

ARE WE BUILDING BACK GREENER?



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Can climate diplomacy support a green recovery for the most vulnerable?

Leonardo Massai

"COP26 has shown that the role of climate diplomacy must be evaluated in the long run. Despite expectations, results were disappointing for the most vulnerable."

"COP27 will be held in Africa (Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt) and is again a crucial moment for climate diplomacy, a summit that should deliver on key aspects for the most vulnerable countries."

The most vulnerable countries to climate change, the least developed countries (LDCs) and small-island developing states (SIDS), are today more than ever affected by the adverse effects of climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) indicates in its latest assessment report with high confidence that 'the poorest groups in society often lose out' in accessing any climate aid finance, with women and girls disproportionately impacted.

'Climate change impacts are expected to intensify with additional warming. It is also an established fact that they are interacting with multiple other societal and environmental challenges. These include a growing world population, unsustainable consumption, a rapidly increasing number of people living in cities, significant inequality, continuing poverty, land degradation, biodiversity loss due to land-use change, ocean pollution, overfishing and habitat destruction as well as a global pandemic,' is the gloomy assessment of the Panel in February 2022.

IPCC also noted that LDCs and SIDS currently receive only 14 % and 2 %, respectively, of total climate finance. Vulnerable countries suffer from additional debt burden linked

to their exposure to climate risks and that is 'further exacerbated by the recession and debt distress accompanying the COVID-19 pandemic'. IPCC confirmed that investment for adaptation and green economic recovery in the most vulnerable countries could be accelerated by debt relief by public creditors, green recovery bonds, debt-for-climate swaps or SDG-aligned debt instruments.

Is climate diplomacy helping to fix this problem? As COP26 has shown, the role of climate diplomacy must be evaluated over the long run. Despite the expectations for COP26, the first meeting of climate diplomacy after the COVID-19 pandemic, the results were disappointing for the most vulnerable.

COP26 demonstrated the limits and boundaries of climate diplomacy. On the one hand the bodies rigidly mandated by the Paris agreement did not help the cause of the poorest. On the other hand, the lack of political willingness to move away from conservative positions (both the new climate finance goal and the operationalisation of the loss and damage mechanism are still far from happening) have shown little progress on issues of relevance to LDCs and SIDS.

"Investment for adaptation and green economic recovery in the most vulnerable countries could be accelerated by debt relief by public creditors, green recovery bonds, debt-for-climate swaps or SDG-aligned debt instruments."



The European dream to lead the global fight against climate change started in 2001 when the US announced it would not to be bound by the Kyoto Protocol. The Paris Agreement (2015) was a significant achievement in contemporary multilateral environmental diplomacy with the EU acting as a bridge between major emitters and with the aim of shaping a coalition of the willing, in addition to 'leading by example'. The Paris Agreement is a legally binding treaty and creates obligations for all parties. It also includes a robust monitoring, reporting and evaluation (MRV) system that, more than any other measure, will help the world reduce GHG emissions and better distribute climate finance and support.

COP27 will be held in Africa (Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt) and is again a crucial moment for climate diplomacy, a summit

that should deliver on key aspects for the most vulnerable countries. For example, these include increased climate finance, a commitment to double the annual adaptation funding to USD 40 billion, clearer rules around carbon markets and increased attention to losses and damages.

What can GCCA+ do to support the role of LDCs and SIDS in climate diplomacy? We can help to enhance the quality of enabling environment so that these countries are more ready to attract and receive financial and technological support; enhance reporting skills, especially on the issue of finance needs; foster cooperation and knowledge exchange, in particular South-South; and support the consistency of key national strategic documents such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), MRVs, Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) and DRR strategies.

EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL – external dimension

Programming and implementation is supported through several technical assistance facilities. The Green Deal provides the overarching vision, supported by the NDICI Global Europe as a financing instrument, and the Global Gateway as a strategy "to build connectivity partnerships around the world to boost trade and investment".



