ROAM: Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology

BRIEFING NOTE

Are you sitting on an opportunity?

With the launch of the Bonn Challenge in 2011, leaders from around the world committed to a global goal to collectively restore 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2020. Recent analysis of global restoration opportunity by the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR) revealed roughly two billion hectares of land suitable for restoration across the world. By the start of 2014 up to 50 million hectares of degraded land had been pledged for restoration, or were being considered for pledges, to the Bonn Challenge goal.

Your region likely contains significant restoration opportunity. The Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology (ROAM) represents a good first step on the path to restoring degraded and deforested lands – a simple, cost-effective and broadly participatory method for assessing restoration opportunity at the national or sub-national level.

How does ROAM work?

ROAM involves a series of analyses that together identify the best restoration opportunities to be found within a given area. As such, ROAM is designed to answer a number of important questions relevant to deforested and degraded land, including:

- Which types of restoration interventions are feasible in different parts of the land/country/region? Which of these restoration options are best?
- What is the total extent of restoration opportunity in the land/country/region?
- What are the potential costs and benefits, including carbon storage, associated with each restoration strategy and option?
- What policy, financial and social incentives exist or are needed to support restoration?
- Who are the stakeholders who need to be engaged?

Most forest landscape restoration opportunities are “wide-scale” or “mosaic.” Wide-scale restoration aims to restore or create a landscape that most people would call a forest. Mosaic-type restoration aims to restore or create a landscape of multiple land uses, with trees added to improve farmland productivity and resilience, as well as soil, water, and biodiversity conservation.

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The ROAM process includes three phases:

- **Engagement and planning**: Define assessment goals, engage key partners and stakeholders, identify restoration intervention options and desired benefits, plan for the larger assessment, etc;
- **Data collection and analysis**: Acquire and analyze spatial, socio-economic, policy and finance condition and other important data layers; and
- **Results validation and recommendation**: Present the findings and gain feedback from governments and stakeholders, assess final finance needs and options, create recommendations on restoration implementation, etc.

ROAM is not a land use planning tool. Rather, it is a way for interested users to identify landscapes that offer opportunities for restoration - considered at a national and subnational level - and to gain preliminary information about those lands in order to undertake successful restoration planning and eventual implementation.

Typical outputs of ROAM include:

- Identification of opportunity areas for restoration;
- Definition of key restoration intervention options;
- Analysis of the costs and benefits of restoration options, including estimation of carbon sequestration potential;
- Assessment of finance and investment needs and opportunities; and
- Identification of gaps in the enabling conditions for restoration. (See example at right).

### Applying ROAM in your region

ROAM was developed by IUCN and WRI as a contribution to the GPFLR and the Bonn Challenge. The **ROAM Road-Test Handbook** is publically available now at [www.IUCN.org/ROAM](http://www.IUCN.org/ROAM).

This handbook is designed to support those considering, commissioning conducting or contributing to a restoration opportunity assessment. With it you should be able to find the guidance you need to identify great opportunities for forest landscape restoration, engage key stakeholders, calculate the costs and benefits of restoration options, and begin planning for restoration success.

Please contact the GPFLR at [gpflr@iucn.org](mailto:gpflr@iucn.org) to get your own copy of the ROAM Handbook, learn more about the process, access case studies, or kick-start an assessment in your country or region.

### One output: A Restoration “Readiness” Diagnostic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enabling condition</th>
<th>Key success factor</th>
<th>Current status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ecological conditions</td>
<td>Soil, water, climate, and fire conditions are suitable for restoration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plants and animals that can impede restoration are absent</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Native seeds, seedlings or source populations are readily available</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market conditions</td>
<td>Competing demands (e.g., food, fuel) for degraded farmlands and declining</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Value chains for products from restored area exists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy conditions</td>
<td>Land and natural resource tenure are secure</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policies affecting restoration are aligned and streamlined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restrictions on clearing remotely located natural forest area are enforced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social conditions</td>
<td>Local people are empowered to make decisions about restoration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local people are able to benefit from restoration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional conditions</td>
<td>Roles and responsibilities for restoration are clearly defined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective institutional coordination is in place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In place  | Partly in place  | Not in place  

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Together we can achieve the Bonn Challenge: Restore 150 million hectares