



Water-smart Forest Landscape Restoration Stakeholder Consultation Workshop Report

Abaya-Chamo Catchment, 23-25 June 2024, Ethiopia



Acknowledgement

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the individuals and organizations that made our workshop and two-day field visit to the Abaya-Chamo catchment possible. We are deeply thankful to the GIZ Forests for Future (F4F) project team in Arba Minch. In particular, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to Rita, Efrata, Abera and Ararsa, who generously shared their time and knowledge with us. Their insightful guidance throughout the workshop and field tour provided us with a comprehensive understanding of the ongoing projects in the GIZ operational areas. Their contributions were invaluable, and we are grateful for their expertise.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the local government focal persons, Mr. Yasin and Mr. Mengistu, who joined us during our visit to West Abaya woreda. Their local knowledge and insights were invaluable, providing us with a deeper understanding of the context and challenges faced by the communities in the area. We appreciate the time they took to share their perspectives with us and look forward to incorporating their insights into our final report.

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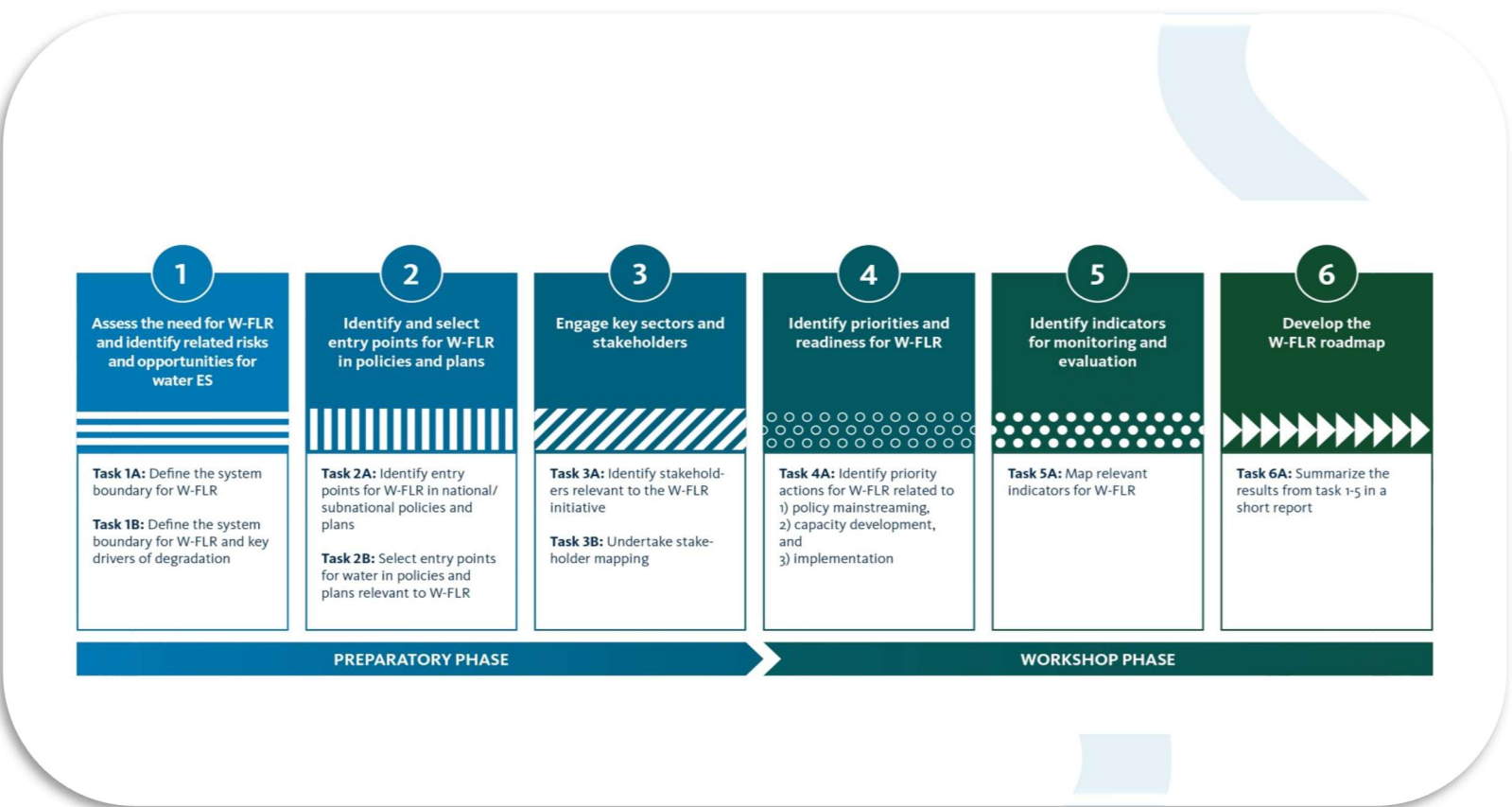
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1. Context and Introduction