Climate forward

Deforestation-free supply chains: a necessary response



"Importing products grown on deforested land indirectly encourages deforestation."

"The new EU Forest Partnerships will promote sustainable value chains that ensure economic resilience and improve forest governance."

Globally, the main cause of deforestation is the conversion of forests into agricultural land and monoculture tree plantations. In developing and emerging countries a significant share of converted land is used for producing export commodities such as cocoa, coffee, soy, beef, palm oil, pulp and paper, rubber or timber. So, importing products grown on deforested land indirectly encourages deforestation. The need to tackle 'imported deforestation' explains the growing interest in developing 'zero-deforestation' supply chains.

Through its external cooperation, the EU promotes integrated forest management measures that address the sustainability and legality of forest-based production and related value chains, while safeguarding biodiversity and local livelihoods. The approach encourages the scaling-up of deforestation-free supply chains by complementing trade-related measures with support for partner governments (e.g. on forest governance, land-use planning, design of incentive measures and legality assurance systems), local producers (e.g. on production practices and compliance with certification requirements), and non-governmental organisations (as partners in advocacy and monitoring). The EU Forests for the Future Facility provides technical support to contribute to healthy forest ecosystems and economic growth. The new EU Forest Partnerships, in line with the EU Green Deal promote a holistic and integrated approach, including sustainable forest value chains and deforestation-free agriculture, forest restoration, promotion of investments, governance and law enforcement, and civil society participation.

In recent years, the EU has developed a policy and regulatory framework (in progress) to support a shift towards

deforestation-free commodity trade. This complements the existing EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, which tackles illegal logging and timber trade and helps strengthen forest governance outside the EU but does not address agriculture-induced deforestation.

Various mechanisms can support the development of deforestation-free supply chains. Private certification and voluntary labeling schemes, voluntary standards, user sensitisation and green procurement policies are increasingly used, but are insufficient to prevent deforestation on the required scale. Other options include a mandatory labeling scheme or a public certification of products associated with high deforestation risk; imposing stringent due diligence requirements on importers; and using differentiated taxes and duties to incentivise a shift towards deforestation-free production and consumption patterns.

The proposed new EU Regulation on deforestation-free products opts for country benchmarking (categorising countries into low, standard and high risk of trade-induced deforestation) combined with due diligence obligations for EU operators and traders of (initially six) deforestation-risk commodities, dependent on the risk level.

The GCCA+ initiative contributes to the promotion of deforestation-free supply chains through various projects, for example by supporting the development of a sustainable and inclusive rubber tree value chain in the Democratic Republic of Congo, sustainable coffee production and forest ecosystem conservation through integrated landscape management in Ethiopia, and sustainable and innovative agricultural value chains in the Brazilian Amazon.

Catherine Paul

Case study

Mozambique: the fragile equilibrium between tourism reputation and climate hazards



Country:

Global Climate Risk Index (CRI):

EU GCCA+ Project:

Mozambique

1st most vulnerable country

*Building Local Climate Resilience
in Mozambique*



"There is a fragile equilibrium allowing Mozambique to reconstruct its reputation as a tourist destination. This reputation can be eroded due to climate change and the immense vulnerability of Mozambique to extreme weather events."

"Prompt, robust and continuous support to the government and Mozambique's local communities is still required from the international community and donors."

Mozambique, in the south-eastern part of Africa, spreads its charms over 2 500 km of coastlines dotted with wild beaches, interspersed with lagoons, coral reefs and small islands. The Gorongosa National Park is considered as one of the top birding destinations in south-eastern Africa, as can be seen in the award-winning National Geographic documentary, *Africa's Lost Eden*. At the same time Mozambique is the country most affected by climate related hazards according to the Global Climate Risk Index (CRI), which uses data from the last 20 years.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism contributed to 8.2 % of national GDP. There is a fragile equilibrium allowing Mozambique to reconstruct its reputation as a tourist destination. This reputation can be eroded due to climate change and the immense vulnerability of Mozambique to extreme weather events. In 2019 only, extreme climate events reduced GDP by 12.6 % and led to USD 4.9 billion of losses. These impacts are linked to Mozambique's vulnerability, its long Indian Ocean coastline and its geographical location downstream (having shares) of nine major river basins. Drought and flooding are the dichotomies representing the extreme exposure of Mozambique to climate change together with heat waves and cyclones.

