Plan to Accelerate Solutions - RAIZ

Axis 3: 3. Transforming Agriculture and Food Systems

Key objective: 8. Land restoration and sustainable agriculture

Name: Resilient Agriculture Investment for Net-Zero Land Degradation (RAIZ)

The Challenge: Over 20% of the world's agricultural land - around 1 billion hectares - is degraded, threatening food security, biodiversity, and climate stability. Degradation reduces productivity, fuels deforestation, and undermines livelihoods for over 3 billion people. While global frameworks like the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the UNCCD call for land restoration, progress is constrained by a chronic funding gap. Current investments of USD 65 billion per year fall far short of the USD 300 billion needed to meet restoration targets. Without scaled action, degradation will continue to erode both natural and economic assets.

The Opportunity: Restoring degraded farmland can transform global food and climate systems. Restoring 250 million hectares by 2050 could cut 12–20 gigatonnes of emissions and boost food output by up to 15 billion tonnes. Agricultural nature-based solutions are proven, cost-effective, and ready to scale, with hundreds of projects already in place. Public and impact funds have demonstrated early success - but scaling these models requires deeper collaboration with the private sector. Mobilizing even 1% of annual agrifood revenues (about USD 90 billion) for on-farm restorative solutions could unlock transformative impact, bridging the funding gap and creating resilient, productive landscapes that benefit farmers, economies and the planet.

The Solution: The Resilient Agriculture Investment for Net-Zero Land Degradation (RAIZ) Accelerator will help countries unlock blended finance for farmland restoration at scale. RAIZ supports governments in mapping degraded land, identifying investable solutions and assessing the investment need, as well as designing optimal finance mechanisms that combine public, private, and multilateral capital. By convening governments and investors, RAIZ creates the connective tissue between global ambition and country-level implementation. Through structured partnerships and shared learning, it will help countries replicate successful financing models - such as EcoInvest - and mobilize billions towards restoring farmland, advancing climate, biodiversity, and food-security goals together.

Host initiative: RAIZ is hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Brazil (MAPA) under the FAO FAST Partnership with the collaboration of the UNCCD G20 Global Land Initiative and the Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) in partnership with the Action Agenda for Regenerative Landscapes. The initiative is supported by technical partners such as the Global Climate Fund, the World Bank, CGIAR, the Climate Policy Initiative, Restor, Ambition Loop iCS and Agroicone among others.

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Scope:

- **Geographic**: Global.
- **Sectoral**: Agricultural land restoration with co-benefits for food systems, biodiversity, climate mitigation/adaptation, and desertification.
- Other aspects:
    - **Stakeholders**:
        - Multi-actor platform, aligned with Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, UNCCD, CBD), SDG 15.3, GST, KMGBF.
        - To include global stakeholders from the public sector, private finance, and organisations involved in designing and delivering restoration projects.
    - **Principles**:
        i. Co-benefits: Spotlighting the climate, biodiversity, desertification, and food security co-benefits of restoring degraded areas;
        ii. Country engagement: Recognizing local and regional challenges and specificities, including production systems and practices, family farming, traditional and indigenous knowledge, as well as access to technologies and innovation;
        iii. Science and innovation: Ensuring that the best available science and innovation are considered, alongside local knowledge and practices;
        iv. Local recognition: Promoting country engagement in accordance with national interests, priorities and needs;
        v. Stakeholder engagement: Fostering the participation of multiple stakeholders, including scientific partners, the business sector, the financial market, producer and supply chain organizations, civil society and governments; and
        vi. Coordination: Coordinating and collaborating with existing global and regional initiatives and partnerships to maximize synergies and avoid duplication of efforts.
    - **Objectives**:
        1. **Map degraded landscapes** to prioritize areas for investment
        2. **Identify investable restoration solutions** and assess their financing needs
        3. **Design optimal investment mechanisms** to scale existing finance
        4. **Foster collaboration and knowledge exchange** within the restoration ecosystem

Levers assessment:

