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AFRICAN  
COMMUNITY



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# PROTECTING NATURAL CAPITAL IN EAST AFRICA

Action Plan  
February 2022

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## FRONT COVER PHOTO

Bull elephant, Tanzania. Credit: Matthew Erdman

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## ACRONYMS

AECF	African Enterprise Challenge Fund
AfDB	African Development Bank
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
EABC	East African Business Council
EAC	East African Community
EACTBCA	East African Community Transboundary Conservation Areas Network (proposed)
EADB	East African Development Bank
EATP	East African Tourism Platform
EFT	Ecological Fiscal Transfers
GCF	Green Climate Fund
IDA	International Development Association
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KTFC	Kenya Tourism Finance Corporation
LGTVP	LGT Venture Philanthropy Foundation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTB	Non-Tarif barriers
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
TWG	Technical Working Group

# RECOMMENDED ACTION PLAN: A FOCUS ON NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

## A. INTRODUCTION AND THEORY OF CHANGE

To implement this Action Plan will require stakeholders working across boundaries and sectors to protect their shared natural wealth and ecosystem services on which millions of people in the East African Community (EAC) region depend. That is why this Action Plan, as well as the assessment report on which it is based, were developed through a highly collaborative process that included input from stakeholders at the landscape, national, and regional levels. Policymakers from the EAC and all six Partner States; members of multiple private sector industries; community-based natural resource managers; and a range of civil society partners provided guidance from the initial stage of landscape prioritization to validation of the assessment findings to development of a recommended strategic approach and action plan for protecting natural capital in these four landscapes.

This multi-stakeholder coalition has converged around the importance of prioritizing nature-based solutions, defined by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as: “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems in ways that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, to provide both human well-being and biodiversity benefits.” This means investing in healthy ecosystems (or “natural infrastructure”) that people and businesses depend on, while preserving biodiversity. A shift toward nature-based solutions is critical to the success and sustainability of conservation in the region.

Each stakeholder group has a role to play in this Action Plan. There are potentially historic opportunities for the regional business community to play a leadership role, including building regional capacity to mobilize capital and increasing the pipeline of investable projects and businesses based on a nature-based solution model. For businesses to make these investments, policymakers need to create an enabling environment with regulatory frameworks that incentivize solutions that align fiscal measures with positive environmental outcomes. Private sector engagements through the East African Business Community (EABC) showed a need for increased awareness and capacity to invest in nature-based solutions. The EAC Secretariat and partner states will need to develop a program that would raise public and private sector awareness of novel land use models as viable alternatives to current unsustainable approaches. To increase the likelihood of commercial success, partner states and development partners need to create opportunities for the private sector and communities – including providing access to business incubators and accelerators, as well as replicable models that support early stage business development. And finally, funding institutions and development partners must build the capacity of a range of implementing partners to support this Action Plan.

## EAC ICONIC LANDSCAPES

The four EAC priority transboundary landscapes assessed (Figure 1) represent 60 percent of total natural capital in EAC countries and contain some of the region’s most important wildlife and wildlife habitats. The EAC and Partner States were aligned on their cultural importance, particularly as a tourism draw, and their economic importance, as they provide a range of ecosystem services on which millions of people and businesses rely.

The theory of change (Figure 2) shows how this strategic approach will lead to the desired outcomes, including protecting nature and the ecosystem services it provides and, ultimately, improve economic and human well-being in East Africa.

## The four transboundary landscapes assessed

(spanning Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda)



### Great East African Plains

Annual regional value: \$6.58 billion – More than half (\$4.61 billion) comes from nature’s regulation of soil, water, and carbon. Another \$1.2 billion comes from nature-based tourism.

**Social cost of carbon: Regional – \$787.9 million; Global – \$397.9 billion**

### Northern Savannas

Annual regional value: \$3.46 billion – At \$2.4 billion, water and sediment regulation are the most valuable services, underpinning livelihoods for millions. Water quality amelioration is also key to livelihoods, including fisheries.

