



# Rwanda

COUNTRY OFFICE

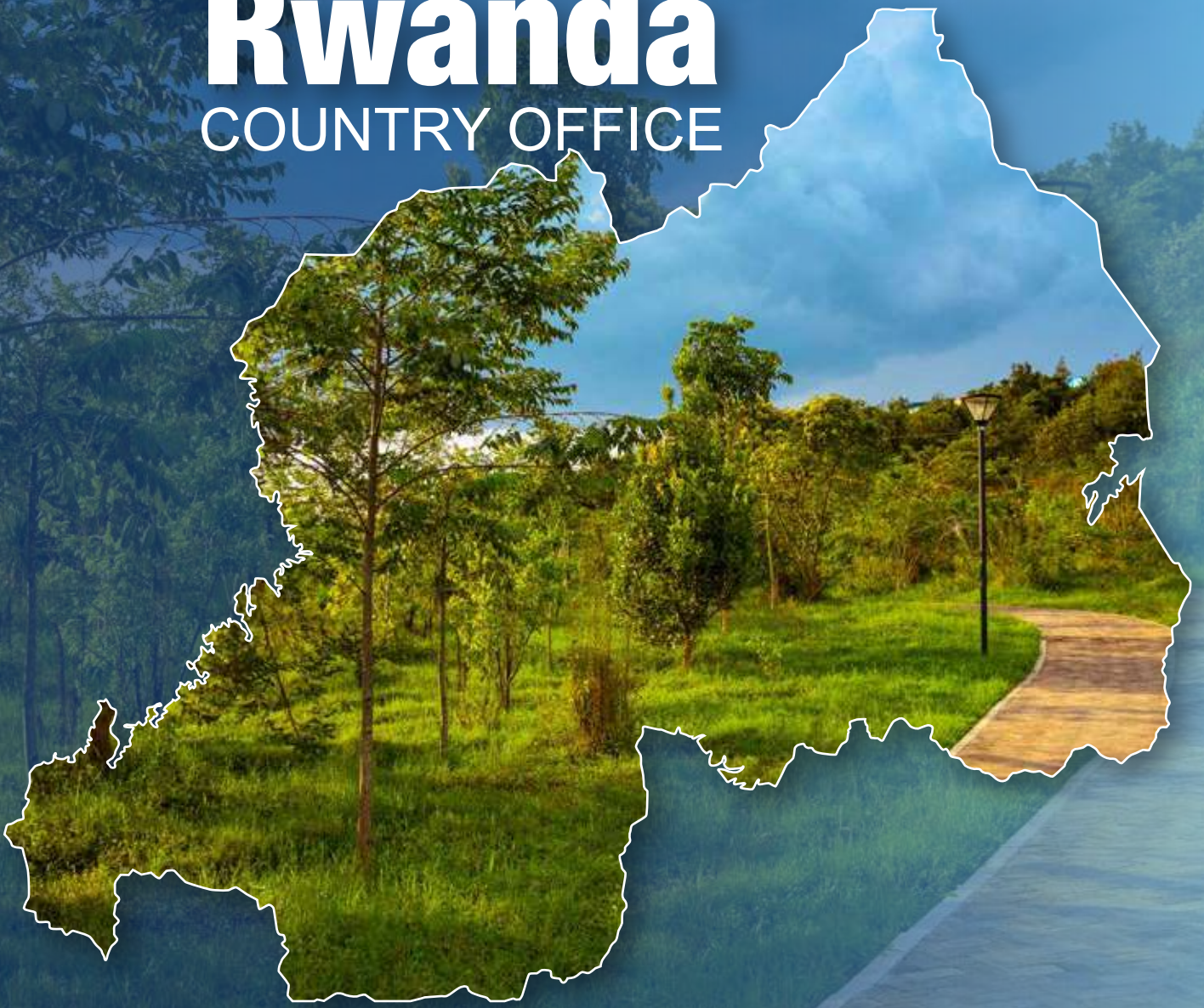




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IUCN is a membership Union composed of both government and civil society organisations. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its more than 1,400 Member organisations and the input of more than 15,000 experts. IUCN is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) opened an office in Rwanda in 2016 to support the Government of Rwanda in achieving its overall conservation and development objectives. Since then, it has implemented projects that have contributed to Rwanda's national policies and international commitments such as those under the Bonn Challenge/African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Using *Nature-based Solutions (NbS)* and *community approaches*, the IUCN Rwanda Country Office aims to address key threats to Rwanda's people and nature, caused by extremely high pressure on land and water, high levels of climate change vulnerability, and high

levels of poverty, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Acknowledging the drivers of biodiversity loss and the interdependencies between people and nature, the IUCN Rwanda Country Office aims to build on opportunities provided by Rwanda's conducive biophysical factors and climate for nature, biodiversity-related policies towards green growth, sustainable development, and investment potential.