The Abaya-Chamo catchment area, situated in Ethiopia's newly emerged South Ethiopia regional state, is a vital water system for the region's agricultural, industrial, and urban development. Characterized by rugged mountains and vast floodplains, this diverse landscape is home to the Abaya-Chamo River, a critical component of Ethiopia's hydrological network. However, the Abaya-Chamo catchment faces significant challenges due to human-induced pressures, particularly deforestation and landscape degradation. These issues have far-reaching consequences for the water ecosystem services, local communities, and the environment itself. Deforestation and related land degradation can cause substantial damage to infrastructure, disrupt agricultural production, and pose a risk to human life. In recent years, the severity of degradation and associated water ecosystem service risks in the catchment have increased. Recognizing this urgency, the GIZ "Forests4Future" (F4F) project has been established to directly support Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) practices.

Forest ecosystems and water security are highly interdependent. As such, any forest and landscape restoration effort must consider water aspects, as well as being participatory and transparent. SIWI has therefore, with support of Sida and GIZ developed the Water-smart FLR (W-FLR) Tool, to ensure that forest and landscape restoration initiatives are sustainable, resilient, and successful in the long-term. The overall objective of the W-FLR Tool is to assess water risks and opportunities, and mainstream water into FLR-relevant plans and initiatives. The tool will enable mainstreaming of water related to hydrological flows, water availability, and water quality etc., into sectors that are important for making FLR sustainable, such as the forestry, agriculture, and environment sectors. The W-FLR Tools is divided into a preparatory and workshop phase and has six modules:



The GIZ F4F program is supporting a pilot test of the W-FLR tool in practice, with the Lakes Abaya-Chamo catchment being one of three pilot areas. The preparatory phase was led by SIWI and included, in addition to a desk review of relevant documents, an online consultation with national-level stakeholders and policymakers. This phase resulted in a report that laid the groundwork for consulting with local stakeholders in the Lake Abaya and Chamo catchment areas. The preparatory phase comprised an analysis of publicly available reports and data on water resources in Ethiopia relevant to forest restoration landscapes, as well as an analysis of relevant policy frameworks.

2. Workshop Program Overview

The objective of the workshop was to facilitate local stakeholders to review and validate the findings of the W-FLR preparatory phase, including:

- System boundary for the FLR initiative and the water ecosystem service at risk
- Identification of relevant FLR and sector policies and analysis of the inclusion of water
- Identification relevant stakeholder and analysis of their interest and influence (power)
- Identification of relevant entry points for mainstreaming water considerations in FLR

The target audience for the workshop included the GIZ project team and 38 representatives from relevant GIZ F4F (Forests for Future) project implementing zonal and woreda level government agencies, GIZ forest for the future implementing NGOs, local communities (project beneficiaries) who are involved in the GIZ land management and restoration efforts in the Abaya-Chamo catchment.

3. The Workshop

3.1. Welcoming and Opening Remarks

The Workshop commenced with a warm welcome and opening remarks from representatives of GIZ, SIWI, and the Ethiopian government. Each speaker that addressed the audience highlighted the significance of the workshop and the collaborative effort towards restoring the Abaya-Chamo catchment.

GIZ Representative began by welcoming all participants to the workshop. He expressed gratitude to SIWI for hosting the workshop and for its technical expertise in introducing the W-FLR tool.



Briefly, the GIZ representative acknowledged the critical environmental challenges facing the Abaya-Chamo catchment, including land degradation and water scarcity. He emphasized that even if we are water considerate in our restoration it is important to pause and think critically about the water elements of our intervention. He emphasized the urgency of implementing effective restoration efforts that take into account water issues. The GIZ representative believes that the W-FLR tool is a potential game-changer in addressing water related challenges of restoration interventions.

