



CIRCULAR  
BIOECONOMY  
ALLIANCE

# Living Labs for Nature, People and Planet

Restoring land through  
agroforestry in  
**Rwanda**



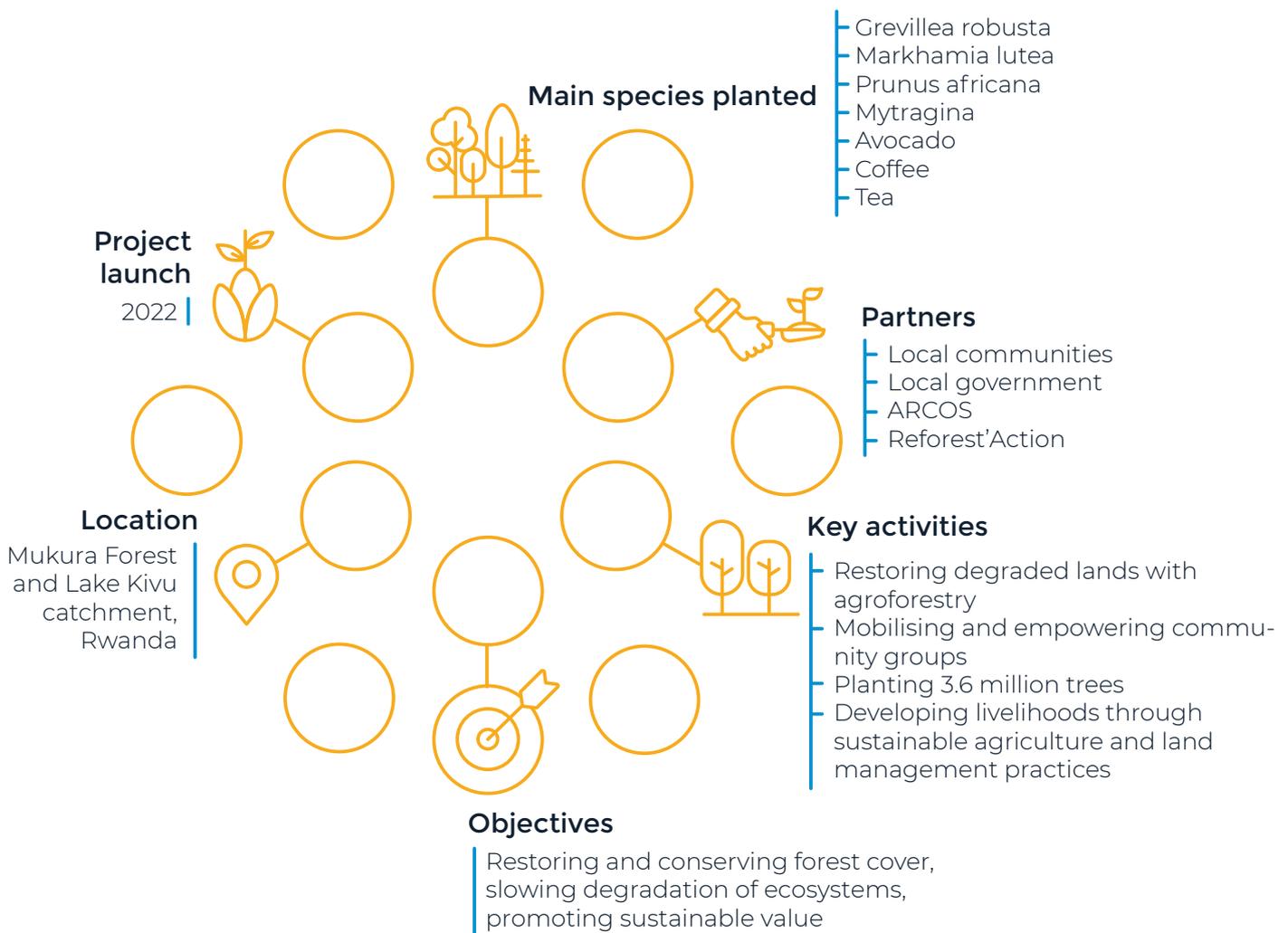
# Restoring land through agroforestry in **Rwanda**

## Implementing agroforestry to restore ecosystems and set up sustainable value chains for local communities with a regional African dimension.