**Social cost of carbon: Regional – \$260.1 million; Global – \$150 billion**

### Albertine Rift Forests

Annual regional value: \$1.19 billion – Erosion control (\$685.5 million) and materials harvested from nature (\$352.1 million) for building, sale, or energy represent the majority of value. Landscape is also a global conservation priority.

**Social cost of carbon: Regional – \$62.6 million; Global – \$42.2 billion**

### Ruweru-Mugesera-Akagera Wetlands

Annual regional value: \$64.4 million – Majority comes from provision of natural material for food, building, and other resources. At \$50.2 million, these services are 10 times more valuable than nature tourism at \$5.3 million.

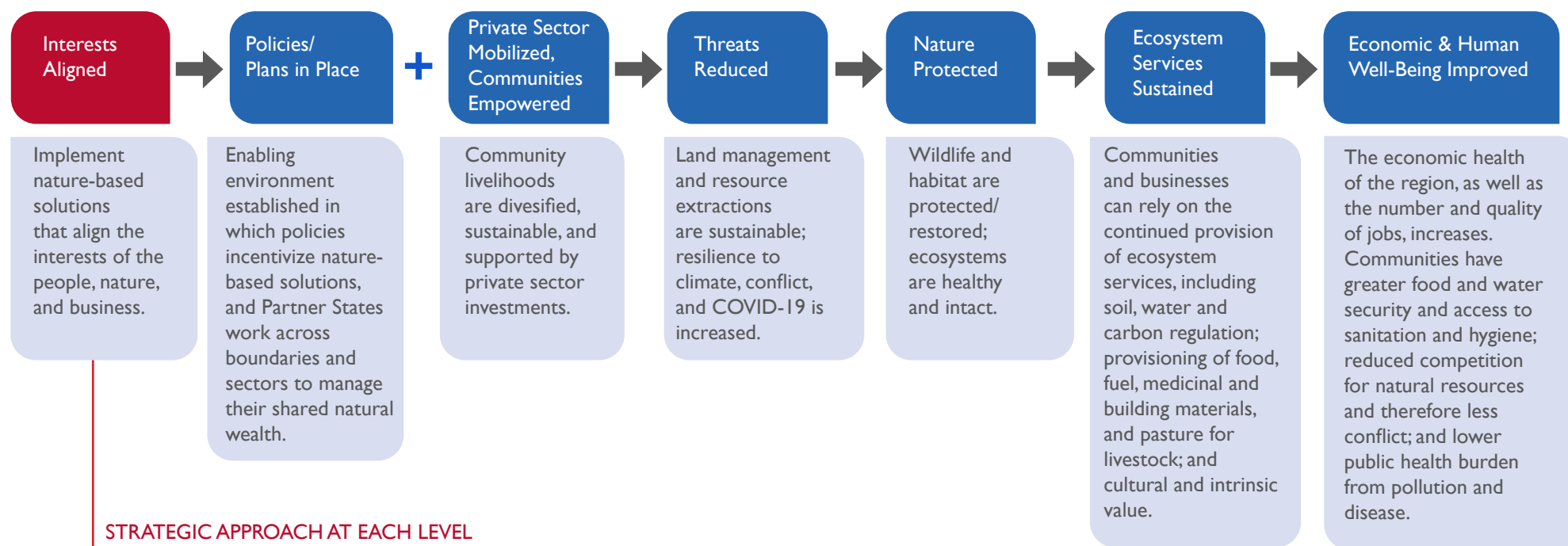
**Social cost of carbon: Regional – \$8.2 million; Global – \$7.3 billion**

All values in U.S. dollars

**Figure 1:** The four transboundary landscapes assessed

## THEORY OF CHANGE

This theory of change applies to all four landscapes, which face similar threats and share the need for solutions that benefit people, nature, and business.