Figure. Opening address by Mr. Abera of GIZ

SIWI Representative (Dr. Håkan Tropp, Acting Chief Operating Officer) emphasized SIWI's technical expertise in water governance and developing and applying the W-FLR tool. He pointed out the importance of communication, financial mechanisms, and coordination for successful restoration efforts. **Communication** is vital for building trust, fostering collaboration, and ensuring all stakeholders are informed and engaged throughout the restoration process. **Financial Mechanisms** are needed to support restoration activities. This includes **securing funding**: Identifying and securing reliable funding sources, such as government budgets, donor grants, private sector investment, or innovative financing mechanisms like payments for ecosystem services; **financial planning and budgeting**: Developing a clear budget for restoration activities, considering factors like labor costs, materials, equipment needs, and long-term maintenance; and **transparent financial management**: Implementing transparent and accountable financial management practices to ensure efficient use of allocated funds and build trust with stakeholders. It is also important with **coordination** between various stakeholders for successful restoration, including **inter-agency collaboration and effective project management**. He positioned the W-FLR tool as a valuable framework for facilitating communication, financial planning, and coordinated action within the Abaya-Chamo catchment restoration program.

Government Representative expressed the Ethiopian government's strong commitment to addressing land degradation and restoring vital ecosystems throughout the country. He highlighted the Abaya-Chamo catchment as a priority area and emphasized the importance of restoring its ecological health for the benefit of current and future generations. He viewed the workshop as a crucial stepping-stone in the development and implementation of a comprehensive restoration plan for the Abaya-Chamo catchment and expressed confidence that the workshop's outcomes would contribute significantly to this goal. He concluded his remarks with a call to action, encouraging all participants to actively engage in the workshop discussions and share their perspectives. He emphasized the importance of working together to develop successful FLR for the Abaya-Chamo catchment.

Following the workshop's opening, the organiser presented the program details (see Annex 1). The day's agenda commenced with morning sessions that introduced the W-FLR tool and roadmap, followed by discussions on specific components. Participants engaged in interactive "World Cafe" discussions and broke into working groups to further evaluate the components. The afternoon sessions, which concentrated on Component 4 evaluation, finalizing the roadmap, and outlining next steps. The workshop concluded with an open forum discussion and evaluation before closing remarks.

3.2. Presentation Sessions

3.2.1. Introduction to W-FLR Tool

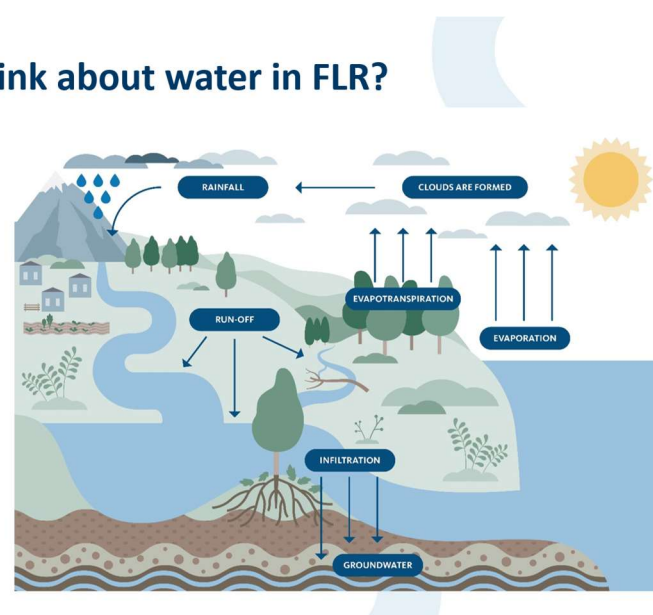
The presentations started with an introduction to the W-FLR tool, led by the SIWI technical team. The presentation provided an overview of the tool, its different modules and application in landscape restoration planning, and its potential benefits for the Abaya-Chamo catchment. It also summarized why it is important to integrate water into FLR and the key factors influencing the impacts of FLR on water resources:

- **Tree stand age:** Water consumption of young tree stands is usually much higher compared to older stands. Positive effects of trees on the water regime only after a certain age.
- **Tree species:** Slow-growing and native tree species and mixed tree stands have better water use efficiency.
- **Tree density:** An increase in the number of trees leads to higher evapotranspiration. Optimal tree cover is site specific. E.g., a medium tree density has been shown to be most suitable in the dry areas of West Africa.
- **Other factors** that are important to consider are:
 - **Location in the landscape** (mountain, plane or coast, etc)
 - **Current and previous land use practices**

Why important to think about water in FLR?

