Key Takeaways from AFR100 Conference

This document summarizes main points and actions from the first AFR100 partnership conference, and is a companion document to the comprehensive report produced by the PICOTEAM conference facilitators.

Summary

- **The conference was marked by strong engagement from across the AFR100 partnership, and in particular from AFR100 partner countries.** Countries' presentations highlighted significant progress in assessing restoration opportunities, developing strategies to implement forest landscape restoration at scale, and pivoting to focus on implementation. Supporting these countries to accelerate implementation in the year ahead is a priority.

- **AFR100 is a contribution to the Bonn Challenge and African Resilient Landscapes Initiative (ARLI).** It facilitates action towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Climate Agreement, Land Degradation Neutrality target-setting process, and a range of sustainable landscape management targets**.** AFR100 contributes *to* many agendas and also relies on contributions *from* a broad range of political, technical, and financial partners. Reinforcing these links and enhancing cooperation among related initiatives and across sectors will be essential if we are to achieve restoration at scale. Effective coordination among technical partners will facilitate a full and efficient response to partner countries' requests for assistance.

- **African ownership is a cornerstone of the AFR100.** Close partnership from the Ethiopian Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change in organizing and facilitating the conference greatly enriched the discussions. Hearing about the impacts of restoration from colleagues in Ethiopia and seeing these impacts firsthand on the field visit to Tigray was uniquely informative and inspiring. AFR100 country focal points' feedback to shape the conference agenda, background notes in advance of the conference, and informative presentations set the stage for impactful dialogue and knowledge-sharing, and sharpened the mandate for AFR100 technical and financial partners moving forward.

- **Knowledge management is an essential component of scaling up, and the AFR100 website can play a key role.** The web platform provides significant opportunities to facilitate connections across the AFR100 partnership and systematically engage partners in sharing information and lessons learned on a rolling basis. Partners' feedback will be very valuable in strengthening the website and maximizing the usefulness of this platform particularly for communication and capacity building activities.

Priority Actions to Move Forward

- **NEPAD Agency will coordinate follow-up from AFR100 technical partners with partner countries** for more detailed discussions on how to support implementation in coming weeks. Discussions will include options to address six priority areas that conference participants cited as essential for creating transformative change for scaling up restoration:
  - **Land tenure:** When land and resource rights are secure, communities are empowered to govern resource use and are more likely to retain the benefits derived from restoration. Enforcing enabling conditions for secure tenure will empower communities to enforce

bylaws or "local conventions" to guide land use planning and ensure that forests are protected from overuse.

- o **Community mobilization:** Restoration depends on changes in attitudes, shifts in behaviors and improved management practices, particularly by rural communities. Knowledge-sharing and communication efforts should amplify the voices of farmer innovators and local restoration champions to share knowledge and strengthen community buy-in.
- o **Finance, markets, and value chains:** Financing restoration at scale requires tapping new sources of private finance and strengthening markets for the goods and services delivered by restoration activities. Identifying investable restoration projects in each AFR100 partner county will be essential to expand financing for restoration and increasing private-sector participation.
- o **Monitoring:** Setting a baseline and monitoring restoration progress on the ground is essential for tracking progress against restoration targets and enabling stakeholders to 'see the change.' Monitoring must encompass both biophysical changes in the landscape and socio-economic impacts that affect human well-being.
- o **Coordination and knowledge transfer across initiatives:** Reinforcing the links and improving coordination among these initiatives is essential if we are to derive maximum value from the considerable technical, human, and financial resources associated with these partnerships and effectively support the full range of AFR100 partner countries in meeting their environment and development objectives.

- **Launch the AFR100 website, building on partners' feedback.** Please be sure to respond to the feedback questionnaire circulated this week. The website will be an important tool in enhancing communication and coordination among related initiatives and in capacity building.