



BONN CHALLENGE LATIN AMERICA, 2016

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REPORT
BONN CHALLENGE LATIN AMERICA, 2016

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Introduction

Landscape restoration seeks to reestablish ecosystem goods and services in different land uses, while enhancing livelihoods and building community resilience in social, economic, and environmental terms. This comprehensive approach provides a unique opportunity to bring together different international development agendas promoted by diverse cooperation agencies and multilateral organizations.

The Bonn Challenge thus makes a significant contribution to restoration. From its start in 2011, the Challenge has produced commitments to restore 150 million hectares by 2020, and 350 million hectares by the year 2030. By September 2016, 37 national commitments had already been made totaling 112.87 million hectares to be restored, demonstrating the growth of this initiative.

The Bonn Challenge has sparked efforts with high political value, where countries can present their commitments to contribute to climate change mitigation, without outside controls imposed upon them, in a format coherent with national capacity.

This initiative has held regional meetings in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, serving as a platform for international dialogue in which countries can share their progress and the challenges they have faced in restoration efforts, as well as lessons learned in the implementation of national programs.

The participants in the regional meeting held in El Salvador in 2015 identified the need to clarify and align goals for restoration with other global initiatives, build technical capacity for restoration, ensure financing for these actions, and develop appropriate monitoring systems.

The Bonn Challenge Latin America 2016, held in Panama, provides a series of reflections on the need to generate restoration efforts with a "human face", oriented to improving livelihoods and reducing risk for the most vulnerable communities. In this orientation, restoration requires an inter-sector approach, with inclusive and transparent dialogue mechanisms and funding from national budgets, private sector investments, and contributions from international cooperation.

The Bonn Challenge is a reality, and different national projects and programs are already underway in different countries, helping to reduce technical and financial gaps and producing positive results and impacts for the region. These actions range from identifying potential areas and priorities for restoration to implementing public policies that may include self-funded or internationally financed incentive programs.

This report marks the start of a new chapter, toward the Third Latin American Meeting of the Bonn Challenge in Honduras, 2017, where political commitments should continue to sustain improvements in the quality of life for inhabitants in the region.

Background

Evolution of the Bonn Challenge

In the first global workshop on the application of forest landscape restoration, held in Petropolis, Brazil in 2005 and organized jointly by the governments of Brazil and the United Kingdom, participants agreed on the Petropolis Challenge "to restore forest landscapes to the benefit of people and nature, and contribute to reversing the trends of forest loss and degradation". The key elements to face this challenge were to strengthen the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR) and build a learning network on restoration issues.

In November, 2009, a high-level roundtable on landscape restoration was organized in London by the government of the United Kingdom and the International Union for Conservation and Nature (IUCN) to bring together ministers and other representatives from governments, the private sector, indigenous peoples' organizations, and civil society to produce the London Challenge, which focused on topics of restoration and climate change, laying out a work plan for the GPFLR.

In February 2011, the United Nations Forum on Forests asked member states and others to build upon the work of the GPFLR and continue to develop and implement efforts for forest landscape restoration. The action on restoration contributes to the global objectives on forests passed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007.

In March 2015, the second conference for the Bonn Challenge was held to take stock of the progress made since the launch of the Bonn Challenge in 2011, to announce new commitments, policies, and other pertinent measures to deepen and strengthen forest landscape restoration around the world, and to explore opportunities to create and implement new and creative "partnerships for restoration implementation" using nationally-available resources without the imposition of external processes.

In August 2015, the first regional meeting was held – the Bonn Challenge Latin America – in El Salvador. This conference sought to promote restoration efforts in countries in the region and encourage parties to join the initiative by establishing local commitments. This would be done through an international platform for dialogue on topics such as capacity building, cooperation systems, and financing mechanisms for landscape restoration.

This meeting highlighted the need to foster capacity-building through South-South cooperation, including exchange of specialized knowledge and advice, building learning networks, developing technical instruments and tools, and taking advantage of experiences not only from countries in the region, but from Africa and Asia as well.

The **objectives** of the Bonn Challenge Latin America 2016 were:

1. **To promote building technical and scientific capacity** oriented to REDD+ activities and other associated initiatives that contribute to sustainable development with low emission of greenhouse gases and climate change resilience.
2. **To share experiences in Latin America on processes for the implementation** of initiatives and proposals for restoration, recovery, sustainable forest management and forest conservation that can be applied in Panama.
3. **To strengthen the bonds of bilateral cooperation** with the Government of Germany to undertake activities relative to reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest

degradation, increasing carbon fixing, forest conservation, and sustainable forest management (REDD+).

Global results

Through July, 2016, the Bonn Challenge has achieved 31 commitments from different countries to restore over 96.13 million hectares of degraded land. These countries include Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Rwanda, among others.

The Bonn Challenge Initiative

The Bonn Challenge is considered to be the largest global restoration initiative, and it has set a goal of restoring 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by the year 2020.

The Bonn Challenge was launched in September 2011, in a ministerial event organized by the Federal Republic of Germany and the IUCN, with support from the GPFLR.

This initiative was designed as a vehicle to implement several existing international commitments, particularly REDD+ objectives under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Aichi Target 15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), along with other instruments related to soil degradation.

