

Making landscape finance more inclusive

A new article series and online platform aim to share issues and best practice for increasing inclusive, responsible finance that promotes sustainable landscape restoration and management



Photo by Nanang Sujana/CIFOR

Our forests and farmland, land use and landscapes are the basis of much of the global economy. And they are even more important to those who live in them and live off them. But ever-increasing levels of external investment are making huge impacts – positive and negative. So to shift the balance in favour of beneficial outcomes, global attention is now focusing on sustainable business models that include more responsible finance, and that is inclusive of men, women and youth in local communities and indigenous peoples.

Why we need to listen and learn

This complex topic needs to be addressed urgently, and strategically. Different actors and sectors hold pieces of the puzzle, but many are not automatically connected to each other or to wider networks. Whether public or private – governments, corporates, banks, smallholders, communities, NGOs – all see the need for common understanding and collaboration, and there are many valuable and innovative experiences and insights that others would do well to learn from. But broad debate appears constrained by a lack of mutually respected platforms for presenting and discussing key issues leading to shared strategies and sustainable solutions at the scales needed, available to all. The past few years have seen a number of high-level discussion forums, and we are learning from international to grassroots levels. This dialogue will build on this.

Opening out the debate

A new online initiative on foreststreesagroforestry.org and tropenbos.org will contribute to sharing innovative thinking and joint learning, facilitating and strengthening networks and bridge-building between actors beyond the usual sectoral boundaries. It will begin in June 2018 with a six-month series of interviews/articles from thought-leaders in different sectors. These and the resulting online debate, as well as parallel reviews and studies, will guide the development of a global online consultation on inclusive landscape finance in early 2019.

The overriding question is “How can investing in sustainable land use and land management be made more inclusive of smallholder and community needs while remaining attractive to investors?”

Key individuals will be invited to contribute to the article series, but the platform is also open to receiving contributions from those involved in inclusive finance, in one of the four main sectors.

- Public – governmental and inter-governmental institutes.
- Finance – international banks, development banks, pension funds, etc.
- Corporate – multinationals involved in commodity production, processing or trade.
- Community – smallholder associations and supporting civil society and non-governmental organizations.

All interviews/articles will offer answers to the following questions.

- How do you define ‘inclusive finance’ and why is it important?
- What are the underlying reasons for the underfinancing of small scale agricultural and forest business?
- What are we not doing right, or not doing well enough, or not doing at all?
- How is your organization addressing inclusive finance, and what are your experiences and key lessons?
- What examples do you have of successful or promising ‘model’ approaches or innovations?
- What is your vision on how best to increase finance and investment in sustainable forestry and farming?

For more information, contact:

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