



STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 10:00 am EET, 9 NOVEMBER 2022

The Global EverGreening Alliance and Acorn, a Rabobank initiative, are developing a US\$12.5 million land restoration programme for Nigeria. The programme aims to directly support 120,000 small scale farmers to restore over 200,000 hectares by supporting their transition to sustainable agriculture.

This project will form part of the Restore Africa Programme, which has already launched Restoring Land and Livelihoods across Eastern and Southern Africa in six South Eastern countries.

It is anticipated that the partnership will improve the livelihoods of more than 120,000 farming families, supporting more productive farming practices that are resilient to the impacts of climate change, while restoring over 200,000 hectares of degraded land using proven Evergreening practices such as Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration.

The project will also enhance carbon sinks, sequestering more than 5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, and providing long-term revenue to farming communities from the sale of carbon credits.

Jelmer van de Mortel, head of Acorn, sees a lot of potential in the collaboration with the Global EverGreening Alliance:

We are very excited to work with a reputable partner such as the Evergreening Alliance to improve the livelihoods and climate resilience of a large number of smallholder farmers in Nigeria through agroforestry and international carbon markets

Improving smallholder livelihoods is key to Acorn, a Rabobank initiative connecting smallholder farmers that adopt appropriate agroforestry practices to the Voluntary Carbon Market (VCM). Acorn has developed a scalable, cost-efficient and Plan Vivo certified methodology to measure and monitor carbon sequestration on individual smallholder plots via remote sensing technology. The significant cost reductions in Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) and certification allows Acorn and its local implementation partners such as the Alliance to channel 80% of the carbon proceeds back to the farmers.

The programme is being designed to run for 30 years and these projects will be implemented across selected areas in the following states: Adamawa, Plateau, Benue, Nasarawa, Ebonyi and Taraba.

At the heart of the project, GEA's collaborative multi-stakeholder approach is to collectively build more productive and reliable farming and pastoral systems, to restore degraded landscapes and sustainably manage natural resources for all stakeholders. Further, it seeks to ensure resilient livelihoods across the most vulnerable communities, where food security is assured, ecosystems continue to thrive in the face of climate change, and the spread of natural resource-based conflict is prevented. Bringing together significant local capacity and technical expertise, and policy engagement at national and local levels, the program will scale-up from existing successful pilots to support climate-vulnerable smallholder farming communities in Nigeria to improve the productivity, reliability and resilience of food production systems in the region.

According to **Chris Armitage, CEO of the Global EverGreening Alliance,**

'Partnering with the Acorn programme of a large international food & agri bank like Rabobank, which has a track record of investing where it is most needed, allows us to take immediate action to scale-up proven-effective practices and support vulnerable rural communities on the ground. This program will demonstrate a commercially investable approach to community-led land restoration and will provide a critical foundation for similar efforts across the drylands of Sub-Saharan Africa.'

Details of the scaling of the programme were jointly announced at COP27, by Chris Armitage and Max Berkelmans of Acorn at the Event: **Restore Africa: Turning Words into Action** in the Nature Zone Pavilion.

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About the Global EverGreening Alliance

The Global EverGreening Alliance is an iNGO that brings together leading research, technical, environmental and development organisations to build on our shared vision of restoring degraded lands. Functioning as a collaborative platform, the Alliance harnesses our members and partners' collective strengths, capacities and networks to coordinate, develop and implement massive-scale land restoration programmes. evergreening.org

About Acorn, Rabobank

Acorn is Rabobank's response to climate change, a threat that affects us all, but that disproportionately disadvantages smallholder farmers in developing countries. Like everything we do, our solution is rooted in common sense, in down-to-earth practicality. We turn the CO2 that is sequestered through agroforestry into carbon credits to be sold on the voluntary carbon market or as insetting units within supply chains. We developed an innovative and scalable method for measuring, certifying, and monetizing the biomass growth of planted trees and turning that growth into Carbon Removal Units (CRUs). The CRUs (or carbon credits) are sold to organizations with strong emission reduction commitments. To close the loop, 80% of the income of every sold CRU flows back to the original smallholder. acorn.rabobank.com

Additional Background Information

Restore Africa is a community led, nature-based carbon programme that spans across six African countries - Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The Global Evergreening Alliance's Restore Africa programme is one of the world's largest and most ambitious large-scale restoration programmes. To learn more about the Restore Africa programme, visit www.evergreening.org/restoreafrica/

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