Additionally, the New York Declaration on Forests, signed at the 2014 Climate Summit, has pushed global restoration efforts. This declaration was signed by over 100 governments, different civil society organizations, indigenous groups, and private companies. The declaration also included the Bonn Challenge target in its goals, and recognized the urgent need to extend the target further, requesting additional restoration of at least 200 million hectares by 2030.

Restoration is a core component of REDD+, and an essential part of any plan for sustainable and climate-smart agriculture. Restoration of arable land productivity and highly-degraded urban watersheds is a key element in the agenda for sustainable cities.

Additionally, restoration of degraded lands provides an opportunity to produce raw materials in an intelligent way, enabling supply chains free from deforestation and reducing pressure on the remaining forests.

Basic principles of forest landscape restoration

Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) is an approach to recover the ecological integrity of degraded land and improve human wellbeing through the creation of multi-functional restored landscapes. FLR enriches the more strictly-defined approaches of ecological restoration, forestation, and reforestation, by focusing on a mosaic of possible land uses and restoration interventions in order to bring multiple benefits for people and nature.

The following basic principles are key components for forest landscape restoration:

- Continuous learning and adaptation to local conditions will build resilience to future changes.
- Common concern is a convergent point for negotiation.
- Gaining multi-tier outcomes improves local and national interventions.
- Landscapes and their components have multiple uses and purposes, making them multifunctional; each of them holds different value for different stakeholders.
- Recognizing the concerns and aspirations of possible investors and stakeholders will foster participation and active negotiation.
- Transparency is at the foundation of trust. Transparency is achieved through a process of mutual understanding and by negotiating for the desired change.
- The rules for social outcomes and resource conservation must be clear as a basis for good management.
- Monitoring is necessary and must be participatory and user-friendly.
- Building the capacities of investors and stakeholders is essential for restoration continuity.

Being part of the Bonn Challenge

1. Countries, companies, communities, institutions, and other landowners or rights-holders for administration register their commitments to restoring degraded land before the GPFLR.
2. Before any contribution has been confirmed, the GPFLR, members, and other partners help to facilitate planning and implementation to ensure that the restoration will be successful, providing knowledge and support on restoration potential, and building political willingness or helping to catalyze the necessary funding.
3. The first step is an expression of interest to the GPFLR through its Secretariat and members, and an assessment of the alignment between a potential Bonn Challenge commitment and national or sub-national authorities and the principles of forest landscape restoration.
4. Next, a preparation and confirmation process is carried out for the contribution to the target, including a process to define the location, number of hectares, nature of the support from the stakeholders in the restoration initiative, and the restoration strategies.
5. This stage triggers a process to mobilize support to assess the restoration potential, implement the actions, and monitoring and evaluation by the GPFLR.

Bonn Challenge Latin America, 2016

The event **began** with remarks by the State Secretary of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety of Germany, Jochen Flasbarth, who presented a brief summary of how the Bonn Challenge initiative has strengthened with different commitments adopted since the year 2011.



Within the context of the progress made and interests in the region around restoration actions, the State Secretary reiterated Germany's support for the REDD+ Landscape II project, which functions under a Forest Landscape Restoration approach with a budget of six million euros to act in the region.

Continuing with the meeting, the Vice-Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources of El Salvador, Ángel Ibarra, presented the **main outcomes from the First Bonn Challenge Latin America meeting, held in El Salvador in 2015**. These outcomes included:

- The **incorporation of restoration actions** into the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies and National Restoration Programs in the region, which adopted synergistic approaches to mitigation and adaptation, and represent key instruments in national plans for vulnerability reduction, comprehensive water resource management, biodiversity conservation, and the fight against soil degradation and drought.
- The restoration initiatives from the participating countries **exceeded 10 million hectares** for the region, enhancing international-level actions as well.
- A platform was proposed for **South-South knowledge exchange and cooperation between countries in Latin America**, to share successful experiences and lessons learned, and foster technical cooperation and technology transfer.

Next, the Vice-Minister for Multilateral Affairs and Cooperation from Panama, María Luisa Navarro, gave opening remarks and **welcomed** the participants to the event, giving way to the presentation of

the commemorative coins for the event by the Minister of the Environment of Panama, Mirei Endara, to the German State Secretary, Jochen Flasbarth.

The Minister of the Environment of Panama, Mirei Endara, **thanked** participants for accompanying this dialogue platform that seeks to build toward the restoration of 150 million hectares of deforested and degraded land by the year 2020. Minister Endara also highlighted Panama's decision, given the large losses in forest coverage it has faced in recent years, to launch the "Alliance for One Million Hectares Reforested" initiative in 2015. This joint initiative between the national government, civil society, and private sector seeks to reforest degraded land across the country.

"...meetings such as this solidify our alliances, produce cooperation agreements, and bring the negotiations held at multinational forums toward implementation and the accomplishment of tangible actions..."

María Luisa Navarro, Vice-Minister for Multilateral Affairs and Cooperation of Panama



At the end of the Minister's remarks, the **official documentation for Panama's inclusion as a Bonn Challenge country** was presented to the Co-President of the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR), Peter Besseau. This brought the event's opening ceremony to a close.



The next session began with an **introductory presentation** by the Executive Secretary for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Braulio Dias. With this presentation, the Secretary clearly outlined the importance of the Bonn Challenge restoration target, especially as it relates to Aichi Biodiversity Target 15, which is essential in generating successful results by 2020.