The strategic approach during this theory of change – implementing nature-based solutions – will look different at regional/transboundary, national/sub-national, and community levels. The actions in the tables starting on the next page are organized around these three focal levels:

- **Regional/transboundary level**  
Harmonize transboundary management plans to capture interests of different Partner States and sectors for sustainable use of natural resources
- **National/sub-national level**  
Identify and enhance public-private partnerships that incentivize the integration of biodiversity conservation into sub-national development plans to conserve natural infrastructure.
- **Community level**  
Empower communities to manage natural resources through sustainable enterprises and activities that are supported by innovative private sector financing models.

**Figure 2:** Theory of change

## B. RECOMMENDED APPROACH AT THE REGIONAL/TRANSBOUNDARY LEVEL

### **Harmonize transboundary management plans to capture interests of different partner states and sectors for sustainable use of natural resources.**

Nature does not conform to boundaries, whether political or economic. Ecosystems span countries and impact multiple industry sectors. For example, private sectors like hydropower, mining, and agriculture may rely on a steady flow of water regulated by more than one country. The tourism sector is highly dependent on the existence of iconic species, such as wildebeests, which migrate across boundaries. Fragmented habitats, interrupted or reduced water flows, and blocked wildlife migratory routes impact large and small businesses across all Partner States. Small-scale fishers, farmers, and pastoralists, who make their living downstream, may be impacted by unsustainable upstream practices, such as deforestation, development, or land degradation. Natural resource managers working in and around transboundary protected areas and adjoining communities may be dependent on their counterparts in other countries to help conserve species and habitats. EAC Partner States may rely on intact transboundary wildlife habitats (e.g., forests, grasslands, and wetlands) to store enough carbon to prevent the costly impacts of climate change.

For this reason, valuing and protecting East Africa's natural capital must occur not only at the site or sectoral level, but at the landscape level. With landscape-level (and often, transboundary) thinking, stakeholders can begin to view themselves as part of an interconnected system and understand how they both impact and benefit from shared natural assets. Ultimately, stakeholders need to unite around shared solutions to better conserve and sustainably develop their inter-dependent resources.

Responsible, interconnected planning will bring people together, enhance transparency and efficiency, and drive access to opportunity. A transboundary approach will require four major steps to establish the necessary institutional mechanisms: (1) an initiation process, (2) establishing an institutional mechanism, (3) program realization, and (4) investments within the common management of the transboundary natural resources. Table I shows intended results and illustrative actions related to this strategic approach.

In December 2021, the EAC's multisectoral expert group, having adopted the Action Plan, recommended nature-based solutions in four pilot projects, one in each transboundary landscape. Those recommendations are presented in Table I as interim result I.5.



**Table 1:** Strategic approach and actions at the regional/transboundary level

Interim results	Illustrative actions	Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
I.1: A core project team from the EAC Secretariat and a technical working group from partner states is operational (process is initiated)	Integrate and institutionalize an existing technical working group, e.g., Transboundary Wildlife Conservation Areas Technical Working Group (TWG)	EAC; Partner States; IUCN	1	Short
	Strengthen coordination and feedback loops of the working group	EAC; Partner States; IUCN	1	Short
I.2: Harmonized transboundary plans developed through an inclusive process and operational (institutional mechanism is established)	Harmonize plans internally within countries' national and sub-national government departments and agencies. This can be catalyzed through the East African Community Transboundary Conservation Areas Network (EAC TBCA) currently under formation, with support from a broader network of experts and relevant stakeholders, modeled around the successful experience with the SADC Transfrontier Conservation Areas Network.	National governments and agencies; Sub-national governments and agencies; SADC Transfrontier Conservation Network; CMS; IUCN	1	Medium
	Harmonize plans (and planned activities) across countries	EAC; Partner States	1	Long
	Allocate funds to support plan implementation	Partner States; Development Partners	1	Long
I.3: Strategies for implementing plans between partner states harmonized and implemented (program is realized)	Create a Memorandum of Understanding on focused issues requiring cooperation	EAC; Partner States	2	Long
	Establish a joint management structure including a "local operational" joint management committee comprising locally-based institutions	EAC; National governments and agencies; Sub-national governments and agencies	2	Long