The mountains of East Africa are home to millions of people, and a range of ecosystem services and goods that are an important source of future agrobiodiversity. They play a central role in water supply and associated poverty alleviation and sustainable development. However, climate change is already drastically affecting this area, with the last glaciers in Africa disappearing by the middle of this century. This leads to increased pressure on land, erratic rainfall patterns, as well as deadly floods and droughts.

The Circular Bioeconomy Alliance (CBA) is partnering with national and international organizations to create a Transboundary Regional Living Lab to enhance the resilience and adaptation of all mountain ecosystems and their communities in East Africa. This Living Lab in West Rwanda is the first phase of this ambitious initiative.

## Project at a glance





## Why?

Rwanda's forest cover has decreased by 8.2 % since 2000. In the mountainous landscapes of Rutsiro District, land and forest degradation have brought major environmental and socio-economic problems. High population pressures lead to the fragmentation of arable land and provoke a high dependence on agriculture and forest resources. **Intense deforestation, mainly driven by unsustainable agricultural practices and population growth has led to soil erosion, land degradation and landslide risks, a threat exacerbated by climate change.**

## What?

### Action on the ground

This Living Lab takes place around the Mukura Forest and the Lake Kivu catchment in Rwanda. The project will target over 30,000 households and cover a total area of 15,000 hectares. Local stakeholders will plant various tree species in agroforestry systems to restore the biodiversity of degraded ecosystems. This will also support timber productivity, carbon sequestration as well as soil and water conservation. Sustainable livelihood options will also be created through nature-based value chains, via the sustainable production of timber, coffee, tea, and fruits.

### Fostering collective action

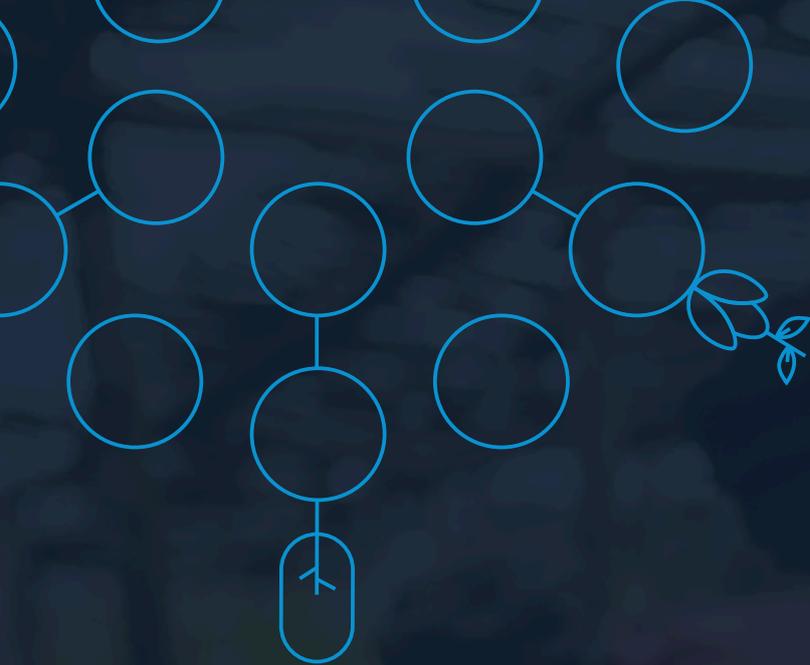
A network of over 1,000 community groups will be mobilised and empowered through the Living Lab. The trees planted and the forest goods produced as well as the commercialisation of coffee and tea will contribute to develop the livelihoods of up to 120,000 people. A network of cooperatives will be created, together with 31 nature-based community funds to ensure the financial sustainability of the work carried out. This approach will improve local producers' access to established community groups and help them enhance and diversify their income.

## Expected benefits

The project directly contributes to the achievement of 11 of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, which provide a roadmap to a better and more sustainable future.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





## What is a Living Lab?

The Circular Bioeconomy Alliance (CBA) is building a global network of Living Labs for Nature, People and Planet.

They demonstrate how harmony can be achieved by empowering nature and people in a concrete territorial context, integrating traditional knowledge, capitalizing on new research and innovation and based on public-private partnerships that place local communities at their centre.

Each Lab uses a landscape restoration project as the starting point to catalyse the development of circular bioeconomy value chains while restoring biodiversity and local livelihoods. They are the start of a journey towards more resilient communities and landscapes.

[circularbioeconomyalliance.org](https://circularbioeconomyalliance.org)

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