- **Risk-informed decision-making:** Medium maturity

    - *Rationale: [*Data and monitoring tools to track degraded land exist and are improving (such as GIS), but they are not yet used consistently in planning and investment decisions. There is a particular gap in translating technical/ scientific information into insights that are useful for project planning and investment decision-making.*]*
- **Technology shifts:** Medium maturity
    - *Rationale:* On-farm nature based solutions such as agroforestry, efficient irrigation, and bio-inputs are well documented and their benefits tested, but access is still limited by high initial costs and long return timelines.
- **Knowledge & Capacity building:** Medium maturity
    - *Rationale: [*Some countries and programs have strong training and extension systems, but in many regions technical skills and resources are still too limited to support large-scale restoration.*]*
- **Inclusive decision-making governance & design:** Medium maturity
    - *Rationale: [*Inclusion is improving at the project level but remains limited in financial and strategic design. Investors, agrifood companies, and DFIs are often engaged too late to shape financing models. Earlier involvement of these actors would enable co-designed instruments, better risk-sharing, and stronger alignment between financial, social, and ecological goals.*]*
- **Standards & Taxonomies:** Low maturity
    - *Rationale: [*International frameworks (e.g., UNCCD, CBD, NDCs) provide guidance and there has been a proliferation of certification standards for agroecology/ regenerative/ biological agriculture globally. Yet, there is still no fully harmonized system to make restoration project outcomes comparable across countries and markets, which also jeopardizes subsidy reforms. There is also a need for additional clarity on carbon market insetting standards. UNEP *State of Finance for Nature* calls for harmonized taxonomies to unlock private capital.*]*
- **Supply:** Medium maturity
    - *Rationale: [*Despite a growing number of restoration initiatives, few reach the level of financial and operational maturity needed to attract investment. The gap lies in translating strong concepts into investable opportunities, with limited mechanisms to aggregate, de-risk, and structure projects at scale to meet investor expectations.*]*
- **Demand:** Medium maturity
    - *Rationale: [*Emerging signals that buyers and governments are willing to pay for sustainable agriculture goods and services from restored land area. Under the Action Agenda for Regenerative Landscapes, businesses and partners have already committed to investing $6bn in regenerative production. However, sustainable commodity procurement is emerging but not systemic; crops or livestock from restored land rarely receive a price premium; some companies pledge deforestation-free or regenerative sourcing, but coverage is limited and enforcement uneven; carbon and ecosystem service markets remain small and uncertain. This serves as an additional barrier for private capital to flow into restoration projects.*]*

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- **Public/private finance:** Low maturity
  - *Rationale: [*Restoration finance remains far below needs, with around USD 65 billion mobilized annually against a USD 300 billion target. Existing mechanisms are fragmented and largely public, with limited private capital participation. The main gap lies in structuring blended finance approaches that align public incentives, private investment, and restoration outcomes to achieve scale.*]*
- **Partnerships and collaboration:** Medium maturity
  - *Rationale: [*Some partnerships link projects, governments, and finance (e.g., AFR100, Brazil's Green Way/EcoInvest), but they are still limited. Financing remains far below needs, partly due to the lack of support to connect scattered projects with the right public and private partners.*]*
- **Policy & regulatory:** High maturity
  - *Rationale: [*Almost all countries have restoration targets, deforestation targets and agroecology policies. Enforcement and coordination vary, hence implementation is lacking.*]*
- **Public opinion:** High maturity
  - *Rationale: [*Restoration is increasingly recognized by political leaders and in international negotiations as key for food security, climate, and biodiversity. Public awareness is uneven but growing.*]*

Expected impact of this plan on the 2030 targets (if any): High

The levers assessment highlights that the greatest barriers to scaling agricultural land restoration lie in areas of low and medium maturity: an emerging landscape of projects that leverage tested agricultural solutions to restore degraded land, but a weak collaboration between investors that allows financing to flow at scale. **RAIZ is designed to focus precisely on these bottlenecks.** By mapping degraded landscapes, identifying investable solutions and their financing needs, designing blended financial mechanisms **RAIZ aims to raise the maturity of these critical levers – turning today's fragmented and underdeveloped enabling environment into one where restoration can attract finance at scale**.

Alignment of levers with RAIZ objectives:

1. **Map degraded landscapes to prioritize areas for investment**
   - Addresses: Risk-informed decision-making (Medium), Technology shifts (Medium).