Interim results	Illustrative actions	Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
<b>I.4: Integrated programming enhanced (investment in place to support program sustainability)</b>	Sustainable tourism and conservation enterprises with cultural events to enhance cross border community security and livelihoods funded through public and private finance institutions e.g., Kenya Tourism Finance Corporation (KTFC), the East African Development Bank (EADB), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the International Development Association (IDA), and green bonds.	National and sub-national governments; Private sector; Development partners; Communities; EABC; EATP	2	Long
	Develop and implement “Pan-EAC” tourism itineraries through effective marketing and promotion strategies for cross border tourism as a single destination.	EAC; National governments; EABC, EATP	2	Long
	Expand the T12 Single Tourist Visa to all countries in the East Africa Community. Currently, this exists for Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda only.	EAC; National governments; EATP	2	Long
	Develop standards of operation to overcome destructive competition between national operators and ensure local business still benefit from “Pan-EAC” tourism	EAC; National governments; EATP	2	Long
	Solve challenges related to small tourism that is women-owned, youth-focused, and rural-based	National and sub-national governments; EATP; Development partners	2	Long
	Remove or simplify non-tariff barriers such as regulations on the movement of tour vehicles across borders, that impact tourism.	EAC; National governments; EATP	2	Long
	Operationalize improved regulation on movement of tour vehicles Actors:	National governments; EATP	2	Long
	Develop funding or co-funding mechanisms that facilitate access to finance for small tourism businesses (particularly youth and women-owned and rural-based).	National and sub-national governments; Development partners; Private sector	2	Long

Interim results	Illustrative actions	Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
<b>I.5: One priority pilot project in each transboundary landscape implemented</b>	Great East African Plains: Pasture restoration of at least 2,000 hectares to improve on sustainable livestock value chains and increase space for wildlife.	EAC; national and sub-national governments; development partners; private sector.	I	Medium
	Northern Savannas: Strengthen pastureland protection of about 2,000 hectares and support at least four alternative livelihood activities for the host communities.	EAC; national and sub-national governments; development partners; private sector.	I	Medium
	Albertine Rift Forests: Erosion control and landscape restoration of at least 2,000 hectares through reforestation and terracing.	EAC; national and sub-national governments; U.S. Forest Service Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) Program; other development partners; private sector.	I	Medium
	Rweru-Mugesera-Akagera Wetlands: Rehabilitation of the landscapes of about 2,000 hectares.	EAC; national and sub-national governments; development partners; private sector.	I	Medium

\* Priority: 1 = Action essential for success; 2 = Action important for success; 3 = Action useful for success

\*\* Time frame: Short (0-1 year); Medium (1-3 years); Long (3-5 years)

## C. RECOMMENDED APPROACH AT THE NATIONAL/SUB-NATIONAL LEVEL

### Identify and enhance public-private partnerships that incentivize the integration of biodiversity conservation into sub-national development plans to conserve natural infrastructure.

What is natural infrastructure and how does it impact our economy and livelihoods? Natural infrastructure is an ecosystem (forest, grassland, wetland, etc.) that is intentionally managed to provide multiple benefits for the environment and human well-being. Whether it is a healthy wetland that regulates water for communities or an intact forest that sequesters carbon to reduce the impact of climate change, conserving natural infrastructure supports livelihoods and should be as important as built infrastructure when it comes to investment.

One of nature's most valuable services is regulating water. Water is critical not only to life, but also to economic growth and environmental outcomes. Degradation of riparian forests and other natural habitats may lead to water risks, including lack of access, lack of availability, poor quality, or adverse events, such as droughts and floods. Such risks would affect several sectors, including agriculture, fisheries, livestock, hydropower, mining, and nature-based tourism. Failure to prevent the degradation of key ecosystems will affect communities' livelihoods and undermine business viability in the landscapes.