After the remarks by the CBD Executive Secretary, a presentation on **Implementing the Challenge through a Regional Restoration Platform in Latin America** was given by Walter Vergara, a Forest and Climate Change Specialist at the World Resources Institute (WRI), who discussed the 20x20 Initiative, a restoration platform in Latin America that joins into the Bonn Challenge objective. One of the relevant aspects of the presentation was a discussion on the challenges for restoration, which include: *clarity in restoration goals, identifying priority areas and actions for restoration, information on successful practices and economic and environmental benefits of restoration, and barriers to private investments in restoration.*

This brought the introductory segment to a close, and led into the ministerial presentations.

Progress and Challenges in the Implementation of National Restoration Proposals in Latin America

The introductory presentations laid the groundwork for presentations on the current progress and challenges in each country. This space was moderated by the Minister of the Environment of Panama, Mirei Endara, and the Secretary of State from Germany, Jochen Flasbarth. Reports by country are listed below:

COSTA RICA has committed to rehabilitating one million hectares. To meet this goal, the country has drafted a Restoration Master Plan and has undertaken the "Green and Inclusive Landscapes" initiative. The objective of this initiative is to improve economic and environmental management in two priority landscapes that cover 20% of the national territory, helping to improve socio-economic management in the production areas by using an inter-sector approach. The country has sought a 100 million dollars' loan from the World Bank, along with 250 million dollars in national resources to fund this initiative.

Given the characteristics of the country, only 5% of restoration activities are exclusively for forest land, while the rest is oriented toward pasture land.

CUBA has not acquired commitments toward the Bonn Challenge. Nonetheless, the country is working on reforestation programs and managing 201 protected areas that cover 15% of the national territory. Government commitments include: increasing the designated national area under the category of protected area, updating the legislation on natural resources and the environment, and transform the use of renewable energies, scaling up from 3% to 25% of the national energy grid by 2030.

Among the strengths of the country include that environmental issues are addressed with a holistic vision and comprehensive regulations that can be updated with new concepts such as resilience building and early warning systems. The challenges that the country has includes rainwater harvesting, and the reversal of certain cultural and industrial factors to favor sustainable development.

The country presentation concluded with a recognition that natural resource conservation is a strategy to perpetuate wellbeing for future generations, and an invitation for the Bonn Challenge 2019 meeting to be held in Cuba.

EL SALVADOR is currently committed to restoring one million hectares, equivalent to 50% of the national territory, most of which (70%) is currently used for agriculture. Within the government administration, the topic of restoration has been included into the "Five-Year Development Plan", the "National Plan on Climate Change", and the "National Plan on Water Resources". Additionally, environmental issues are being addressed with an intergovernmental approach through the National Council on Environmental Sustainability and Vulnerability (CONASAV, by its acronym in Spanish), which includes the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, the Ministry of the Interior and Territorial Development, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Treasury, Vice-Ministry for Development Cooperation, National Administration of Sewers and Aqueducts, National Commission for Micro and Small Enterprise, Secretariat for Governance, and the Presidential Technical Secretariat, along with participants from the academic sector, municipal governments, business groups, and other relevant actors.

For landscape restoration, the country uses an adaptation-based approach for mitigation, which includes the implementation of agricultural and livestock best practices, sequencing of physical

infrastructure with national infrastructure, and the protection of critical ecosystems. On this last point, implementation of protection works for 65,000 hectares are planned for 2016-2017. Ecosystem and landscape restoration focuses on critical ecosystems (mangroves, hillsides, etc.), and on establishing multi-functional territories to improve social and environmental wellbeing, improving water resources and reducing the hydro-geological risks in certain regions of the country.

GUATEMALA has made a commitment to restore 1.5 million hectares. To meet this commitment, the country must invest approximately five billion dollars over the course of 30 years; 1.5 billion of this total will be used to strengthen public policy instruments such as environmental incentive programs for sustainable forest management. National efforts in Guatemala include the passage of the "Law to Promote Forest Establishment, Recovery, Restoration, Management, Production, and Protection in Guatemala (Probosque)".

The *Probosque* Law seeks to stimulate economic growth in rural areas through the recovery of goods and services from degraded lands, as well as improving the livelihoods of people who depend on the forest. This growth and recovery should be produced with forest incentives provided by the government. This law will receive 1.5% of the national budget for the next 30 years; additional participation and contribution from private initiatives and local governments will help to reach the goal.

GUINEA BISSAU has not acquired commitments toward the Bonn Challenge. Nonetheless, due to the loss of 50% of its forest coverage by 2011, driven by clandestine timber extraction and sale to China, the country declared a "no cutting" or "forest prohibition" for five years, and ordered the planting of 10 million trees through a series of stages funded with domestic resources.

HONDURAS has made a commitment to restore one million hectares. This commitment is coherent with national targets and the country plan. Honduras currently implements an approach for sustainable productive landscapes, with participation from different sectors of society under five criteria: biodiversity, water, resilience to natural disasters, participation of different stakeholder populations, and food security. The country highlighted its interest in protecting coastal areas and providing for local, indigenous, and afro-descendant communities in light of the great vulnerability to natural disasters in Honduras, which positions the country as one of the most vulnerable nations on the list of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Additionally, Honduras is drafting the "Master Plan on Water, Forests, and Soil", which addresses water, forest, and edaphic resources as core elements to build an agroforestry policy based on sustainable productive landscapes, with a series of programs rooted in the national plan for climate change mitigation and adaptation. This plan includes a national reforestation campaign entitled "Planting Lives in Honduras", which is aligned with the Bonn Challenge. The plan positions biodiversity as one of the main indicators for ecosystem protection, promotes the establishment of a sustainable funding mechanisms, and develops a special application to support forest initiatives in which the user can locate their property, define actions to be implemented, and calculate the benefits.