- Contribution: improve the use of data and monitoring tools; makes geospatial insights accessible and actionable for investment planning.

2. **Identify investable restoration solutions and assess their financing needs**
   - Addresses: Supply (Medium), Standards & taxonomies (Low), Knowledge & capacity (Medium).
   - Contribution: leverage growing experience in implementing on farm nature-based solutions to clarify the ROI of solutions and key financing gaps, informs the suitable types of financing per attractive solution.
3. **Design optimal investment mechanisms to scale existing finance**
   - Addresses: Public & private finance (Low), Demand (Medium), Standards & taxonomies (Low).
   - Contribution: test blended finance instruments, strengthens demand signals (procurement, ecosystem services), and advances harmonization of standards needed to unlock private capital.
4. **Foster collaboration and knowledge exchange within the restoration ecosystem**
   - Addresses: Partnerships & collaboration (Medium), Inclusive governance & design (Medium).
   - Contribution: support the improvement of enabling conditions; amplifies the restoration narrative.

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Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement[1]	Committed Stakeholders
Map Degraded Landscapes - Part 1	Data & Prioritization	Develop an open-access global atlas of degraded croplands and 'grassland and shrubland' as a proxy for pastureland.	New action	Risk-informed…	UNCCD G20 GLI	Novemb…	Countries	FAO, CGIAR, FOLU
Map Degraded Landscapes - Part 2 Restoration Priorities & Targets	Data & Prioritization	Develop a methodology to identify priority areas for restoration and define breakthrough targets for cropland and pastureland restoration ahead of UNCCD COP17 in Mongolia.	New action	Risk-informed…	UNCCD G20 GLI	June 20…	Countries	FAO, CGIAR, Restor, Ambition Loop
Map Degraded Landscapes - Part 3 Capacity Building	Data & Prioritization	Host capacity building workshops with 2 countries to equip them for effective use of mapping tools in national decision-making.	New action	Inclusive deci…	UNCCD G20 GLI	Novemb…	Countries	FAO, FOLU
Identify Investable Solutions and Assess Investment Needs - Part 1 Identify Stated Country Targets	High-level investment needs	Identify cropland and pastureland restoration targets, commitments and financial needs expressed in NDCs and NAPs in six to eight countries leveraging existing resources.	New action	Policy & regul…	FAO FAST	Novemb…	Countries	FOLU
Identify Investable Solutions and Assess Investment Needs - Part 2 Develop agrifood MACCs for 16 countries	High level Investment needs	Apply a newly developed methodology to generate marginal abatement cost curves (MACCs) for agrifood sector solutions, including on-farm nature-based solutions (i.e. biochar reduced grazing etc), in 16 countries.	New action	Standards & T…	World Bank (MACC tool)	Novemb…	Technical insti…	FOLU

[1] Such as national governments, companies, investors, cities and local governments, technical institutions, MDBs, regulators & public agencies, utilities & system operators, youth & indigenous peoples groups, multi-stakeholders platform (non-exhaustive)

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Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement[1]	Committed Stakeholders
Identify Investable Solutions and Assess Investment Needs Part 3 Assess total investments needs	High level Investment needs	Share a methodology to assess investment needs for farmland restoration and identify relevant mechanisms for financing farmland restoration.	New action	Public/private …	FOLU	Novemb…	Investors	Action Agenda on Regenerative Landscapes
Identify Optimal Investment Mechanisms Part 1. List existing sources of financing	Financing Mechanisms	Map relevant financing mechanisms and categorise them by geography and project maturity - establish relationships with existing funds and investment mechanisms. If relevant, analyse climate finance trends in land restoration to prioritise mechanisms to leverage.	New action	Public/private …	FAO	June 20…	Investors	CPI
Identify Optimal Investment Mechanisms Part 2. Deep dive on Derisking instruments	Financing Mechanisms	Develop a two page policy brief on how derisking instruments such as guarantees and first loss insurance can support governments to unlock blended finance at scale	New action	Public/private …	FOLU	Novemb…	Investors	CPI, Agri3
Identify Optimal Investment Mechanisms Part 3: Deep dive on Value Chain investment	Knowledge and insight generation	Provide curated insights to the business community on how they can invest in landscape restoration (Guidebook). Conduct consultations in partnership with Business4Land on guidelines that can be followed to unlock blended finance mechanisms.	New action	Public/private …	FOLU via WBCSD	Novemb…	Companies	iCS UNCCD
Identify Optimal Investment Mechanisms	Knowledge and insight generation	Develop a public knowledge resource on land restoration finance, translating CGIAR's	New action	Public/private …	CGIAR (ImpactSF)	June 20…	Countries	CGIAR