On a regional scale

- Forest are driving atmospheric water inland
- Forests **regulate water flows** and influence water availability
- Forests act as natural water **filters**



3.2.2 The draft CCA W-FLR Roadmap Presentation

Following the tool introduction, the SIWI technical team presented the draft W-FLR roadmap for the Abaya-Chamo Catchment (ACC) developed based on the preparatory phase findings.

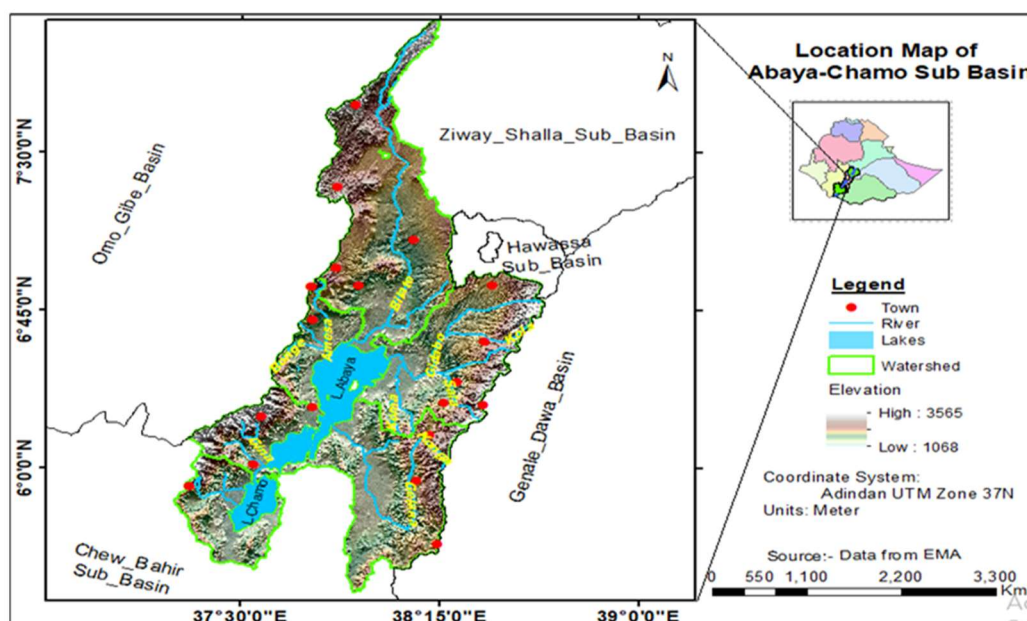
Roadmap Structure

The roadmap was presented as a matrix outlining various modules contributing to its development. The presentation focused on key findings from Modules 1 and 4, including:

Task 1: System boundary: Location map of Abaya-Chamo sub-basin

Module 1: System Analysis

- **System Boundary Delineation:** Defining the geographical extent of the FLR initiative and the water ecosystem service at risk.
- **Water Ecosystem Services Analysis:** Identifying the specific water resources crucial for the catchment's health.
- **Drivers of Degradation and Challenges:** Examining the factors causing degradation and the challenges hindering restoration efforts.



Module 4: Proposed priority Actions and Implementation Strategy

- **Enabling Opportunities and Recommendations:** Highlighting factors that can facilitate successful implementation of the W-FLR strategy.
- **Priority Actions and Intervention Strategies:** Outlining the detail of proposed priority actions categorized under policy, capacity development, and implementation domains.

4. Preparatory Phase Results Verification and Validation

4.1. Round-table Discussions

The validation of preparatory phase results was a crucial component of the workshop. This crucial step ensured that all stakeholders identified during the preparatory phase had a say in verifying the accuracy and relevance of the findings.

Specifically, W-FLR stakeholders who would be directly impacted by the forest and landscape restoration (FLR) intervention were tasked with validating the results generated based on publicly available information.

The afternoon session kicked off with a lively "World Café" format, where participants engaged in interactive and engaging discussions on the system boundaries for FLR from a water perspective, as well as the key drivers of degradation and loss of water-related ecosystem services. The session centered on verifying the outcomes of Module 1, which had been implemented prior to the workshop. Led by GIZ focal persons, the round-table discussions encouraged participants to share their perspectives and insights, while also facilitating a comprehensive review of the results. The four tables set up for small-group discussions allowed participants to share their ideas and opinions, guided by general and specific questions designed to facilitate productive group discussions (see Annex 2).