INDONESIA has not acquired commitments toward the Bonn Challenge, but the country has made efforts for forest protection and restoration over the last five years. These efforts have been led by the central government, private sector, non-governmental organizations, and local communities, leading to an 83% reduction in forest fires by the year 2016, and the creation of an agency for ecosystem restoration that will serve as a key tool to meet the targets established by the government, using an approach to ensure restoration and environmental protection, and stimulate the national

economy. South Sumatra has tropical rainforests with a high potential for biodiversity conservation. Nonetheless, in the year 2015, 736,000 hectares were lost, 130,000 of them to forest fires.

South Sumatra specifically has recently established an agency for landscape restoration, which uses a livelihoods approach and implements reforestation and soil restoration actions. The target of restoring over 400,000 hectares begins with a goal of 30% (120,000 hectares) for 2016, and 20% (80,000 hectares) yearly from 2017 to 2019.

NICARAGUA as part of the 20x20 initiative, the country plans to recover 2.8 million hectares, which corresponds to 11 million tons of CO₂ equivalent in the first five years. The principal restoration actions include management of 21 watersheds located along the Bosawas and Maíz rivers, using agroforestry and silvopastoral models, with support of the World Bank. Additionally, forest plantations have been established with private sector financing to generate energy using biomass.

The **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC** will make a commitment to restore and join the Bonn Challenge at the next regional meeting as a member country. With 68% of its national territory appropriate for forestry and as a leader in tourism with six million visitors per year, the Dominican Republic is implementing the "Green Quisqueya Plan", which seeks to mitigate extreme poverty through reforestation actions and the recovery of natural green areas; this plan has support and participation from the public sector, private sector, and civil society.

PANAMA has committed to restoring one million hectares. To meet this target, the country will use its public-private initiative entitled "Alliance for One Million Hectares Reforested". This initiative includes four components: restoring forestry lands, forest restoration for commercial use, and conservation of natural forests, which includes restoration of buffer zones and restoration of gallery forests.

Currently, Panama is undertaking a legislative initiative to provide incentives for restoration activities. This law creates the Panama Reforestation Fund to go along with REDD+ projects and private sector contributions for economic sustainability.

It is worth noting that at COP 21, Panama, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic launched the International Center for the Implementation of Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (ICIREDD), to effectively, fairly, and transparently promote international cooperation for the reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

The challenges that Panama faces include: *developing a transparent monitoring system independent from its public-private platform, and facilitating the International Center for REDD implementation through appropriate research and aid in financing its operations.*

Upon the conclusion of the ministerial presentations, **a dialogue began on the steps to implement landscape restoration actions.** This dialogue was divided into two discussion panels. The contents and conclusions of each discussion are described below:

Panel Discussion 1: Developing Public Policies and Regulations to Facilitate Action in the Field

The **objective of the panel 1** was to discuss how to strengthen the development and enhance public policies and use of public-private and/or community synergies to implement national and regional restoration actions.

To produce effective public policy, it is important to gain **clarity on the assumptions upon which the new norm would be based**. This activity is increasingly complex, given that global dynamics are more volatile with high levels of uncertainty.

Undertaking a deep integral analysis and generating different future scenarios including possible impacts and consequences for different sectors of the society helps to understand the problem and challenges that a new norm would have to address. This analysis also serves to design public policies that provide specific proactive solutions, rather than reactive responses, to promote long-term planning.

A public policy with a long-term planning horizon (20 to 50 years) must overcome time-specific constraints for administrative management, ensuring the sustainability of the process with well-defined responsibilities over time to generate a true **national commitment**, not limited to current government administration.

The key element for a successful public policy is for it to **last over time** while ensuring that government administrations present results in the short term as well, with active participation from the private sector and civil society. This undertaking requires political, technical, and financial capacity on the part of the state.

- In the **political realm**, this means establishing inclusive governance structures where the government can listen to its citizens systematically through transparent dialogue mechanisms, ensuring participation by the population in decision-making and the implementation of activities under co-management formats, especially with the affected communities, indigenous peoples, and afro-descendants whose livelihoods depend on the ecosystems.
- **Technically**, inter-sector collaboration is essential to generate successful restoration experiences. The topic of landscape restoration cannot be addressed only by the ministries of the environment; it requires active participation from other state ministries such as those in charge of agriculture, finance, economy, energy, etc. This collaboration requires a review of the policies around the issue, as well as greater engagement with spatial and land planning initiatives that could have a significant impact to avoid changing land use.
- In **financial terms**, one restriction are the limited resources for institutions to implement restoration actions. The institutions governing the financial systems must advocate for greater funds available from the natural budget to ensure proper implementation of public policy.

Financial support from the private sector is also needed, as well as from bilateral and multilateral international cooperation agencies. Long-term investments carry high risk, and as such the characteristics of the **financing should adapt to these realities** and include elements such as longer grace periods and lower interest rates, among others.

