



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Tanzania builds climate resilience in major push to restore landscapes hosting displaced populations**

**Tbilisi, 25 October 2023** – The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) today announced a USD 19 million project aiming to build climate resilience in the United Republic of Tanzania, part of a landmark collaboration with UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

The project targets Tanzania's Kigoma region – on the northeastern shores of Lake Tanganyika – hosting a population of approximately 2.3 million and an additional 250,000 refugees from neighbouring countries, the majority of whom live in the refugee camps of Nduta and Nyarugusu. These settlements, which were rapidly established in response to critical humanitarian needs, have added to the population pressures on the degraded surrounding ecosystems.

Climate change, both now and projected, further increases the pressures on these landscapes and the climate vulnerability of both host and displaced communities.

The five-year project, *Building Climate Resilience in the Landscapes of the Kigoma Region of Tanzania*, was approved by the GCF Board at its 37th meeting in Tbilisi, Georgia.

The initiative is set to be a flagship approach on the practice of using nature-based solutions and ecosystem restoration as a holistic strategy to adapt to climate change - technically referred to as [ecosystem-based adaptation](#) - especially in landscapes hosting displaced populations.

It aims to address the complex and interconnected resilience needs of host communities and displaced populations in an environment where climate, humanitarian, and development interact to create compound risks.

The project will directly benefit up to 570,000 people, while improving and conserving 261,000 hectares of forest and agroecological ecosystems in support of local livelihoods in the districts of Kasulu, Kakonko and Kibondo. Climate-resilient land use planning, forestry, agriculture, water security, flood control and policy interventions will be implemented in an integrated landscape approach.

At the signing ceremony for the Legal Agreement between GCF and UNEP, Jessica Troni, UNEP's Adaptation Portfolio Manager, said: "This project provides much needed finance for the adaptation needs of over half a million people in a highly vulnerable region in Tanzania. It marks a significant and ground-breaking milestone in addressing the nexus between food, forests and energy and the climate vulnerability of host communities and displaced populations reliant on the critical, sensitive ecosystems and their services."



“UNHCR has been spearheading efforts to address issues of environmental degradation and sustainable energy provision in areas hosting refugees in Tanzania, and we are extremely grateful for this GCF project – the first of its kind - that will help both refugees and the generous communities that have been hosting them to adapt to the challenges faced from climate change,” said Ms. Mahoua Parums, UNHCR’s Representative in Tanzania.

In recent decades, the Kigoma region has grappled with severe environmental degradation due to burgeoning population growth, unsustainable agricultural practices, and deforestation. The resulting vulnerabilities have manifested in a drop in staple maize yields and intensified flooding events.

Through its multifaceted approach, the project aims to address these challenges by focusing on the multiple benefits of ecosystem-based adaptation [practices](#). UNEP and the Government of Tanzania have now already worked together on ecosystem-based adaptation projects in the country’s [coastal areas](#), [cities](#), [rural areas](#), and on the [shores of Lake Victoria](#).

The UNFCCC Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damage and the Global Migration Group, both of which UNEP is engaged with, highlight the need for UN agencies to address the impacts of climate change on human mobility and displacement.

Highlighting the broader vision, Mr. Fredrick Ibrahim Kibuta, Tanzanian Ambassador to Russia, said: “Climate change continues to be among the topmost challenges facing modern humanity. National and international measures are underway, including our development of a National Adaptation Plan. But these policy initiatives need translation into actionable projects. That's where the new project in Kigoma comes in.”

“We appreciate and thank cordial cooperation with GCF throughout the development of the project. Tanzania looks forward to continue working with UNEP and GCF on more project proposals on adaptation,” the Ambassador continued.

Verónica Gálmez, Deputy Director of the Division of Mitigation and Adaptation of the Green Climate Fund, said: “I am very pleased to see this project approved today, a project that will benefit the most vulnerable populations in Tanzania. In partnership with UNEP, UNHCR, and the Vice-President’s Office of the United Republic of Tanzania, this ecosystem-based adaptation project will enhance the resilience of the landscapes in Kigoma and its residents, including local communities and displaced populations”.

Tanzania currently hosts around 250,000 refugees, mainly from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.



## **Notes to Editors**

### **About the UN Environment Programme**

UNEP is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

### **About the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for people forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution. We lead international action to protect refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. Our vision is a world where every person forced to flee can build a better future.

### **For more information, please contact:**

[News and Media Unit](#), UN Environment Programme

[Faith Kasina](#), UNHCR, Nairobi, +254 113 427 094

[Bahia Egeh](#), UNHCR, Dar Es Salaam, +255 765 168 179