As stated in Mozambique's National Adaptation Programme of Action, increased knowledge of appropriate adaptation responses, tailored to different users, is needed to reduce climate-related risks to human life and alleviate poverty.

The government is working together with international donors to reduce flooding in major cities through new infrastructure programmes.

Building Local Climate Resilience in Mozambique, an EU GCCA+-funded project, is working to reduce climate-induced vulnerability at the local/district level by supporting the implementation of concrete actions from Local Adaptation Plans. However, these actions are not enough. The frequency and magnitude of extreme weather events are growing. Isolation and restrictions imposed by COVID-19 hampered a challenging situation at the local level and increased the vulnerability of local communities that were strongly affected in 2021 by Cyclone Chalane and Eloise. UNICEF estimated that over 176 000 people in Central Mozambique were in a need of humanitarian assistance in the aftermath of Eloise. Mozambique is the worst-hit country, where 11 fatalities occurred. 314,369 people have been affected and at least 20,012 individuals sheltered in accommodation centres. More than 20,550 houses have been damaged or destroyed, mainly in Sofala Province (Tropical Cyclone Eloise – ECHO 29/01/2021). Prompt, robust and continuous support to the government and Mozambique's local communities is still required from the international community and donors. Local, regional and national stakeholders need to understand, foster and enable innovative climate-oriented solutions tailored to Mozambique's specific situation and aimed at promoting livelihoods, ensuring food security and creating jobs.

Monica Bonfanti

Case study

Zimbabwe: Climate-smart technologies for post COVID-19 food security



Country:

Global Climate Risk Index (CRI):

EU GCCA+ Project:

Zimbabwe

15th most vulnerable country

SADC/CCARDESA COVID-19 response project



"Climate-smart technologies are used to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on food and nutrition security in Zimbabwe, as well as Eswatini, Mozambique and Zambia."

"A newly registered company helps local farmers commercialise their produce, and trains them in climate-smart agronomic practices and financial management."

In Southern Africa, the disease burden, lockdowns and other restrictions associated with COVID-19 have disrupted food value chains at both production and marketing levels. The shock induced by the pandemic has compounded the impact of climate change (manifested by rising temperatures and growing aridity but also by more frequent (or intense) torrential rainfall episodes) on agri-food systems – making them more vulnerable and negatively affecting the food and nutrition status of millions of households, including those whose livelihoods depend on subsistence and small-scale agriculture.

In response, the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) launched a project to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on food and nutrition security in Zimbabwe (as well as Eswatini, Mozambique and Zambia) using climate-smart technologies. This project is funded by the Intra-ACP GCCA+ programme in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, and in Zimbabwe it is managed by the Grow a Tree Foundation (GTF).

The Zimbabwe project component, launched in December 2020 and with a duration of 18 months, is carried out on a 3.5-hectare estate in Gwangwawa, a village

in the Rushinga District of north-eastern Zimbabwe. It supports a community of 100 households through a range of activities aimed at climate-proofing and diversifying agricultural production.

It supports the planting of fruit, moringa and baobab trees, the drilling of solar-powered boreholes to secure horticultural and fruit production, the expansion of solar-powered drip irrigation, and the dissemination of efficient cookstoves to reduce wood fuel consumption. It has also assisted with the registration of a company that will help local farmers commercialise their produce, and is training them in climate-smart agronomic practices and financial management.