Under current policies, conservation of wildlife and habitat is viewed more as a cost than benefit to governments and businesses. This viewpoint perpetuates conservation investments that are not commensurate with the full value the wildlife economy provides in terms of employment, revenues, and ecosystem services.

One solution is to create an economic incentive for conservation and have the public sector develop a policy on **ecological fiscal transfers** (EFTs), which transfer public funds between governments within a country based on effective ecological management. Under EFTs, sub-national governments are compensated for the cost of conserving ecosystems that provide beneficial services to other communities and, in principle, can incentivize greater ecological conservation. Such a policy is in place in Uganda, where a **national biodiversity and ecosystem index** is in use to inform ecological fiscal transfers. Across East Africa, public policies that recognize the economic value of biodiversity-related resources and earmark a portion of income derived from these resources to conservation and sustainable management can safeguard the assets that support continued economic growth.

Other enabling policies can also support nature-based solutions by incentivizing companies whose business model works in balance with nature. For example, lowering the cost of capital, and therefore barriers to entry, can increase conservation-friendly investment. Integration of biodiversity into sub-national development actions will require five major steps: (1) a shift in investment decisions (2) a revolution in planning, (3) harnessing private sector resilience, (4) a revolution in understanding among all stakeholders, and (5) an implementation strategy. Table 2 shows intended results and illustrative actions related to this strategic approach.

**Table 2:** Strategic approach and actions at the national/sub-national level

Interim results	Illustrative actions			Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
<b>2.1: Tools and strategies that ensure investment decisions support nature-based solutions developed and deployed (shift in investments initiated).</b>	National governments and international donors increase the amount of devolved funding to local actors to identify, prioritize, implement, and monitor nature based solutions, e.g., develop and implement a policy on ecological fiscal transfer that makes conservation indices part of the fiscal allocation formula			National government (financial authorities); Sub-national governments; Development partners	I	Long
	National governments develop policy interventions to lower the barriers and associated risks to investment in biodiversity-friendly sectors through de-risking of financial investments, e.g., where commercial finance is 'blended' with concessional and non-recoverable funding, or by incorporating support for project preparation and pipeline development (e.g., technical assistance)			Government (financial authorities); Development partners; Private sector	I	Long
<b>2.2: The target natural infrastructure appropriately valued and enabling conditions and policies in place (investment decisions and implementation solutions revolutionized)</b>	Identify a natural infrastructure, e.g., a wetland, grassland or forest, create a comprehensive case for investment			Government (multi-sectoral national and sub national) agencies; Private sector; Development partners	I	Short
	<b>Key landscape values:</b> Great East African Plains: \$3.2 billion/year in water flow regulation and erosion control. <i>Flow regulation to decline by 35% by 2050 under business-as-usual scenario.</i>	<b>Projections:</b> Change in water needs in the Mara River Basin from 30 Mm <sup>3</sup> (2013) to 2620 Mm <sup>3</sup> (2045)  Change in water needs in the Pangani River Basin from 1880 Mm <sup>3</sup> (2011) to 3250 Mm <sup>3</sup> (2060)	<b>Opportunities:</b> 1 Sustainable forestry (reforestation and afforestation) 2 Sustainable agriculture (climate smart) 3 Livestock value chain (reseeding of degraded grasslands and holistic management) 4 Sustainable ecotourism 5 Small hydros 6 Carbon sequestration payments	Sub-national governments; Water Resources Authority; Private sector; development partners, e.g., U.S. Forest Service PES Program		