The Rwanda Country Office can draw on the strong global experience of IUCN's members and Commissions, and on the scientific credibility of its standards and tools, including the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas. IUCN is also an

accredited entity of the Green Climate Fund and Global Environment Facility.

The Government of Rwanda has been an IUCN member since 2014. Since IUCN started in Rwanda, it has implemented Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) programmes. Currently, the office is expanding its programmes in Sustainable Agriculture and other themes.

IUCN Rwanda is working under a Memorandum of Understanding for the period 2019 – 2029 with the Ministry of Environment. In December 2021, the Government of Rwanda, represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and IUCN signed the latest Host Country Agreement as an International Organisation.

# IUCN Rwanda

## Vision

The IUCN Rwanda Country Office subscribes to the overall IUCN vision: *A just world that values and conserves nature.*

## Mission

The IUCN Rwanda Country Office specifies its mission as follows: *To assist the Government and the people of Rwanda to conserve the integrity and diversity of Rwanda's nature, and to support and sustain healthy and resilient ecosystems that provide essential services to Rwanda's people.*

## Expertise



Forest and landscape restoration



Integrated water resources management



Biodiversity conservation (*on-farm*)



Climate change adaptation and mitigation



Natural resources governance and management  
(including protected and conserved areas management)



Geo-spatial ecosystems mapping and modelling



Natural resources economics and ecosystems valuation



Sustainable agriculture using Nature based Solutions (NbS) packages



Sustainable cities



Sustainable conservation finance instruments

## IUCN Rwanda strategic objectives

With “nature and biodiversity” central to IUCN’s mandate and strategy, and in line with its vision and mission, the IUCN Rwanda Country Office pursues four strategic priorities during the period 2021-2030:

1. Forest and landscape restoration (FLR), sustainable agriculture, sustainable cities and protected and conservation areas
2. Integrated water resources management (IWRM)
3. Climate change adaptation and mitigation for sustainable development
4. Sustainable financing mechanisms for effective natural resource management

• Data • Science • Knowledge • Conservation action • Nature-based Solutions • Governance • Innovative financing

The strategic priorities will entail integration of Biodiversity, Gender and Youth, and Natural Resource Governance and Rights as cross-cutting areas, using Participatory Community Approach and Nature-based Solution as guiding principles. The implementation of the IUCN Rwanda Strategy contributes directly to the four goals of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and other relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and International Commitments.

**Nature-based Solutions actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.**

## IUCN Rwanda current projects portfolio

Project	Implementing Partners	Location	Summary	Donor
Transforming Eastern Province through Adaptation ( <i>TREPA</i> )  2022 - 2027	Rwanda Forestry Authority, CordAid, Enabel, World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), World Vision, IUCN	Eastern Province - Kirehe, Ngoma, Kayonza, Rwamagana, Bugesera, Gatsibo, and Nyagatare	The project intends to restore 60,000 hectares of degraded landscapes into climate resilient ecosystems through re-forestation, agroforestry, restoration of pasture lands and erosion control measures. The project also intends to increase the resilience of 75,000 smallholder farmers.	Green Climate Fund
Alliance for Restoration of Forest Landscapes and Ecosystems in Africa ( <i>AREECA</i> )  2020 - 2025	Rwanda Forestry Authority, Food and Agriculture Organization, World Bank, World Resources Institute, IUCN	Eastern Province – Kirehe and Nyagatare	Targeting the restoration of 25,000 ha of degraded lands in the Kirehe and Nyagatare districts, the programme is putting up catalytic and supportive measures that impact the livelihoods of over 13,000 households and over 50,000 people.	German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU)
Reducing vulnerability to climate change through enhanced community-based biodiversity conservation in the Eastern Province of Rwanda ( <i>COMBIO</i> )  2021 - 2027	Rwanda Forestry Authority, Enabel, IUCN	Eastern Province - Kirehe, Ngoma, Kayonza, Rwamagana, Bugesera, Gatsibo, and Nyagatare	COMBIO aims to increase the geographic distribution of biodiversity supportive areas and enhance the ecosystem's biodiversity connectivity. The project is expected to directly benefit a total of 220,796 people and over 12,700 ha planted on protective landscapes across the Eastern Province.	Embassy of Sweden in Rwanda