After one year of implementation, the results are already visible in the form of increasing horticultural production. There are plans to expand to other product lines such as beekeeping, fish farming, chicken and goat rearing, and groundnut and baobab pulp processing. The initial success has helped attract interest from banks, which have lent money for fencing and offered financial services. This all helps develop a sustainable alternative to livelihoods based on gold mining, tobacco production and charcoal making.

Catherine Paul

Story

Women farmers hold the key to a sustainable future for shea trees in West Africa



"Restoring the savannah parkland where shea trees grow helps combat the creeping desertification which threatens the Sahel."

"In an effort both to boost the livelihoods of women shea nut collectors and ensure a more sustainable future for shea farming, a two-year EU GCCA+ project is already being hailed as a success."

On a remote farm in Oyo State, Nigeria, a group of women work the dusty fields, sowing maize, okra, spinach, tomatoes and other crops ready for the coming dry season. Dressed in brightly coloured clothing and headscarves, the women sing as they work in a scene typical of rural West Africa.

But the four hectare Oke Odo farm, located in the west not far from the border with Benin, is far from typical. The women here are planting their crops in the shade of shea trees as part of a pioneering approach to sustainable farming. Together with women at a second farm, 500 km to the east at Tufa in Niger State, they are aiming to transform their lives and the future of the shea industry. In addition, restoring the savannah parkland where shea trees grow (naturally) helps combat the creeping desertification threatening the Sahel.

'Nigeria, along with other countries in West Africa, increasingly suffers from climate-related issues such as drought and deforestation which affect food production,' says Cornelius Kakrabah, who heads up business development and programme implementation for the [Global Shea Alliance \(GSA\)](#).

Shea butter is used in the production of food and cosmetics all over the world. Demand for shea nuts from West Africa has rocketed by 600 % in the last 20 years, but the women – and it is almost exclusively women – who collect the shea nuts are at the bottom of the value chain, typically earning around USD 75 a year for their labour.

Nigeria is the world's leading supplier of shea nuts, and it is estimated that around 2.2 million Nigerian women work as shea nut collectors. In an effort both

to boost their livelihoods and ensure a more sustainable future for shea farming, a two-year, EUR 245 000 EU GCCA+ funded project, Developing A Resilient Shea Agro-forestry Farm Model, is already being hailed as a success. Fifty-six women, drawn from local cooperatives, are being trained on the two model farms before passing their knowledge on to around 1 500 women in the surrounding communities.

'The project was designed absolutely around women shea nut collectors,' explains Cornelius. 'The shea season only lasts from May to August, and after that there is very little work for them. This way they have work all year round, both during and outside of the shea season. They plant mixed crops on the same land where the shea trees grow. That gives them a livelihood all year round, and it's also better for conservation. The women are also taught beekeeping, which not only provides additional income but helps pollinate the crops.'

Women shea nut collectors tend to belong to large, polygamous households, and in some states local laws and customs prevent them from owning the land they cultivate. Men are not generally involved in shea farming, yet the women are expected both to look after their children and pay for school fees and other expenses from the money they earn from shea nut collecting.

Khadijat Hassan, a member of Asumali cooperative in Tufa who was chosen to take part in the pilot is enthusiastic: 'We have been really impressed. We've been able to accomplish many things – how to do mixed cropping so we can harvest more, and how to pass on our knowledge to other women. We will be able to take good care of our families and children, and support our husbands financially.'

