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SITUATION REPORT

GREAT GREEN WALL · LAND RESTORATION · SUDAN

Great Green Wall: A \$78 Million Programme for Nine Countries. Where Sudan Stands.

Sudan reports 285,729 hectares under restoration, the third-largest total among the 11 founding states.

The illustration shows a stylized landscape with a sun in the top right, a row of trees in the middle, and a progress bar at the bottom. The progress bar is a horizontal line with a small orange segment on the left, indicating progress.

3Bi Research Team

12 October 2026

A New \$78 Million Great Green Wall Programme Covers Nine Countries: Where Sudan's Restoration Stands

3Bi Situation Report — Climate & Energy Desk | First edition

Research Team

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A new US\$78 million GEF programme will restore 270,000 hectares across nine Great Green Wall countries. Sudan, a founding member, reports the third-largest restoration area, while its own GCF project has drawn 20% of its grant.

A new US\$78 million GEF programme, launched at a regional workshop in Saint-Louis, Senegal, aims to restore more than 270,000 hectares across nine Great Green Wall countries. Sudan, a founding member, is not among them. (Illustration: 3Bi)

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Headline Fact

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has committed US\$78 million to a programme that aims to restore more than 270,000 hectares of degraded land and improve the livelihoods of five million people, more than half of them women, across nine Great Green Wall countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal (UN Environment Programme, 6 October 2026). With co-financing from the Green Climate Fund (GCF), IFAD, FAO and bilateral partners, total resources exceed US\$500 million (UNEP, 6 October 2026; Capital FM, 7 October 2026). Its regional coordination project was launched at a workshop in Saint-Louis, Senegal, held from 28 September to 3 October (Le Soleil, 28 September 2026). Sudan, one of the 11 founding member states of the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall, is not among the nine. In the latest partner-validated figures, it reports 285,729 hectares under restoration, the third-largest national total after Ethiopia and Niger (UNCCD, August 2026).

Timeline

- **2007:** Member states found the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall through the Community of Sahel-Saharan States and the African Union. The 11 founding members are Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan (UNCCD, August 2026).
- **13 November 2020:** The GCF Board approves “Gums for Adaptation and Mitigation in Sudan” (GAMS, SAP019), a US\$9.975 million grant implemented by FAO to restore the gum arabic belt in Kordofan, “expanding Africa’s Great Green Wall” (GCF project page, accessed 12 October 2026).
- **2021:** The Great Green Wall Accelerator is launched at the One Planet Summit, where partners pledge more than US\$19 billion (UNCCD, August 2026).
- **20 June 2024:** The GEF approves the concept for the nine-country programme, formally titled “Transformation Approach to Large Scale Investment in Support of the Implementation of the



Great Green Wall Initiative" (GEF project database, ID 11455).

- **24 August 2026:** At a high-level event on the margins of UNCCD COP17 in Ulaanbaatar, the African Union, the African Development Bank and partners call for a shift "from projects to programmes". The bank announces the first African Great Green Wall Investment Forum for 2027 (African Union, 24 August 2026). AU Commissioner Moses Vilakati puts the initiative's financing gap to 2030 at around US\$14 billion (African Development Bank, 26 August 2026).
- **28 September–3 October 2026:** The Saint-Louis launch workshop reviews the 2026 workplan, governance, monitoring and evaluation, gender, and carbon and biodiversity finance (Le Soleil, 28 September 2026).
- **6 October 2026:** UNEP announces the programme. UNEP will implement eight of its ten projects and the West African Development Bank (BOAD) the other two (UNEP, 6 October 2026).

What We Know / What We Don't

We know the programme's shape. Mali has the largest target, 150,000 hectares, and Niger will rehabilitate 55,000. Ethiopia, the only Horn of Africa country in the group, will restore 22,000 hectares and bring 40,000 hectares of natural forest under improved management (UNEP, 6 October 2026). UNEP's Susan Gardner said the programme gives countries "a common framework so that they can plan, measure, and learn from the results together", contributing to their commitment to bring 30% of degraded land under restoration by 2030 (UNEP, 6 October 2026).

