



# FORESTS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (FSD)

## Sustainable conservation of natural forest, biodiversity and ecosystem services

2022-2025 | Oromia Regional State of Ethiopia: East Bale, Bale, West Arsi, East Guji, and Borena zones | Projected number of forest-dependent households to be targeted: 55,677

Reconciling the need to produce more food for a growing population with an urgent need to protect natural forests for biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation represents one of the world's most pressing problems.

As the demand for agricultural production increases, smallholder farmers and forest communities frequently respond by clearing additional land to meet food demand and benefit from virgin soils that have not been exhausted. This expanded land clearing results in increased deforestation, loss of biodiversity, threats to water sources and rapid decline in agricultural productivity as soils are mined.

The four-year FSD programme aims to contribute to the sustainable conservation of natural forests, biodiversity and ecosystem services in the Bale Eco-region and associated landscapes in Guji and Borena zones in Oromia, Ethiopia through interventions that reduce deforestation and biodiversity loss, increase household incomes and resilience of the local community, and improve governance for integrated landscape management.

Since 2006, with funding from the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Ethiopia, Farm Africa and SOS Sahel Ethiopia have been working with communities in the

Bale Eco-region to conserve and protect natural resources, while also developing sustainable livelihoods.

The organisations' Bale Eco-region sustainable management programme (BERSMP) and Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) phase I and II projects laid a robust foundation for the sustainable management of forest resources using the Participatory Forest Management (PFM) approach. The FSD programme will build upon the results achieved through initiatives in reducing deforestation, cutting carbon emissions and increasing the incomes of forest-dependent communities.

The programme will scale out interventions aiming to reduce deforestation, biodiversity loss and depletion of other natural resources, further building institutional capacity of participatory forest management cooperatives (PFMCs) and participatory rangeland management cooperatives (PRMCs). It will develop economic opportunities for women, youth and climate-compatible forest enterprises and ensure knowledge management and coordination systems are operational across the governance levels from the kebeles upwards to regional and federal levels.



## PROJECT OVERVIEW:

Improve participatory management of Bale Mountains National Park, forests, rangelands and watersheds.



Reduce biodiversity threats through monitoring and conservation actions.



Increase agricultural livelihood opportunities for local communities without negatively affecting natural resources.



Establish viable green business partnerships and diversify non-agricultural livelihood options, creating jobs in green value chains.



Establish landscape change tracking systems that generate timely knowledge to inform decision-making.



Strengthen mechanisms for integrated landscape management and support multi-sectoral coordination.



## CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

### Ethiopian Climate-Resilient Green Economy (CRGE)

The programme contributes to the Ethiopian Climate-Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy, applying best practices in the integrated landscape management approach (ILM) linking communities in an integrated and participatory manner to enhance ecosystem functioning.

### United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



Improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities to lift them out of poverty.



Creating opportunities for women and youth to ensure effective participation and equal opportunities.



Strengthening communities' resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.



Promoting sustainable management of natural forests, restoration of degraded forest ecosystems and halting biodiversity losses.

### KEY EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT

- Management of natural forests, Bale Mountains National Park, rangelands, and watersheds is improved - strengthening participatory management mechanisms (including integrating traditional management systems in the region).
- Threats to biodiversity are reduced - supporting direct biodiversity monitoring and conservation actions.
- Agricultural livelihoods opportunities of local communities are increased - increasing communities' ability to produce for and interact with market actors to guarantee sufficient food production and income generation without negatively affecting resource conservation.
- Viable green business partnerships are established and non-agricultural livelihood options are diversified for job creation and employment opportunities - developing long-standing sustainable commercial relationships in green value chains.
- Integrated landscape change tracking systems - knowledge products developed for decision-making by landscape actors - setting up monitoring systems that generate relevant and timely knowledge to inform decision-making in all sectors.
- Mechanisms for integrated landscape management are established and strengthened, supporting efficient multi-sectoral coordination.