Martin Atkin

THE EU GCCA+ BAROMETER

GCCA/GCCA+ AND EU GREEN DEAL

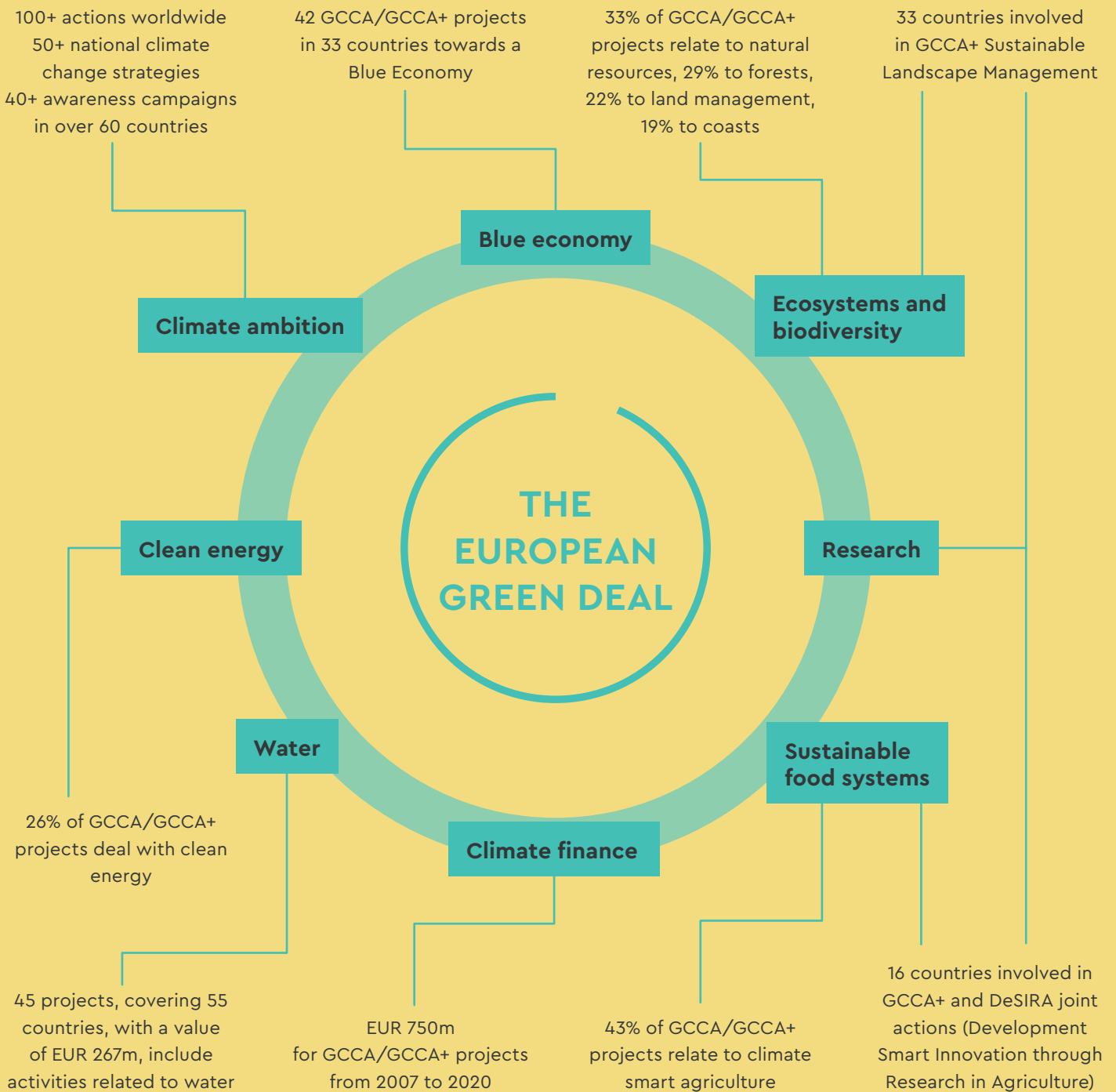
For the 2021–2027 period, the EU's ambition is to dedicate 35 % of its budget for international partnerships to climate action. The EU target of using 20 % of its 2014–2020 budget on climate-related projects and policies was reached in the case of external actions under the EU's development and international cooperation portfolio.