Project	Implementing Partners	Location	Summary	Donor
<p>Embedding Integrated Water Resource Management in Rwanda (<i>EWMR</i>) commonly known as Sebeya Project</p> <p> 2019 – 2023</p>	<p>Rwanda Development Board, Rwanda Rural Rehabilitation Initiative, Rwanda Water Resources Board, the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), IUCN</p>	<p>Western Province - Rubavu, Nyabihu, Rutsiro and Ngororero</p>	<p>Through proactive and participatory engagement, the project has yielded tangible benefits that include reduced impacts of flooding in the catchment, landscapes restored, enhanced agricultural yields and improved community livelihoods</p>	<p>Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Rwanda.</p>
<p>Improving resilience of farmers' livelihoods to climate change through innovative, research proven climate-smart agroforestry and efficient use of tree resources in the Eastern Province and peri-urban areas of Kigali City (<i>DeSIRA</i>)</p> <p> 2022 - 2027</p>	<p>IUCN, Enabel, Ghent University of Rwanda and CIFOR-ICRAF</p>	<p>Eastern Province and peri-urban areas of Kigali</p>	<p>To decrease the vulnerability of communities in Eastern Province, the DeSIRA project is enhancing capacity of smallholder farmers to cope with the impacts of climate change through knowledge-sharing to agroforestry actions aligned to the IUCN Nature-based Solutions.</p>	<p>European Union Delegation to Rwanda</p>
<p>Applying and sharing lessons in the use of technology and digital-based solutions for wildlife conservation and protected areas management in Rwanda (<i>Tech4Nature</i>)</p> <p> 2022 - 2027</p>	<p>Rwanda Development Board, IUCN</p>	<p>Akagera National Park, Gishwati-Mukura National Park, Nyungwe National Park, Volcanoes National Park</p>	<p>To demonstrate digital-based solutions for wildlife conservation and protected areas management in Rwanda, benchmarking against the IUCN Green List Standard for protected and conserved areas.</p>	<p>HUWAEI</p>

## IUCN Rwanda Government partners

Institution	Areas of Collaboration
Government of Rwanda represented by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MINAFET)	Host agreement for IUCN
Ministry of Environment (MoE)	Environment and natural resources sector
Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources Board (MINAGRI)	Sustainable agriculture
Rwanda National Environment Fund (FONERWA)	Sustainable finance for NR sectors
Rwanda Development Board (RDB)	Protected areas and OECMs
Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB)	Integrated water resources management
Rwanda Forestry Authority (RFA)	Forest land restoration
Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA)	Wetlands, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation
Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB)	Agriculture extension
National Agriculture Export Board (NAEB)	Sustainable agriculture, value chains of high value crops and horticulture.

## IUCN members in Rwanda

Name of institution	Status (April 2021)	Area of Collaboration
Government of Rwanda represented by MoE	State Member	Environment and Natural Resources
APEFA - Action for Environment Protection and Promotion of Agriculture Sectors	National member	Rural Livelihoods and CBNRM <i>(Community-based natural resources management)</i>
ARECO - Rwandese Association of Ecologists	National member	Conservation Enterprises, Wetlands and CBNRM
ARCOS – Albertine Rift Conservation Society	International member	Conservation Enterprises, Wetlands and CBNRM <i>(Community-based natural resources management)</i>
AWF – African Wildlife Foundation	International member	Volcanoes National Park
ICF – International Crane Foundation	International member	Species Conservation, Conservation Agreements
ICRAF – World Agroforestry Centre	International member	Agroforestry
RWCA – Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association	National member	Biodiversity Conservation, Wetlands Restoration, PES <i>(Payment for Ecosystem Services)</i>
WCS – Wildlife Conservation Society	International member	Protected Areas Management and landscape restoration



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**Butera Musafili**

Many people from Bigogwe, including myself, at first did not welcome this terracing initiative because we thought they wanted to demolish our lands. The landscape restoration initiatives have really helped us prevent soil erosion and increase our agricultural yields. On my two hectares of land, I am able to grow Irish potatoes and fodder for my cows. They are in good condition.

*Sebeya Project*

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**Yvonne Uwamurera**

The project trained us on the role of agroforestry trees in increasing our crop yields, how to efficiently use inputs such as fertilizer, manure, and improved seeds and also on how to measure water content in soil using different techniques and tools.

*DeSIRA Project*

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**Thierry Niyoyita**

I remember it was in 2020 when we were in the lockdown due to COVID-19. As youth, we were encouraged to participate in the project implementation. I used the money I earned to invest in different activities. Now I have two cows and a calf. Another one will give birth soon. I planted 500 Kilograms of potato seeds, and I am expecting to harvest about five or six tons.

*Sebeya Project*

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**Aphrodis Rutagengwa**

I have been able to harvest over 600kg of maize compared to 200kg the land used to yield before, something unusual! I have been able to improve my income, food security and nutrition.

*DeSIRA Project*

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## Alice Nyiransabimana

There are many more trees in my farms compared to five years ago. Today we are happy to see our Calliandra trees growing very fast, and our cows are getting sufficient fodder. AREECA project has truly changed our lives. Our mindset towards taking care of trees has changed because we know and have experienced the benefits of trees in our homesteads. Our roofs are no longer carried away by strong winds. The trees act as wind breakers.

*AREECA Project*





### How to partner with us


IUCN has evolved over six decades into the world's largest community of environmental experts. Join us in building a sustainable future:


- Become a member organisation
- Join one of our six commissions as a conservation professional
- Provide support to our general work or to a specific project and initiative

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