We know where the Wall stands overall. The Great Green Wall Observatory reports 1.66 million hectares under restoration against a 2030 target of 100 million, along with 4.6 million jobs and 24 million tonnes of CO₂-equivalent sequestered. UNCCD cautions that these figures come from fewer than 90 of the 389 projects reported as of 31 December 2025, and that member states' national coalitions still need to validate them (UNCCD, August 2026). Sudan's line reads 285,729 hectares, 13,817 jobs, four million beneficiaries and five million tonnes of CO₂-equivalent, which is about 17% of the reported hectares (3Bi calculation from UNCCD, August 2026).

We know the status of Sudan's flagship Great Green Wall project. By the end of 2025, GAMS had received US\$1,972,090 of its US\$9.975 million grant (about 20%) and spent US\$1,400,830. Against a target of 276,000 hectares, it reported no hectares restored (GCF, GAMS 2025 annual performance report). The report says field restoration was suspended throughout 2025 because teams could not safely reach the sites. Remote monitoring of vegetation continued, and preparations are under way to resume work in four of the eleven target localities in 2026. The project is due to close on 25 November 2028 (GCF annual performance report; GCF project page).

We do not know why Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea are outside the nine-country programme, and



none of the sources we reviewed explains it. 3Bi is not claiming that Sudan applied, or that it was excluded. We do not know whether non-participating member states can use the programme's shared monitoring and knowledge platforms. Nor have we found a Sudanese GEF-8 Great Green Wall project in the pipeline. The Observatory's national figures and the GAMS report measure different things; we do not treat one as contradicting the other.

Implications

For Sudan, the reported restoration area is an asset, but only a provisional one. The African Development Bank's 2027 investment forum is designed to build "bankable programmes" (African Union, 24 August 2026). Investors will look for figures validated by national coalitions and pipelines built on the shared reporting framework, which UNCCD says ten of the 11 founding countries have developed and validated (UNCCD, August 2026). In our reading, the nearest test is GAMS itself. About 80% of its grant is undisbursed and roughly 775 days of implementation remain, so whether work restarts in those four localities in 2026 will shape how credible Sudan's next proposal looks.

The climate backdrop raises the stakes. ICPAC's climate watch of 17 September flagged rainfall deficits, soil-moisture deficits and vegetation stress across the northern sector of Eastern Africa, with an elevated risk to farming, pasture and water, especially in Sudan, northern Ethiopia and parts of Eritrea. It gave a greater than 90% probability that El Niño conditions persist through March–May 2027 (ICPAC, 17 September 2026). Any 2026–27 restoration push in Kordofan would start in a drought-stressed landscape: a reason to plan species and water for the restart, not to delay it.

Watch Next

- **By 16 October 2026:** ICPAC's next update of its climate watch for the northern sector of Eastern Africa, including Sudan (ICPAC, 17 September 2026).
- **19–30 October 2026:** CBD COP17 in Yerevan, the first stocktake of the 2022 Global Biodiversity Framework (Climate Home News, 1 October 2026).
- **9–20 November 2026:** COP31 in Antalya (UNFCCC, COP31 overview schedule).
- **During 2026:** Whether GAMS field work resumes in the four localities where access has improved (GCF annual performance report).
- **2027:** The African Development Bank's first African Great Green Wall Investment Forum (African Union, 24 August 2026).



Sourcing & Next Update

Primary sources: UN Environment Programme press release on the US\$78 million Great Green Wall initiative (6 October 2026); Le Soleil on the Saint-Louis launch of the GEF-8 project (28 September 2026); Capital FM (7 October 2026); GEF project database, TALSISI-GGWI (ID 11455); UNCCD, "Five Years of the GGW Accelerator" (August 2026); African Union press release (24 August 2026); African Development Bank news release (26 August 2026); GCF, SAP019 project page and 2025 annual performance report (published 5 September 2026); ICPAC Climate Watch Advisory (17 September 2026); Climate Home News, October 2026 climate calendar (1 October 2026); UNFCCC, COP31 overview schedule. For methodology questions or to propose a correction, contact 3Bi's Research Team via 3bisudan.org.

Next update expected when ICPAC revises its climate watch, or when the programme publishes its national project documents.

3Bi Research Team. This piece was produced through 3Bi's automated daily publications workflow, which monitors regional and international climate and energy reporting.

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