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Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement[1]	Committed Stakeholders
Deep dive on Green Loans and Impact Funds		lessons from working with banks and impact partners experience into practical guidance for RAIZ partners and broader stakeholders						
Foster collaboration and knowledge exchange Part 1: Country experience exchange	Knowledge sharing	Build case studies on countries that have been able to mobilise finance for land restoration. Create opportunities for learning exchanges among countries on innovative funding opportunities for farmland restoration.	New action	Knowledge & …	FAO FAST	Novemb…	Investors	iCS
Foster collaboration and knowledge exchange Part 2: Landscape Acceleration Plan - Brazil (LAB) Case Study	Knowledge sharing	Publish a case on Brazil, articulating how public and private sector can collaborate to build a joint vision for farmland restoration that strengthens economic performance (incl. of farmers) and environmental resilience.	New action	Knowledge & …	FOLU via WBCSD	Novemb…	Countries	Action Agenda on Regenerative Landscapes
Identify Optimal Investment Mechanisms Part 3. Investor Engagement Brief	Knowledge sharing	Leverage existing public and private investment opportunities to develop at least two 3–5 page investment concept notes for green loans and/or impact funds targeting Agri-SMEs. Integrate RAIZ's Mapping Tool and CGIAR's science-based risk and impact assessment tools (e.g., ImpactSF Analyzer) to support agriculture-linked restoration investments.	New action	Public/private …	CGIAR (ImpactSF)	Novemb…	Investors	CGIAR

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The ambition:

Over time, RAIZ aims to work closely with selected national governments and apply the above learnings and tools to expand country-level farmland restoration financing. Countries who participate in RAIZ will be supported through four key service offerings - these are outlined below. The breadth and depth of delivery will be customised based on an initial assessment on the country's key gaps and opportunities. Fundraising will be required to support the country-level implementation of these activities.

1. **Map degraded landscapes** to prioritize areas for investment
    - RAIZ will work with national institutions to create a **Map of Degraded Agricultural Land**, combining local data (on environment, climate, and livelihoods) and country commitments to identify priority areas for restoration and investment.
    - The tool will include analysis features to help policymakers, financiers, and project developers make informed decisions. RAIZ will also provide capacity building to ensure national teams can fully use and maintain the tool.
2. **Identify investable restoration solutions** and assess their financing needs
    - RAIZ will support governments in identifying investable restoration solutions on the ground and assessing their cost at scale, under a **Farmland Restoration Finance Report**, informed by national institutions and local experts.
    - The report will be informed by data on restoration solutions being implemented in the country, such as expected financial returns, current costs and funding gaps.
3. **Design optimal investment mechanisms** to scale existing finance
    - RAIZ will help governments **identify and access the most suitable financing mechanisms** at national and global level. The Farmland Restoration Finance report will also assess the optimal financial instruments that can be used based on the rate of return of the solutions and local funding availability., in consultation with businesses, investors and financial institutions.
    - RAIZ will also provide technical assistance during the design and implementation of national financing instruments to ensure funds are used effectively and achieve real restoration results. Where needed, RAIZ will help countries prepare proposals for international climate finance and develop investment cases that attract private partners.
4. **Foster collaboration and knowledge exchange** within the restoration ecosystem
    - RAIZ will assess each country's **readiness and enabling environment** for restoration finance, including policy frameworks, financial sector maturity, and institutional coordination.
    - It will **capture and consolidate lessons** from national implementation – on expanding financing mechanisms, channeling funds to restoration projects, and building public–private collaboration. These will be distilled into case studies and guidance to **inform RAIZ's global work and peer learning across countries**.