Participants were divided into smaller groups and rotated around designated "café stations," each focusing on one single result of module 1 presented in a table format.

Café station 1: System Boundary definition & Hydrology

Café station 2: Drivers of Degradation & Challenges

Café station 3: Enabling Opportunities & Recommendations

Café station 4: Ecosystem services

At each station, participants engaged in focused discussions, recording their key observations, agreements, and any discrepancies and deficiencies with the information presented in the preparatory phase material.



4.2. Presentation of Groups Verification and Validation Results

Following the round-table verification and validation discussions, a group facilitator from each table presented the key takeaways and additional areas for considerations.

Overall Outcome:

- Increased stakeholder engagement and buy-in for the W-FLR Preparatory Phase Module 1 findings for the Abaya-Chamo Catchment.
- Identification of potential gaps and areas for further refinement in the module.
- Generation of recommendations and next practical steps for successful W-FLR implementation.

Round 1: System Boundary & Hydrology

- Confirmation or refinement of the W-FLR system boundary based on stakeholder input regarding missing rivers, streams, wetlands, or upstream impacts.
- Identification of specific areas of hydrological concern requiring further investigation.
- Development of recommendations for improving the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the hydrological assessment.

Round 2: Water Ecosystem Services

- Validation or modification of the list of water ecosystem services based on stakeholder feedback.
- Agreement or revision of the current status (green, yellow, red) of these services.
- Prioritization of water ecosystem services require urgent restoration efforts.
- Generation of recommendations for enhancing the understanding and management of water ecosystem services.

Round 3: Drivers of Degradation & Challenges

- Confirmed the identified drivers of degradation (e.g., deforestation, overgrazing) are correct
- Identified the root causes behind these drivers and additional social or economic factors contributing to the challenges.
- Highlighting of potential threats not currently listed that could be addressed in restoration efforts.
- Generated recommendations for tackling the root causes and mitigating the challenges hindering restoration.

Round 4: Enabling Opportunities & Recommendations

- Validation or refinement of the listed enabling opportunities (e.g., government policies, community participation) for successful W-FLR implementation.
- Identification of additional strategies to leverage existing opportunities and mobilize resources for W-FLR.
- Development of recommendations for enhancing community participation and ownership of restoration efforts.
- Generation of broader recommendations or considerations for successful W-FLR implementation not yet covered.

The round-table discussions confirmed the already identified outcomes by the technical team, but **additional considerations** were added, including:

- Increased collaboration and communication among stakeholders involved in the Abaya-Chamo Catchment W-FLR initiative.
- Identification of new ideas and innovative approaches for W-FLR implementation.
- Enhanced understanding of the local context and priorities for successful W-FLR in the Abaya-Chamo Catchment.

Additional outcomes identified in the round tables that need to be integrated into the W-FLR roadmap are summarized below.

Round 1: System Boundary & Hydrology - Additional Outcomes

Round	Additional Outcome/Recommendation	Justification
Round 1: System Boundary & Hydrology	Conduct a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify all relevant stakeholders with an interest in the catchment's water resources.	This will ensure a more comprehensive understanding of potential upstream and downstream impacts and secure broader buy-in for the W-FLR initiative.
Round 1: System Boundary & Hydrology	Develop a digital platform (e.g., interactive map) to visualize the W-FLR system boundary and facilitate ongoing data collection and updates.	This will enhance transparency, improve accessibility of information, and allow for real-time monitoring of hydrological changes.
Round 1: System Boundary & Hydrology	Partner with local research institutions to conduct a detailed hydrological assessment, including water quality and quantity monitoring.	This will provide a more robust scientific basis for defining the system boundary, identifying areas of concern, and informing restoration strategies.

Round 2: Water Ecosystem Services - Additional Outcomes

Round	Additional Outcome/Recommendation	Justification
Round 2: Water Ecosystem Services	Conduct a participatory valuation exercise with local communities to understand the cultural significance of different water ecosystem services.	This will integrate local perspectives into the decision-making process and ensure restoration efforts address cultural values alongside ecological functions.
Round 2: Water Ecosystem Services	Develop a risk assessment framework to evaluate the potential socio-economic consequences of degrading water ecosystem services.	This will highlight the economic costs of inaction and strengthen the case for investing in restoration efforts.
Round 2: Water Ecosystem Services	Explore opportunities for integrating the restoration of water ecosystem services into national development plans and strategies.	This will ensure alignment with broader national priorities, potentially leading to increased political will and resource allocation for W-FLR.