Public policy should **favor a climate for investment and promote business opportunities by focusing on the value chains that can be generated**. These investments must be capable of producing social investment and good jobs, making it important to produce a level of scale for investments, recognizing the breadth of small production units in the region. In this sense, financial mechanisms should include micro-credit schemes as well.

Lastly, public policies should generate a series of disincentives to discourage the use of poor agricultural practices and deforestation. **A mechanism for monitoring and verification is needed** for these public policies to be able to visualize the progress in the implementation of restoration actions, stimulating organizational learning and improved decision-making.

Panel Discussion 2: Landscape Restoration and its Links to Compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

The **objective of the second discussion panel** was to present strategies for landscape restoration not only to benefit biodiversity and ecosystem function; they also allow communities to improve local livelihoods and generate equitable benefits for the most vulnerable communities.

There are two billion hectares with restoration potential, which translates into greater opportunities to contribute to sustainable development. Restoration initiatives are closely linked to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The main **Sustainable Development Goals** linked to restoration are:

- **Goal 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- **Goal 6:** Ensure access to water and sanitation for all.
- **Goal 8:** Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.
- **Goal 13:** Take urgent measures to combat climate change and its impacts.
- **Goal 15:** Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss.

To undertake **national-level** restoration actions, it is important to identify areas with restoration potential and define a landscape model; this will help to provide a general orientation on the territories and actions. To implement reforestation actions **locally**, it is important to identify the problem for the community and define concrete restoration measures to provide effective solutions to environmental degradation, and establish a monitoring mechanism under a participatory and inclusive public administration model.

Restoration activities requires an **inclusive approach**. This means finding institutional arrangements to generate effective coordination with a clear definition of roles in planning, execution, monitoring, and evaluation stages.

The environment is a cross-cutting topic rather than sector specific. In this sense, environmental policies should include economic and social policy, not the other way around.

In terms of sustainable development, biodiversity helps to ensure life and can also be a sustainable business for the private sector. Experience shows us that poverty leads to poor decisions in terms of conservation. To solve this kind of situation, **it is essential to promote private sector actions that are linked to the government initiatives**.

Concretely, the Bonn Challenge is an opportunity for countries to comply with their SDGs.

Undertaking restoration actions can generate profound changes in areas with high levels of environmental degradation, poverty, and food insecurity, such as the Central American Dry Corridor, thus substantially improving quality of life for the inhabitants of these areas.

The discussion panels concluded with final remarks from Minister Endara, in which she thanked the Federal Republic of Germany for its support for this initiative, as well as all of the state representatives present: Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Nicaragua, Panama, Dominican Republic, as well as representatives from multilateral agencies such as the World Bank, World Resources Institute (WRI), IUCN, UNEP, UNDP, FAO, IICA, Coffee & Climate, and CGIAR. Underscoring the importance of continuing to expand dialogue between actors and the great interest in this initiative, several countries offered to host future Bonn Challenge meetings.

Conclusions

1 Next meetings

- The Bonn Challenge is built on an integral and inclusive approach. Since the first regional meeting in El Salvador in 2015, the initiative has strengthened its objective to generate a space for experience exchange, technical support, and access to resources. This is further ratified with the intentions expressed by Honduras, Guatemala, and Cuba to host Bonn Challenge regional meetings for 2017, 2018, and 2019, respectively.

2 Multilateral agreements

- Multilateral agreements have served their purpose of generating an environment for global collaboration, which converges positively with agendas on climate change, desertification, drought, and biodiversity, as a key part of meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

3 Restoration approach

- The landscape restoration approach must be assessed from the perspective of existing approaches and understandings of watershed management, as well as considering institutional, administrative, and community arrangements that help to shift paradigms in land use from the bottom up.

4 Restoration

- Landscape restoration can become a practical means for climate change adaptation and mitigation, reducing impacts on local communities.

5 Countries progress

- The countries are making firm progress in building platforms and tools for restoration activities, reflected in their plans, strategies, and pilot actions for a national interpretation of "restoration". This generates sustainable political will to ensure the long-term implementation of these actions.

6 Investment for restoration

- It is necessary to build favorable conditions for private sector investment to facilitate changes toward more efficient and sustainable production systems, followed by direct investment in landscape restoration.

7 Financing

- Access to financing and investment sources is improving in Latin America, with the definition of schemes for capital investment, risk guarantees and collateral, credit, working capital, and efforts such as the 20x20 Initiative.

8 Harmonization of institutional agendas

- The harmonization of inter-institutional agendas is essential. This must be produced in the framework of common state objectives that can last over time, identifying national priorities for conservation and restoration of forest assets, soils, and biodiversity. This approach can help to find ongoing sources of support through technical assistance platforms to build climate resistance and produce reliable and cost-efficient monitoring systems.

Participants at the dialogue roundtable

MIREI ENDARA - PANAMA

Mirei Endara is the first and current Minister of the Environment in Panama. She led the process to elevate the previous National Environmental Authority of Panama (ANAM) to the level of a Ministry. Minister Endara received her bachelor's degree in biochemistry and Japanese from the University of Wellesley, with a minor in economics, and she holds a master's degree in environmental management from the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale. Endara opened and managed the first office of The Nature Conservancy in Panama, and also contributed to several non-profit organizations including the National Association for the Conservation of Nature (ANCON), which is the oldest conservation organization in Panama, as well as the Smithsonian Foundation in Panama, and EXPLORA - the Interactive Center for Arts and Sciences of Panama.

