

COURSE REPORT

Forest Landscape Restoration - Togo

April 23 - October 20, 2019

A blended course organized by:
Environmental Leadership & Training Initiative (ELTI)
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)



Group photo of course participants, facilitators, and organizers. Photo credit: Salome Begeladze.

Background

Countries worldwide have made commitments to restore millions of hectares of degraded and deforested land under the Bonn Challenge, which is an international effort to restore 150 million hectares around the globe by 2020 and 350 million by 2030. The Bonn Challenge includes the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100), a country-led effort to bring 100 million hectares of land in Africa into restoration by 2030. Achieving these commitments, however, requires that decision-makers address the diverse ecological, socio-political, and economic factors that impact restoration efforts at different scales.

Forest landscape restoration (FLR) is an approach that can transform large areas of degraded and deforested land into landscapes that produce ecological, economic, and social benefits and can fulfill Bonn Challenge and AFR100 commitments. The Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM) provides a framework to analyze, identify, and prioritize restoration opportunities in order to develop a suite of FLR strategies for particular contexts.

ELTI is an initiative of the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental studies supported by Arcadia, a charitable fund of Peter Baldwin and Lisbet Rausing (www.arcadiahfund.org.uk). IUCN is a membership Union composed of both government and civil society organisations. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its 1,300 Member organisations and the input of some 15,000 experts. IUCN is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.



Participants visiting a community-managed sacred grove during the course field visit.

This blended course aimed to develop the capacity of key restoration actors involved with ROAM and FLR in Togo. FLR is important to Togo's AFR100 commitments, its national forest and REDD+ policies, its National Development Plan, and for meeting the country's international commitments related to development and sustainability.

Course objectives

- Provide the opportunity for participants to engage in critical discussion and connect with a global network of practitioners;
- Familiarize participants with the tools and frameworks of ROAM, FLR, and the Bonn Challenge Barometer;
- Present basic principles of forest ecology, restoration ecology, natural and anthropogenic disturbances, and regeneration potential;
- Provide guidance on engaging and effective collaboration with diverse stakeholder groups;
- Build participants' abilities to evaluate different FLR methodologies and understand how site conditions influence which strategies to apply; and
- Develop a theory of change at the subnational level with FLR interventions that are socially, economically, and ecologically appropriate.

Format

This course included an in-person workshop in Kara, Togo from April 23-26, 2019, followed by an online course held September 2-October 20, 2019. The blended format aimed to build foundational knowledge and collaboration among participants in order to set the stage for on-the-ground ROAM and FLR activities in the targeted landscape.

During the **in-person workshop**, participants completed three days of classroom-based lectures and interactive group work and did a one-day a field visit to the landscapes of Binah in Kara, Togo.



Course participants discussing the results of the interactive group exercises during the in-person workshop.

The in-person workshop included the following sessions:

1. Opening and introduction
2. Presentation on the Binah landscape
3. Fundamentals of FLR
4. Stakeholder participation in FLR
5. Landscape restoration opportunities
6. Multi-criteria analysis and data collection for ROAM
7. Developing appropriate FLR interventions
8. Monitoring of FLR
9. Uptake of FLR
10. Developing a ROAM road map
11. Communication and awareness-raising
12. Closing session



Course participants presenting on the outcomes of the interactive group exercises during the in-person workshop.

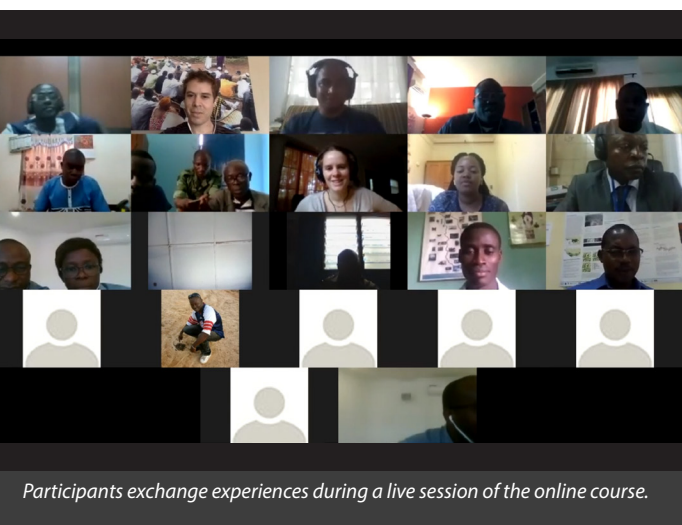
During the field visit, participants went to several sites in Binah prefecture. Site visits included a multi-use forest plantation for fuelwood and cashew production, a sacred forest, agricultural fields practicing agroecology and a community forest with demonstration sites.

Participants then completed a 6-week **online course**, where they learned and practiced skills through pre-recorded video lectures, interactive text-based presentations, readings, case studies, weekly live discussion sessions, and guided assignments.

The online course included the following weeklong thematic modules:

- Module 1: Fundamental ecological concepts
- Module 2: Introduction to FLR, ROAM, and the Barometer
- Module 3: Thinking about opportunities for FLR
- Module 4: Restoration strategies
- Module 5: FLR interventions
- Module 6: The Barometer, tracking and monitoring FLR

As an output of the online course, participants produced planning documents for FLR and ROAM for the target landscape of Kara, Togo.



Participants exchange experiences during a live session of the online course.



Participants visiting a site of agroecological interventions in Binah during the field visit component of the course.

Participants

Twenty-nine individuals participated in the full blended course experience. In addition, two people attended the in-person course only and one attended the online course only. Participants represented public, private, academic, and non-profit sectors and a range of organizations including: GIZ, the University of Kara, and the Ministry of the Environment.

Instruction team

Salome Begeladze (IUCN), Karin Bucht (ELTI), Dominique Endamana (IUCN), and Mirjam Kuzee (IUCN) facilitated the in-person workshop.

Dr. Tendro Tondrasoa Ramaharitra (State College of Florida-Manatee-Sarasota) served as lead instructor for the online course, with facilitation support from Karin Bucht (ELTI) and Eli Terris (ELTI), and teaching assistance from Lysa Uwizeyimana (MEM candidate 2020, Yale F&ES).

Follow-up

Participants gave positive feedback on the course and stated that they will continue to develop and implement activities for ROAM, FLR, and the Barometer in the Binah prefecture of Kara, Togo.

For more information, please contact karin.bucht@yale.edu.