Round 3: Drivers of Degradation & Challenges - Additional Outcomes

Round	Additional Outcome/Recommendation	Justification
Round 3: Drivers of Degradation & Challenges	Conduct a gender analysis to understand how resource degradation disproportionately impacts women and girls.	This will help ensure restoration efforts are equitable and address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women in the community.
Round 3: Drivers of Degradation & Challenges	Invest in climate-smart restoration practices that enhance ecosystem resilience to extreme weather events and changing weather patterns.	This will ensure the long-term sustainability of restoration efforts and minimize the risk of setbacks due to climate change impacts.
Round 3: Drivers of Degradation & Challenges	Develop conflict resolution mechanisms to address potential competition for water resources among different user groups.	This will proactively mitigate potential conflicts arising from water scarcity and ensure equitable access to water resources.

Round 4: Enabling Opportunities & Recommendations - Additional Outcomes

Round	Additional Outcome/Recommendation	Justification
Round 4: Enabling Opportunities & Recommendations	Establish a knowledge-sharing platform for exchanging best practices and lessons learned from other successful W-FLR initiatives in similar ecosystems.	This will enable stakeholders to learn from past experiences and adapt successful approaches to the specific context of the Abaya-Chamo Catchment.
Round 4: Enabling Opportunities & Recommendations	Develop a communication strategy targeting different audiences (e.g., policymakers, media, local communities) to raise awareness about the importance of W-FLR and garner public support.	This will ensure a broader understanding of the benefits of W-FLR and encourage active participation from various stakeholders.
Round 4: Enabling Opportunities & Recommendations	Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework with clear indicators to track progress towards achieving the W-FLR goals and objectives.	This will allow for adaptive management, enabling adjustments to be made based on ongoing monitoring and evaluation findings.

5. Group Work on W-FLR Roadmap Review and Evaluation (Working Session)

In the second interactive session, workshop participants were divided into smaller working groups, with each group assigned a specific domain within the W-FLR roadmap (e.g. capacity development or implementation actions). Each working group reviewed the proposed actions and intervention strategies within their assigned domain as outlined in the W-FLR roadmap. The groups were provided with a set of evaluation criteria to assess the feasibility, effectiveness, and sustainability of proposed actions (see annex 4)

Structured and Open Group Discussions

Facilitated discussions within each working group allowed participants to (i) analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed actions; (ii) identify potential gaps or areas for improvement; (iii) discuss alternative approaches or more tailored interventions; and (iv) consider local context and stakeholder priorities. The group work session concluded with a wrap-up discussion to consolidate key points and ensure all participant voices were heard.



Photo of Group work (Efrata. GIZ)

Proposed Actions Evaluation Results - Group 1 (Capacity Development)

Action Domain: Capacity Development

Proposed Action: *Develop Training Programs for Local Communities on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Practices*

Overall Recommendation (Group Discussion):

Strongly Recommend: This action directly addresses a critical gap, is feasible through collaboration, and has a high potential for long-term impact on W-FLR readiness. Group work can further enhance stakeholder engagement, data collection, and overall effectiveness.

Additional Notes:

- Consider collaborating with local universities or research institutions to develop training curricula with scientific grounding and local context. (This could address potential feasibility concerns)
- Explore partnerships with NGOs or CSOs with experience in community mobilization and training delivery. (This could further enhance stakeholder engagement and potentially data collection)

Proposed Action: *Build the Capacity of Government Agencies on W-FLR Policy Development and Implementation*

Overall Recommendation (Group Discussion):

Strongly Recommend: This action addresses a critical gap and has a high potential impact on W-FLR readiness. Collaboration can enhance feasibility and potentially stakeholder engagement. Group work can help define clear indicators and improve monitoring.

Additional Notes:

- Consider involving experts from academia, NGOs, and the private sector in workshops to share diverse perspectives and best practices. (This could address potential feasibility concerns and enhance stakeholder engagement)
- Design workshops to be interactive and address the specific needs and challenges faced by different government agencies.

Proposed Action: *Enhance the Skills of Local NGOs and CSOs in W-FLR Project Design, Management, and Monitoring*

Overall Recommendation (Group Discussion):

Strongly Recommend: This action addresses a critical gap and has a high potential impact on W-FLR success. Collaboration enhances feasibility and stakeholder engagement. Group work can help define clear indicators and improve data collection.