EMILIO SEMPRIS - PANAMA

Emilio Sempris, Vice-Minister of the Environment of Panama. Prior to this position, Sempris was the director for over nine years at the Water Center for the Humid Tropics of Latin America and the Caribbean (CATHALAC). He also has worked as a consultant for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to support the establishment of the National Program in Panama on Climate Change; at the World Meteorological Organization; at the European Center for the World Health Organization for the Environment and Health; and as a reviewer of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) for Panama. His interests include Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Integrated Watershed Management, Multilateral Environmental Negotiations, Land Observation, Environmental Analysis, and Risk Management and Modeling.

MARÍA LUISA NAVARRO - PANAMA

María Luisa Navarro serves as the Vice-Minister for Multilateral Affairs and Cooperation in Panama. Ms. Navarro studied international policy, economics, and Latin American studies at the School for International Relations at Georgetown University. Since July 2014 she has served as the Secretary General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and as Vice-Minister on several occasions. Prior to this position at the Government of the Republic of Panama, she served as the Executive Director of the Swiss Alfa Trust Company, the fiduciary company of Arias, Fábrega, and Fábrega, and has worked in private and investment banking.

JOCHEN FLASBARTH - ALEMANIA

In December, 2013, Jochen Flasbarth was named State Secretary for the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety of the Federal Republic of Germany. Previously, he was the chair of the Federal Environmental Agency in 2009. Flasbarth studied economics, political science, and philosophy in Münster and Bonn, where he received a degree in economics. He has participated, *ad honorem*, at the German Society for Protection of Birds, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and the German League for Nature and the Environment.

HORST FREIBERG - ALEMANIA

Dr. Horst Freiberg has served as the Head of the Division for Conservation and Sustainable Forest Management, Biological Diversity and Climate Change at the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Public Works, and Nuclear Security in Bonn, Germany, since 2009. Previously, Dr. Freiberg worked for the Bavarian Forest Service and in development cooperation projects in Latin America on forest regeneration and restoration, as well as forest education and capacity-building. Dr. Freiberg has worked extensively under the Convention on Biological Diversity, at the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation in Bonn.

JOSÉ FIDEL SANTANA - CUBA

José Fidel Santana holds a degree in nuclear engineering from the University of Havana, with a specialty in Radiological and Nuclear Security from the University of Buenos Aires; he has also held important positions

in the field of Science, Technology, Monitoring. Some of the important positions José Fidel Santana has held include: Head of the Environmental Radiological Monitoring Laboratory of Cienfuegos (Cuba), Head of the State Inspection Group for the Electro-Nuclear Plant of Juraguá, Director of the National Center for Nuclear Security, UN Expert in Disarmament for Latin America, General Director for the Research center for Health Protection from Radiation. In 2012, he began his doctorate program at the Superior Institute for Applied Technology in Direction Systems. He currently serves as the Vice-Minister for Science, Technology, and the Environment, and as an International Expert for the International Atomic Energy Agency and national liaison office.

ÁNGEL IBARRA – EL SALVADOR

Ángel Ibarra, MD, holds a graduate degree in Public Health and a Master's in Environment and Natural Resources. He serves as the current Vice-Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources in El Salvador. Ibarra is also an academic, researcher, essayist, university professor, environmental activist, and altruist. Ángel Ibarra was the President of the Salvadoran Ecological Unit (UNES), guest professor for the Master's Program in Environmental Risk in Central America at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the University of Girona, Spain, Member of the ACT Global Group on Climate Change, Member of the Latin American Network on Political Ecology, the ILE Review Editorial Board, and the Editorial Council of the Political Ecology Review in Chile.

SYDNEY ALEXANDER SAMUELS – GUATEMALA

Sydney Alexander Samuels holds a degree in civil engineering from San Carlos University in Guatemala, a doctorate in leadership and local public administration from the University of Jaén, Spain, and a doctorate in public administration from Atlantic International University. He is currently the Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala. Dr. Samuels has produced led research studies in Central America on sustainable spatial and territorial management. He has served for over 30 years in management positions at public administration institutions, in the private sector, and international organizations related to municipal administrations, programs and projects for municipal decentralization and strengthening, and territorial management. Dr. Samuels currently works as a consultant on development projects and a professor in the master's program in the fields of sustainable development, project evaluation, and public policy at the Mariano Gálvez University in Guatemala.

BERNARDO BRAIMA MANÉ – GUINEA BISSAU

Bernardo Briama Mané holds a bachelor's degree in Forest Engineering from the Pinar del Río Forest Institute in Cuba. He has many years of experience in the forestry sector. Bernardo has been an advisor to the Forest Statistics Office for the Bissau port, the Regional Delegate for Forests in Biombo, Oio, Cacheu, Buba, in the Bafata and Autonomous Sector of Bissau, National Congressman (2014), ACP-EU Attaché (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific - European Union), and Member of the ANP at the national Assembly for the Specialized Commission on Agriculture, Fisheries, Natural Resources, Tourism, and the Environment. He currently serves as the State Secretary for the Environment of Guinea-Bissau.

