

Landscapes and Environmental Agility across the Nation (LEAN)



LEAN is a four-year project funded by the European Union's flagship GCCA+ initiative that aims to conserve biodiversity, build climate resilience, and reduce emissions from land-use changes in the savannah, high forest, and transition zones of Ghana—and all while helping local farmers to improve their livelihoods. It will be implemented on the ground by a consortium of four local and international NGOs with expertise in these challenging fields: The Rainforest Alliance, World Vision Ghana, Tropenbos Ghana, and EcoCare Ghana.

The project seeks to address three structural barriers that have historically hindered efforts by governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector to halt land degradation and deforestation through the uptake of landscape approaches.

1. While most stakeholders are actively interested in conserving natural capital and helping to improve livelihoods, they only have the capacity and expertise to act within their direct sphere of influence or economic interest. The LEAN project will explore jurisdictional landscape approaches that cover the entirety of the project's target landscapes.
2. Although there is growing recognition of the importance of landscape approaches in addressing sustainability challenges, there is still a lack of

effective tools, resources, and incentives to drive aligned action at scale. That's why the LEAN project seeks to work alongside all stakeholders to mobilize and effectively deploy resources and tools that will support targeted sustainability interventions.

3. While some multi-stakeholder governance structures have already been established in Ghana, there is as yet no landscape governance model suitable for scale-up. The LEAN project will work alongside key stakeholders in the different landscapes to establish participatory landscape management structures that will facilitate easy uptake of ILM (Integrated Landscape Management) technology and innovation.



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OBJECTIVES

OVERALL OBJECTIVE:

To directly support national efforts to conserve biodiversity, improve the livelihoods of small-scale farmers, build climate resilience, and reduce emissions from land-use changes across Ghana's savannah, high forest, and transition zones.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

To implement Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) models in three priority landscapes through functional and sustainable landscape governance structures. This will be supported by smallholders' uptake of more sustainable farming and forest management practices, market incentives, and initiatives to diversify rural income opportunities. Using the landscape sustainability measurement framework (LandScale), an evidence-based ILM model will be produced for national and regional scale-up.

PROJECT OUTPUTS

Output 1: *Community-level capacity building initiatives and tailored technical assistance to support the establishment of strong, long-lasting, and socially inclusive landscape governance structures in three priority landscapes.*

Output 2: *Capacity and commitment to reduce land degradation, prevent forest loss, increase productivity, build climate resilience, and promote natural resource conservation through training and mentoring of smallholders on CSA (Climate-Smart Agriculture) and SFM (Sustainable Forest Management) practices.*

Output 3: *Capacity strengthening to help smallholders access improved market incentives and establish diversified income streams through training, extension services, and private sector engagement.*

Output 4: *Building the capacity of landscape governance bodies to design and implement a LandScale-based Landscape Performance Management Framework, developed through training and continuous technical assistance. National and regional stakeholders will be advised on the project's ILM model.*



TARGET GROUPS

1. About 36,000 small-scale farmers and rural people across the project's three priority landscapes.
2. Key landscape governance structure actors:
 - Sefwi Wiawso Landscape Management Board (under development)
 - Bodi-Akontombra Landscape Management Board (established)
 - Community Resource Management Areas (CREMAs)
 - National Forestry Commission
 - Ghana Cocoa Board
 - Municipal/District Assemblies
 - Local community leaders
 - Community members
 - Major private sector companies committed to deforestation-free supply chains, including logging companies and Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs) sourcing cocoa, shea, and timber from local landscapes
 - Civil society organizations
 - Food and Agriculture Legal Services (to guide and formalize the governance)
3. Youth—students, graduates, and educational system representatives.



PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND LEAD ORGANIZATION

PROJECT LANDSCAPE	DISTRICT	REGION	LEAD ORGANIZATION
A. High Forest Zone (Western Zone B Hotspot Intervention Area)	1. Bibiani-Anhwiaso-Bekwai, Sefwi Wiawso Municipal, Bodi, Akontombra	1. Western North	Rainforest Alliance
B. Guinea and Sudan Savannah Ecological Zones	1. West Gonja 2. Kassena-Nankana West	1. Savannah Region 2. Upper East region	World Vision Ghana
C. Forest-Savannah Transition zone	1. Offinso Municipal and Offinso North 2. Techiman Municipal, Techiman North, Nkoranza Municipal and Nkoranza North	1. Ashanti Region 2. Bono East Region	Tropenbos Ghana and EcoCare Ghana



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PROJECT IMPACT:

The implementation of the EU LEAN project in these diverse landscapes will enable cross-learning and build business cases for Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) models across various commodity sectors, mobilize political and partners' support to inform decision making and advance sub-programmes of the Ghana REDD+ strategy.

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