Interim results	Illustrative actions			Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
<p>[Continued]</p> <p><b>2.2: The target natural infrastructure appropriately valued and enabling conditions and policies in place (investment decisions and implementation solutions revolutionized)</b></p>	<p><b>Key landscape values:</b> Nothern Savannas: \$2.4 billion/year in erosion control and water flow regulation.</p>	<p><b>Projections:</b> Projected increase in livestock numbers up to 224%. Increase in area under agriculture at 5.4ha/year</p>	<p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Disaster risk reduction from climate hazards around Mt Elgon through reforestation and climate smart agriculture. Upscale activities of the Livelihood Funds around Mt Elgon, carbon markets to complement community earnings.</li> <li>2. Holistic management practice for improved pasture and stock quality with private sector support of the beef value chain.</li> <li>3. Ecotourism in the Kidepo transboundary complex as a single market. Explore ecotourism funding through the public and private finance institutions e.g., KTFC Corporation, EADB, AfDB, IDA, and green bonds.</li> </ol>	<p>National governments and agencies; sub- national governments; EABC; EATP; The Livelihood FundDevelopment partners, e.g., U.S. Forest Service PES Program Communities</p>		

Interim results	Illustrative actions			Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
<p>[Continued]</p> <p><b>2.2: The target natural infrastructure appropriately valued and enabling conditions and policies in place (investment decisions and implementation solutions revolutionized)</b></p>	<p><b>Key landscape values:</b> Albertine Rift Forests: \$721.8 million/year in erosion control and crop pollination</p>	<p><b>Projections:</b> Increase in rate of deforestation leading to increasing levels of erosion with upto 6.5 million tons of sediments and 179,000 tons of phosphorous entering rivers and waterbodies annually.</p>	<p><b>Opportunities:</b> Support strategies related to PES for erosion and water quality control, with private sector investments in green infrastructure. Scale up ecotourism with support for community hospitality infrastructures funded through the public and private finance institutions.</p>	National governments and agencies; subnational governments; EABC; EATP; Development partners, e.g., U.S. Forest Service PES Program Communities	1	Long
	Rweru-Mugesera-Akagera wetlands: \$50 million/year in resource provision from harvests	Demand for papyrus to increase by 84% and that of fish by 113% by 2050.	Identify community priorities for sustainable use of wetland resources, coupled with private sector investment in sustainable aquaculture funded as a low-carbon and climate resilient development strategy.	National governments and agencies; subnational governments; EABC; EATP; Development partners, Communities	1	Long
	Plan and sequence investments to maximize social and economic returns, as well as increase benefits from interlinkages across sectors			Government (financial authorities); Private sector; Development partners	1	Medium
	Promote the preparation of viable, investment-ready, and high-impact projects			Sub-national government; Private sector; Development partners	1	Long
	Mainstream programs that demonstrate value and sustainability to private sector investments in the development plans of sub-national governments to support protection, restoration, and sustainable use of natural resources			Sub-national governments	2	Medium

Interim results	Illustrative actions	Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
<b>2.3: Policies and regulations that facilitate private sector-led natural resource management developed and implemented (private sector resilience harnessed)</b>	Build and roll out efficient and effective finance vehicles including domestic finance, blending public and commercial finance	National governments (financial authorities); Development partners	2	Long
<b>2.4: Awareness, capacity and skills of sub-national actors enhanced (understanding among actors revolutionized)</b>	Conduct awareness among all subnational actors on the interplay of various environmental disruptions from poor stewardship	Sub-national governments; Thought leaders; Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) Communities	2	Long
	Conduct training of subnational actors to implement plans related to the selected biodiversity enhancing programs, e.g., nature-based solutions in land use planning	National and sub-national governments; NGOs; Thought leaders	2	Long
	Create community awareness and develop local capacity as trainers to build knowledge and expertise about the value of ecosystems, and empower them as leaders to build their image and confidence in the eyes of other actors in the landscapes.	Sub-national governments; Development partners; NGOs;Thought leaders.	2	Long
<b>2.5: Plans are implemented and operational (implementation process)</b>	Plans are implemented and adaptively managed to achieve natural infrastructure and ecosystem service goals	Sub-national governments; Private sector; Communities	2	Long

\* Priority: 1 = Action essential for success; 2 = Action important for success; 3 = Action useful for success

\*\* Time frame: Short (0-1 year); Medium (1-3 years); Long (3-5 years)