JOSÉ ANTONIO GALDÁMES – HONDURAS

The engineer José Galdames is the Minister of Energy, Natural Resources, the Environment and Mining in Honduras. He has worked over 17 years in the public sector and has been Government Coordinator of International Cooperation Projects across different Ministries, including the Ministry of Forest Development and Conservation, Protected Areas and Wildlife (ICF), where he served as Vice Minister of Protected Areas and Wildlife Conservation. He is a Forest Engineer with a Master's degree in Gender and Education, currently serving as President of the Board of the National Electric Energy Company.

ALEX NOERDIN – INDONESIA

Alex Noerdin is Governor of the Province of South Sumatra, Indonesia. He was a pioneer in free education and health programs, begun under his administration as Regent of the Musi Banyuasin District in 2001. In the field of the environment and forests, Alex Noerdin has promoted models of collaboration in landscape

management at the high-level roundtable "Bonn Challenge 2.0" in Germany, in March 2015, and at COP 21 in Paris in December, 2015. He has closely observed the forest fires in South Sumatra that caused severe impacts for climate change, awaiting international support for efforts for landscape restoration and fire control as part of REDD+ activities.

PAUL OQUIST – NICARAGUA

Dr. Paul Oquist is the Minister and Private Secretary for National Policy under President Daniel Ortega Saavedra of the Republic of Nicaragua. Dr. Oquist is a member of the Group for Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Standing Committee on Finance. He is a first-term member of the Executive Committee on the Green Climate Fund, along with representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, and Cuba. Previously, Dr. Oquist served on the Transition Committee organized by the Green Climate Fund. He was a member of the Nicaraguan delegation to the XV Conference of the Party States for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, COP-1), and the V Conference of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP-5). Dr. Oquist was the head of the delegation for the 42nd meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel of Experts on Climate Change (IPCC) in Dubrovnik, Croatia, where the council was elected for the 2016-2023 term. Dr. Oquist is also a second-term member on the Committee of Experts in Public Administration (CEPA), elected by the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

OMAR RAMÍREZ – REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA

Omar Ramírez, a biologist by trade, has worked in coordination and implementation of environmental and development projects with bilateral and multilateral development cooperation agencies. He has held important management positions in the environmental and natural resource sector. Ramírez was elected Alderman for the National District (2002-2006), and in his first municipal term he was elected Vice-President of the National District Council (2002-2003), as well as the Chair of the Standing Commission on the Environment, Parks, and Green Spaces for the municipal government (2002-2006). He was designated as the coordinator for Target 9 of the project on the Millennium Development Goals, and for two years was the Environmental Contact Person for the Dominican Republic for the Environmental Cooperation Agreement within the DR-CAFTA free trade agreement (2006-2007). In August, 2007, he was named State Secretary for the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, and in September 2008 he was appointed as the Executive Vice-President, with the rank of Secretary of State, of the National Council on Climate Change and the Clean Development Mechanism, and head of the Dominican delegation before the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. He is also the honorary director of the Center for Environmental Studies, Energy, and Natural Resources at the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development, FUNGLODE.

EVERT THOMAS – BIODIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL

Evert Thomas, originally from Belgium, joined the Regional Office for the Americas in April, 2011. His main work has been to improve the conservation and use of genetic forest resources through the use of spatial diversity analysis. Evert has also contributed to studies in the field of ecological restoration for the FAO. Before joining Biodiversity, Mr. Thomas worked as an expert in biodiversity and biosecurity for the Belgian Federal Ministry of the Environment. Among other positions, he has served as the focal point for Belgium on topics of benefit access and distribution, and Article 8 on traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities in the context of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Evert has also negotiated these topics on behalf of the European Union in CDB COP 10 in Nagoya, Japan.

BRAULIO DIAS – CDB

Dr. Dias currently serves as the Executive Secretary for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). He has over three decades of experience in biodiversity science and policy and its implementation at national and international levels. He obtained a BSc in Biological Sciences from the University of Brasilia and a PhD in Zoology from the University of Edinburgh in 1981. In 1994, Braulio coordinated the National Program on Biodiversity (PRONABIO); later in negotiations for the creation of the National Policy on Biodiversity in Brazil (1998-2002), Mr. Dias led the National Project on Biological Diversity (PROBIO, 1996-2005). Mr. Dias joined

the Secretariat at the start of the United Nations Decade on Biological Diversity, and in the early years of the application of the Strategic Plan for Biological Diversity, 2011-2020.

MICHAEL OPITZ – COFFEE AND CLIMATE

Michael Opitz is Managing Director of the Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung, a foundation promoting sustainable development in the coffee sector. Mr. Opitz holds an MSc in Agricultural Economics from Wye College of London University. Before joining the Neumann Kaffee Gruppe in 1992, he has worked for the GIZ. During his professional life he has worked in a variety of agricultural projects in Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Ethiopia, among others, building experience in development work. Now based in Hamburg, he steers the activities of the Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung, with the vision of strengthening the livelihoods of coffee communities through empowerment.

PIETER VAN LIEROP – FAO

FAO Forestry Office at the Sub-Regional Office in Panama. With a master's degree from the Agricultural University of Wageningen in the Netherlands, with a focus on agrosilviculture, agricultural production systems, and rural sociology. Mr. Lierop has broad experience in environmental and forest education, forest fire prevention and maintenance, and risk management. He currently coordinates the working group on Sustainable Natural Resource management, Risk Management, and Climate Change.

