percent of CO₂ emissions from terrestrial deforestation because of their high carbon stocks per hectare.
- Restoration includes measures to create green jobs, which is one of the key elements for building resilient societies post-COVID-19 global pandemic.



[The strategy of the UN Decade on ecosystem restoration](#) is the result of a global and open consultation process promoted by UNEP and FAO in 2019 and 2020, drawing more than 2,000 contributions from governments, organizations and others actors around the world. The strategy focuses on three pathways: building a global restoration movement; increasing political will and building the required technical and financial capacity for restoration at scale.

The resolution highlights that the challenge of the UN Decade can only be met if everyone come together to find viable and lasting solutions. The UN Decade will inspire and globally support governments, UN agencies, NGOs, civil society, private sector companies, indigenous peoples, farmers, women's groups, local communities and individuals to collaborate and develop the appropriate skillsets for catalyzing and successfully implementing restoration initiatives across the world. From the point of view of the actors who promote integrated and sustainable territorial development processes, the Decade offers a new important reference framework for protecting their natural resources and repairing degraded ecosystems for the benefit of people and nature.



The UN Decade website presents extensive information on contents, strategy, initiatives underway for its launch and indicates the ways to participate.



To know more

[UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration website](#)

[United Nations General Assembly Resolution](#)

[Types of ecosystem restoration](#)

[To join the movement *Generation Restoration*](#)



[UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration Strategy](#)

[About ecosystems in UN Environment website](#)

[UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration in FAO website](#)

[Ecosystem services and biodiversity in FAO website](#)

[Article in UN Environment website](#)

[World Environment Day 2021](#)

[UNEP-FAO Fact sheet](#)