## D. RECOMMENDED APPROACH AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

Interim results	Illustrative actions			Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
<b>3.1 Target area and enterprises co-identified by public and private sectors in an inclusive process involving communities (business context developed)</b>	Create a forum enabling direct interaction between different actors and demonstrating direct link between economic development and conservation.			National and sub-national governments; Private sector	I	Short
	Conduct feasibility studies to identify target products for private sector investment and business cases for nature-based solutions, and identify private sector financing mechanisms and markets			National and sub-national governments; Private sector; Thought leaders; Communities; Development partners	I	Medium
	Landscape	Recommended enterprises	Funding model			
	1 Great East African Plains 2 Northern Savannas	Work with the livestock supply chain actors to improve productivity through eco-friendly practices, such as sustainable silvo-pasture (combination of trees and livestock); with intermediate agriculture businesses, e.g., bee keeping, honey and wax production, and dairy to meet certification standards for sustainable production and link it to national buyers; carbon markets; and savings and loans.	1 <b>African Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF):</b> The Fund supports businesses to establish new activity or expand existing agricultural businesses across the value chain with rural households living on less than \$2 per day as target beneficiaries.  2 Reversing degradation and conserving grasslands through carbon markets, e.g., the <b>LTG Venture Philanthropy</b> program in the Masai Mara Ecosystem.			

Interim results	Illustrative actions			Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
<p>[Continued]</p> <p><b>3.1 Target area and enterprises co-identified by public and private sectors in an inclusive process involving communities (business context developed)</b></p>	<b>Landscape</b>	<b>Recommended enterprises</b>	<b>Funding model</b>	Governments (national and sub national); Private sector; Thought leaders; Communities; Development partners	1	medium
	3 Albertine Rift Forests 4 Mt Elgon	Work with the agriculture and dairy supply chain actors to improve productivity through eco-friendly practices, such as sustainable silvo-arable (trees grown in combination with agriculture on the same land); non-timber forest products; mushroom harvesting; apiary (honey production); renewable energy; rainwater harvesting; dairy; payments for ecosystem services; and savings and loans	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1 The Green Climate Fund (GCF)-private sector facility:</b> GCF is a global platform to respond to climate change by investing in low emission and climate-resilient development. It recently invested \$49.6 million in an initiative to strengthen adaptation and emission reduction through improved land management in Rwanda's tea farming region.</li> <li><b>2 Livelihood Funds:</b> These are impact investment funds designed to support the efforts of agricultural and rural communities to live in sustainable ecosystems which serve as the foundation for their food security and provide the necessary resources for their livelihoods.</li> <li><b>3 U.S. Forest Service PES Program</b></li> </ol>			
	(5) Rweru-Mugesera-Akagera wetlands	Work with the fisheries supply chain actors to improve productivity through eco-friendly practices, such as sustainable fisheries; eco-friendly fish processing; handicrafts; renewable energy; rainwater harvesting; eco- and cultural tourism; wetland banking; and savings and loans	AECF			
	Develop industry platforms to bring key actors together to hash out what they need to make sustainability profitable					

## **Empower communities to manage natural resources through sustainable enterprises and activities, supported by innovative private sector financing models.**

Many communities in the four priority transboundary landscapes occupy marginal lands, impacted by climate change and, more recently, COVID 19. These communities commonly rely on small-scale agriculture, pastoralism, fishing, or harvesting of resources from nature for livelihoods, and they have limited access to alternative sources of income. To improve both ecosystem and community resilience, it is critical to develop alternate and diversified livelihood opportunities. Enterprises must be nature-based and in conformity with community values. Benefits may include avoiding losses from environmental disasters (e.g., landslides, drought) and human-wildlife conflict, increased food and water security, and improved human well-being.

Climate change and human-driven threats to natural resources are also hindering operations and growth of the private sector by impacting every link in the supply chain. Nature-based solutions offer opportunities to transform the way partner states address key business and societal challenges. For example, the private sector can invest in sustainable and regenerative production systems, such as sustainable forestry and agriculture, to reduce pressure on natural ecosystems, while contributing to sustainable food innovation, circular bioeconomy, and green inclusive jobs.