PETER BESSEAU – GPFLR

Peter Besseau is Director of the International Affairs Division of Natural Resources at the Canadian Forest Service. Since 2003, he has also served as the Executive Director of the International Model Forest Network (IMFN) Secretariat in Ottawa. In December 2013, Peter was elected vice-president of the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR), a role that allows him to put his varied experience to work on landscape approaches, especially in terms of governance, to support GPFLR objectives. Mr. Besseau has worked on forestry and international forest policy initiatives for over 20 years, including in Russia, Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

DIEGO MONTENEGRO – IICA

Diego Montenegro Ernst is the Director of Management and Regional Integration at IICA. He holds a master's degree in Agroenterprise. Montenegro was the Minister for Rural and Agricultural Affairs in Bolivia, and the Regional Coordinator for Central America and IICA representative in Venezuela and Costa Rica. Additionally, he served as an advisor and international consultant at various international agencies and public and private institutions in the fields of economic development and agroindustry, strategic planning, project management and administration, sector analysis and development policy, and others. He is the co-author of several books and articles in journals and magazines, as well as a speaker at international fora and workshops.

ADRIANA VIDAL – IUCN

Adriana is a lawyer by trade, with a passion for international policy on forests, land use, and climate change. Before joining the IUCN Global Forest and Climate Change Program (GFCCP), Adriana worked on REDD+ and indigenous issues with the International Program on Climate Change at the Environmental Defense Fund, and later with Climate Focus as a researcher on forest issues and climate change related land use. As the GFCCP Forest Policy Officer at the IUCN, Adriana advises on policy and provides support on forest landscape restoration issues and REDD+ for various regions and projects. She is the focal point for the CDB Forest Program and for the Bonn Challenge for Latin America. As part of her role, Adriana works with international processes and platforms where the GFCCP supports and influences the work of different countries on forest issues.

JESSICA YOUNG – PNUD

Jessica Young currently serves as the National Environment and Sustainable Development Officer at the UNDP. With her broad work experience, she has worked at the UNEP, the Latin American Development

Bank (CAF), the National Association for the Conservation of nature (ANCON), the GEF-IADB Ecotour Project, and others, with a keen focus on environmental issues.

GABRIEL LABBATE - PNUMA

Gabriel Labbate holds a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, a graduate degree in economics from New York University, and a doctorate in environmental studies from the University of California at Santa Cruz. Dr. Labbate has over 17 years of experience with UNEP, OECD, ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, and the private sector. His work is especially interdisciplinary, including environmental assessment, quantitative poverty assessment, household surveys, debt swaps for nature, and the integration of social problems into land use and biodiversity conservation policies. Recently, his work has focused on cost-benefit analyses of REDD+ policies and green financing. Dr. Labbate has worked in the former Soviet Union, Asia, the Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

RAÚL ALFARO PELICO - WORLD BANK

Dr. Raúl Alfaro Pelico currently works as the Practice Manager for the Environment and Natural Resources in Latin America and the Caribbean at the World Bank. He has over 15 years of experience in the fields of energy, the environment, and sustainable development, as a advisor and researcher for different international agencies with operations in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa, including teaching and making presentations on economics and natural resources. His main areas of expertise include energy, climate change, and sustainable development, as well as protection of biodiversity and ecosystems. He is keenly interested in the environment and low-emissions and climate-resistant development and technology, and its potential to catalyze transformation in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa.

WALTER VERGARA - WRI

Walter Vergara is a climate specialist with a long-standing interest in a variety of topics related to adaptation and mitigation. As a lead researcher at the World Resources Institute, Walter directs the 20x20 initiative, a restoration effort that seeks to contribute substantially to reducing the carbon footprint of land use. He also has served as the director for UNEP-DTU for the production of Carbon Zero Studies. Before joining the WRI, Walter Vergara retired from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), where he served as the Head of the Department on Climate Change and Sustainability. For 25 years prior to this, Mr. Vergara worked at the World Bank, where his last position was as the leader of the Global Team of Experts on Climate Change. Mr. Vergara organized and led the first climate change team on Latin America at the World Bank. Over the course of his career, he has authored or co-authored 14 books and numerous technical articles. He was an opinion editor of the Fifth IPCC Assessment Report.

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Group photo



First row, right to left: Christa Castro, Emilio Sempris, José Fidel Santana, Ruandha Sugardiman, Agus Justianto, Alex Noerdin, Braulio Dias, Mirei Endara, Jochen Flasbarth, Esteban Girón, Paul Oquist, Peter Besseau, Pedro García, German Obando, Lucio Santos, Dr. Evert Thomas. **Second row, right to left:** José Antonio Prado, Bianca Morán, Nicholls Esprit, Gilbert Canet, Leo Heileman, José Antonio Galdámes, Ángel Ibarra, Omar Ramírez Tejada, Rosilena Lindo, Bernardo Braima Mané, Walter Vergara, Efraín Díaz, Diego Montenegro, Dr. Jorge Quezada, Michael Opitz. **Third row, right to left:** Pieter Van Lierop, Catalina Santamaría, Jürgen Popp, Dr. Ivan Bockor, Raúl Alfaro-Pelico, Jesús Guerra Bell, Dr. Horst Freiberg, Adriana Vidal, Juan Carlos Díaz, Sydney Samuels, Óscar Zúñiga, Javier Gutierrez, Paola Agostini..

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