

The background of the page is a photograph of a dense, green forest. A river flows through the center of the forest, with its banks covered in thick vegetation. The sky is hazy and grey. A green banner with white text is overlaid on the lower part of the image.

Forests for Future: Forest landscape restoration in Southwest Ethiopia



Deforestation threatens biodiversity and the livelihoods of the local communities.

Local forest users receiving training in forest conservation and sustainable and participatory forest management.



Forest landscapes under pressure

Forests and trees provide livelihoods and food security for more than one billion people worldwide. They serve as a safety net in particular for women, children and landless farmers.

The last high forests of Southwest Ethiopia have been identified as particularly valuable key ecosystems. They belong to one of the two remnant natural forest blocks in Ethiopia and provide habitat for a rich and endemic biodiversity. Due to the diversity of its terrain and ecosystems, high amounts of rainfall and fertile soils, the region is considered as one of the most food-secure in the country. Forests and forest products are of great importance for the livelihood of the rural poor. However, forest degradation and deforestation in Ethiopia are serious and jeopardise people's livelihoods, food, water and energy security and the resilience of both people and natural ecosystems. Fragmented forest patches prevent gene flow, give access to further degradation and reduce essential ecosystem services, which leads to an increasing vulnerability of both forests and two million people of forest dependent communities in Bench-Sheko Zone, Kafa Biosphere Reserve and Sheka Forest Biosphere Reserve.

First steps towards forest landscape restoration

In order to stabilise existing forests, initiate community-based restoration, develop income schemes for the local communities and build up the capacities of community representatives, local NGOs and key government officials, NABU set up a project in partnership with Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resources Association (EWNRA).

Our joint project is focussing on the following major activities:

- Initiation of the *Southwest Forest Alliance*, a platform for Southwest forest stakeholders for exchange, networking, capacity building and joint strategic collaboration
- Participatory forest assessment for selection of priority intervention sites and measures
- Piloting of community-based *Forest Action Plans*
- Capacity development at all levels
- Income generation for forest user groups / Participatory Forest Management (PFM) groups
- Awareness creation on forest degradation and means to intervene
- Support to local conservation NGOs for civil society enhancement in Ethiopia

The project initiated *Southwest Forest Alliance* offers an exchange platform for actors and stakeholders from the forest sector.



Local green value chains like the Ethiopian cardamom generates additional income for forest users.



The extensive forests offer important habitat for threatened species such as the Crowned Eagle.



Our project regions

The project targets the Bench-Sheko Zone, Kafa Biosphere Reserve and Sheka Forest Biosphere Reserve in Southwest Ethiopia.

Bench-Sheko Zone has a great share of lowland. In the past, the area has suffered severe forest decline from refugees' settlements, nowadays, informal settlements as well as commercial farms increase the deforestation process within the zone. In the 466,800 hectare zone, income from forest resources is the most important source of livelihood for the population, alongside agriculture.

Kafa Biosphere Reserve is characterised by Afromontane mountain cloud, rain and bamboo forests and wetlands on 760,000 hectare. The forests are highly fragmented and suffering from impacts of climate change. NABU has been supporting forest restoration and conservation in Kafa since 2006.

Sheka Forest Biosphere Reserve comprises unique natural landscapes of about 240,000 hectare, ranging from cool, humid highlands to hot lowlands. As in Kafa and Bench-Sheko, wild *Coffea arabica* is part of the characteristic Afromontane rainforests of the region.





www.forestsforfuture-ethiopia.com

www.NABU.de/forests-for-future

The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU), has promoted the interests of people and nature for more than 120 years drawing on its unwavering commitment, specialised expertise and the backing of its 820,000 members and supporters. The NGO is the largest of its kind in Germany. NABU has been working towards the protection of Kafa's unique environment with national and international partners and support from the German government since 2006. NABU aims to ensure the conservation and restoration of the Afromontane cloud forests and wetlands to preserve ecosystem resilience and unique biodiversity, reduce CO₂ emissions and sustain ecosystem services for local communities.



“Forests for Future: Developing forest landscapes for livelihoods and climate adaptation in Southwest Ethiopia”



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