

# CASCADE

## Carbon Finance for Agriculture, Silviculture, Conservation, and Action against Deforestation

■ **Putting theory into practice:** Over 20 projects in 7 countries receive technical assistance

■ **Targeted institutional support:** Strengthening national regulatory frameworks for carbon finance projects

■ **Experts network:** Promoting and developing forestry and bioenergy projects in sub-Saharan Africa

Operating in seven Sub-Saharan African countries, CASCADE assists both public and private project developers in making climate change mitigation projects a reality in rural Africa. CASCADE helps carbon finance projects advance from the initial project idea stages to validation and eventual participation in the carbon market.

### A Forest of Carbon Credits

Carbon finance has the potential to not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but also to improve the quality of life in rural African communities. Agroforestry, soil management, and bioenergy projects aimed at reducing carbon emissions encourage economic development, conserve biodiversity, and strengthen communities' resilience to climate change. Since the establishment of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Protocol, industrialized countries have been able to receive carbon credits for financing carbon mitigation and sequestration projects in less developed countries. Simultaneously, the voluntary carbon market has expanded, offering individuals and organizations the opportunity to offset their carbon emissions. In sub-Saharan Africa, Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) projects represent a powerful means for some of the world's poorest populations to meaningfully participate in the global carbon market.

Despite the rapid growth of global carbon finance transactions, however, carbon finance projects in sub-Saharan Africa are still being bypassed by commercial investors and project developers. Among other challenges to overcome is the misconception that the potential for carbon finance in Africa is limited, when in fact the demand for agroforestry carbon credits is growing

rapidly. Other obstacles include prohibitive transaction costs, high risks, and weak regulatory and institutional frameworks.

### Planting a Seed

Since 2007, CASCADE has been helping seven sub-Saharan African countries (Benin, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, and Senegal) generate carbon credits by providing customized individual technical assistance to



project developers, support to national climate change institutions, and training. By supporting replicable projects in the forestry, agriculture and bioenergy sectors, CASCADE is opening up opportunities for African participation in the CDM and the voluntary carbon markets. In the process, the programme links buyers and sellers, and facilitates regional cooperation and exchange between national experts. The experiences gathered from CASCADE will contribute to the national and international policy debates regarding a more inclusive climate regime.

CASCADE is jointly implemented by UNEP and UNEP Risoe Centre, in partnership with the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (le Centre de coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement, or CIRAD). The programme's core funding is provided by the Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM). International and local experts from Environmental Resource Management (ERM), Winrock International, and ONF International provide technical assistance.

### Objectives

- Enhance local stakeholders' expertise in generating carbon credits from African forests and farmlands
- Offer strategic technical assistance to sub-Saharan African forestry and bioenergy projects
- Establish a strong francophone African network of technical experts

[www.unep.fr/energy/activities/cascade/](http://www.unep.fr/energy/activities/cascade/)



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