80+ COUNTRIES

100+ ACTIONS

EUR 750 MILLION

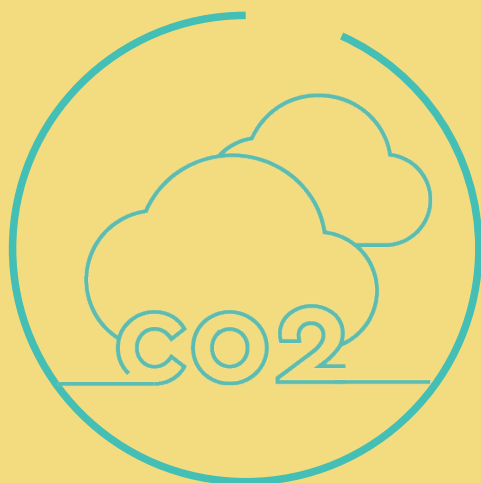
GCCA/GCCA+ ACTIONS AND THE GREEN DEAL



AREAS OF INTERVENTION OF GCCA/GCCA+

39 Least Developed Countries (LDCs)
34 Small Island Developing States (SIDS)





The best of Practice

The need to go beyond 'business as usual' for climate targets

The example of sustainable reforestation for farmers in Timor Leste

Country efforts and targets to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions are anchored in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). NDCs are universal: virtually all countries that are signatories to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have submitted their contributions. The NDCs combine two types of targets: conditional and unconditional. The latter are targets that the country sets itself to achieve regardless of external support.

With the burden of poverty, debt, climate change emergencies and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, most measures designed in a pre-pandemic scenario are either not applicable to today's world or fall short of what developing countries need. As things stand, it is clear that many countries will not be able to deliver the nationally determined contributions they committed to under the Paris Agreement.

To go beyond "business as usual" GDP priorities or short-term targets we need to have innovative business models. The need to engage the private sector is indisputable. However, past efforts to address the causes of social and economic marginalisation have barely succeeded in disrupting persistent patterns of poverty and inequality. If private operators are to assume the role of agents of development, sustainability objectives must be at the heart of their activities.

Timor-Leste, as a Least Developed Country and Small Island Development State, did not need to present an NDC with specific emission reduction targets. Its NDC however notes the key role of agriculture, energy use and Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) in

the emission trajectory and suggests that all three sectors offer opportunities for mitigation actions. While the NDC signals the country's aim to establish productive forests, it also highlights opportunities for forest conservation and enhancing and expanding forest carbon stock.

Launched in 2020, a GCCA+ project in Timor Leste intends to establish economic incentives for farmers undertaking meaningful climate change action at their own level, including sustainable reforestation activities. Through this system, every tree planted in certified areas of reforestation counts for the purpose of carbon sequestration. After an initial screening, interested forestry groups receive technical training and follow-up, allowing them to understand the climate change activity and the functioning of carbon credits.

Supporting such initiatives may imply changes of habits in rural communities and include new activities in the local economy. To ensure that stakeholders receive and even optimise the intended benefits, the GCCA+ will temporally support a favourable institutional environment and the development of capacities. Yet, developing countries like Timor-Leste should be offered a stronger dialogue with international partners, allowing them to learn and capitalise on similar efforts, and receive preference on existing carbon sequestration credit schemes rewarding their sustainable reforestation efforts.

Geraldo Carreiro

"With the burden of poverty, debt, climate change emergencies and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, most measures designed in a pre-pandemic scenario fall short of what developing countries need."

"A 2020 GCCA+ project in Timor Leste intends to establish economic incentives for farmers undertaking meaningful climate change action at their own level, including sustainable reforestation activities."



EU GCCA+ THE ALLIANCE FOR A CHANGING WORLD

The **Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (EU GCCA+)** is a flagship initiative of the European Union helping the most vulnerable countries respond to climate change. It started in 2007 and has become a major climate initiative with over 80 programmes in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Pacific regions.

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