However, these solutions require both public and private capital and direct participation of land and resource rights owners in all aspects of land use planning and management. As demonstrated in the first two recommended approaches, the public sector and development partners play a fundamental role in creating opportunities and demand for investment in nature-based solutions by developing revolutionary policies and regulations and creating an enabling environment for project development and scaling of successful models. This will provide opportunities for the private sector to invest in community-based natural resource management as a source of revenue, cost reduction, and enhanced reputation. Empowering communities through innovative private sector investments would follow a six-step strategy: (1) assessing the business context, (2) assessing the local context and engaging communities, (3) investing in capacity building, (4) setting parameters, (5) developing implementation models, and (6) measuring and communicating results. Table 3 shows intended results and illustrative actions related to this strategic approach.

**Table 3:** Strategic approach and actions at the community level

Interim results	Illustrative actions	Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
<b>3.2 Community acceptance secured (local context secured and community engaged)</b>	Create awareness and integrate indigenous and local knowledge in educating communities on the sustainable use and management of natural resources	Landowners (e.g., community members, private entities) and landowners' associations; Sub national governments; Private sector; NGOs	1	Long
	Strengthen land tenure and educate communities about resource rights and access by indigenous, local, and marginalized people.	National and sub-national governments and agencies, e.g., KWS, RDB, TAWA, UWA, etc.; NGOs; Thought leaders	1	Long
	Create community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) management committees	Landowners (e.g., community members, private entities) and landowners' associations; Sub national governments; NGOs	1	Medium
	Develop benefit sharing agreement	Sub-national governments; CBNRM Management Committees; Private sector	1	Medium
<b>3.3: Enterprises based on sustainable natural resource use and management developed and expanded (parameters developed)</b>	Develop business models and plans, market linkages, mechanism of return on investment to the conservation of biodiversity	Sub-national governments; Private sector; Development partners	1	Medium
	Set up community cooperatives as local level intermediaries for aggregating products and services, getting investment, finding markets, and distributing large payments or other services to the local level	Sub-national governments; CBNRM Management Committees;	2	Medium
	Enterprises are developed and expanded based on the improvement in these enabling conditions	Sub-national governments; Private sector; Development partners; communities	1	Medium
<b>3.4 Human and institutional competencies in nature-based solutions developed (capacity built)</b>	Prioritize development on the technical capacity of communities on governance and business. Ensure markets, traceability, and certification systems in place to generate revenues	Private sector; Development partners; community members	2	Medium
	Strengthen extension and advisory services	Sub-national governments; Community cooperatives	2	Medium

Interim results	Illustrative actions	Actors	Priority*	Time frame**
<b>3.5: Meaningful benefits realized by key stakeholders (implementation models in place)</b>	Benefits accrue from the enterprises and additional income from carbon credits or an alternative payment for ecosystem services scheme	CBNRM management committees; Governments (National and sub-national); Private sector; Development partners; Thought leaders	1	Long
	Market expansion by the private sector due to increased profitability	Governments (National and sub-national) and Agencies; Private sector	2	Long
<b>3.6: Communities' knowledge, attitudes and practices on conservation and sustainable natural resources use improved (results measured and communicated)</b>	Increase community awareness about practicing management of natural infrastructure for enterprise sustainability	CBNRM management committees; Sub-national governments; NGOs	1	Long
	CBNRM committees monitor and report illegal activities to authorities	CBNRM management committees	2	Long
	Community members comply with conservation agreements, sustainably harvest natural products, do not encroach on habitat in the buffer areas around target natural infrastructure, engage in habitat restoration programs, and where applicable, do not engage in retaliatory killings of wildlife	CBNRM management committees; Sub-national governments; Private sector	2	Long

\* Priority: 1 =Action essential for success; 2 = Action important for success; 3 = Action useful for success

\*\*Time frame: Short (0-1 year); Medium (1-3 years); Long (3-5 years)

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