Forests4Future Ethiopia

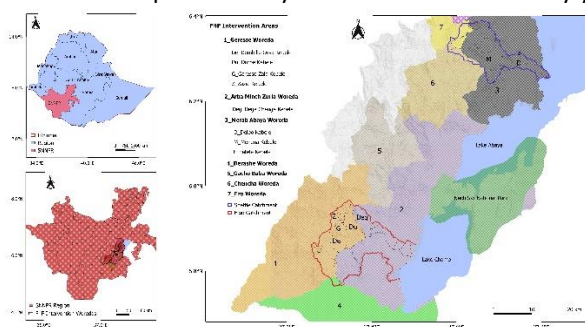## Giving forests a future

The challenge

Natural forest landscapes in Ethiopia have disappeared at a rapid rate: around the year 1900 an estimated 40% of the country's land area was covered by forests, while today the figure is roughly 2.7% to 4.0%, depending on sources and counting methods. The main cause of the decline in forest areas is the demand for firewood, which meets 96% of household energy requirements. Deforestation is usually followed by smallholders appropriating the land for farming.

Ethiopia is home to almost 110 million people, giving it the second largest population in Africa (after Nigeria), and numbers are still growing rapidly, rising by 3.02% per year according to the 2018 World Population Review. Eighty per cent of Ethiopians live in rural areas, with most of them making their living from subsistence farming. Agriculture accounts for almost half of GDP. Given the rate of population growth, the areas of land suitable for agricultural use have to feed increasing numbers of people.

However, at the same time these areas are being degraded as a result of land clearance, overgrazing and unsustainable arable farming in unsuitable locations. Loss of fertile soils, advancing desertification and the impacts of climate change are making productive land use ever more difficult. This applies first and foremost to Ethiopia's highlands, which are particularly severely affected by erosion and soil degradation.

Project name	Global project on forest landscape restoration and good governance in the forest sector in Ethiopia (Forests4Future)
Commisioned by	Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Lake Chamo and Lake Abaya catchment, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples´ Region
Lead executing agency	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Duration	01.2020 – 06.2026

As there are very few means of storing seasonal precipitation, farming in Ethiopia is mainly rain-fed, and, in order to increase output, farmers use land where levels of productivity are low. This accelerates land degradation and erosion, decreases crop yields and, in the long term, endangers Ethiopia's food security. The Ethiopian Government estimates that around 8 million hectares of land suffer from severe degradation and that some 30,000 hectares of fertile land is permanently lost to land erosion every year.

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Pilot implementation for bamboo processing: Green Jobs in Geresse, Ethiopia

Left picture: Assembled handicrafts, before the application of finishing material

Right picture: Assembling fruit tray and other products

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Extending to around 49,000 ha, the sub- catchments of Elgo River at Lake Chamo and the Lake Abaya, which includes the country package's target region, is typical of the state of natural resources in Ethiopia in general. The middle and upper slopes suffer from severe to extremely severe soil erosion, with the resulting sedimentation threatening to permanently destroy the ecological balance in Lake Chamo and Lake Abaya and hence also fish production, which is important for the economy. The process of selecting the project area considers nationwide studies on which areas should be prioritized for forest landscape restoration (FLR), and the explicit wishes of the Ethiopian Government.

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Our objectives

The Ethiopia country package is part of the global programme Forest Landscape Restoration and Good Governance in the Forest Sector of the BMZ. The Ethiopia country package pilots local measures for FLR and thus contributes to achieving the objectives of the global programme. The country package contributes to achievement of Ethiopia's goals in the areas of restoration and management of forest resources, prevention of soil erosion, employment promotion and the conservation of biodiversity, and supports Ethiopia's ambition of meeting its voluntary commitment to restore the country's forests within the context of the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100).

The objectives comprise the following fields of activity:

- Village- based land- use plans drawn up by local and regional actors including integrated approaches for the restoration and sustainable use of forest landscapes
- No visible soil erosion taking place with the area directly affected by FLR
- Selected households reached by FLR measures increase their average income from the use of tree-rich productive landscapes

Our approach

On behalf of and in close coordination with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Forests4Future project in Ethiopia is pursuing two main fields of action:

1. Implementing the restoration of forest landscapes using tried-and-tested scalable FLR measures
2. Enhancing the economic benefits of tree use and documenting land use rights by means of promoting forest-related value chains, which in turn creates economic incentives for further investment in FLR measures

In addition, it implements measures to improve local conditions and develop financing approaches.