Additional Notes:

- Consider partnering with experienced NGOs or international organizations with expertise in training delivery (3 - This could address potential feasibility concerns).
- Design training programs that are tailored to the specific needs and contexts of local NGOs/CSOs working in the Abaya-Chamo catchment (This could further enhance impact).
- Explore opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange among local NGOs/CSOs (This could promote long-term sustainability).

Additional Proposed Actions Evaluation - Capacity Development

Proposed Action: *Establish a W-FLR knowledge hub as a central online platform for sharing information, best practices, and resources related to W-FLR in the Abaya-Chamo catchment.*

Overall Recommendation (Group Discussion):

Recommend with Modifications: This action has high potential impact but requires planning for website development and ongoing content management. Collaboration can enhance feasibility and stakeholder engagement.

Additional Notes:

- Consider partnering with universities or research institutions to contribute content.
- Develop the platform in multiple languages to ensure accessibility for local communities.

Proposed Action: *Integrate W-FLR principles and practices into the curricula of relevant educational institutions (e.g., schools, vocational training centers) within the Abaya-Chamo catchment.*

Overall Recommendation (Group Discussion):

Strongly Recommend: This action has a high potential impact on long-term W-FLR sustainability and fosters stakeholder engagement. Collaboration is crucial for feasibility.

Additional Notes:

- Develop age-appropriate educational materials and teacher training programs.
- Partner with the Ministry of Education to facilitate curriculum integration.

Proposed Actions Evaluation Results - Implementation

Action Domain: Implementation on-the-Ground

Proposed Action: Establish Ecological Corridors to Enhance Landscape Connectivity

Overall Recommendation (Group Discussion):

Strongly Recommend: This action directly addresses a key challenge, has a high potential impact, and fosters sustainability. Collaboration enhances feasibility and stakeholder engagement. Group work can help define clear indicators and improve monitoring.

Additional Notes:

- Conduct ecological surveys to identify priority areas for corridor restoration (This could address feasibility concerns).
- Develop a participatory approach involving local communities in planning and implementation activities to foster ownership (This could further enhance stakeholder engagement).
- Explore funding opportunities and partnerships with conservation organizations that can provide technical expertise (This could address feasibility concerns).

Proposed Action: Promote Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Practices among Local Farmers

Overall Recommendation (Group Discussion):

Strongly Recommend: This action directly addresses a key challenge, has a high potential impact on W-FLR objectives, and fosters sustainability. Collaboration enhances feasibility and stakeholder engagement. Group work can help define clear indicators and improve monitoring.

Additional Notes:

- Develop training programs and demonstration plots showcasing effective SLM practices (This could address potential feasibility concerns).
- Partner with agricultural extension services for wider outreach and technical support to farmers (This could further enhance feasibility and stakeholder engagement).
- Explore incentive programs to encourage adoption of SLM practices (This could further enhance impact).

Proposed Action: *Implement Sustainable Forest Management Practices*

Overall Recommendation (Group Discussion):

Recommend with Modifications: This action has a high potential impact on W-FLR, but feasibility requires careful planning and enforcement. Collaboration enhances stakeholder engagement and data collection.

Additional Notes:

- Conduct participatory forest management planning involving local communities (This could address feasibility concerns).
- Partner with forestry officials to develop and enforce sustainable forest management practices (This could address feasibility concerns).
- Explore opportunities for alternative livelihoods for communities to reduce dependence on forest resources (This could further enhance sustainability).

Improved Proposed Actions for Implementation Domain

Here are three improved proposed actions for the implementation domain, focusing on W-FLR readiness, along with evaluation tables including rankings:

Action 1: Promote Integrated Watershed Management (IWM)

Overall Recommendation: Strongly Recommend. IWM offers a comprehensive approach that addresses key challenges and fosters long-term sustainability. Collaboration is crucial for success.

Additional Notes:

- Establish a multi-stakeholder platform for IWM planning and implementation.
- Conduct participatory assessments of land and water resources.
- Develop and implement an IWM plan with clear objectives, strategies, and monitoring mechanisms.

Action 2: Strengthen Forest Landscape Governance (FLG)

Overall Recommendation: Strongly Recommend. FLG is essential for ensuring long-term sustainability and equitable outcomes in W-FLR efforts. Collaboration is crucial for success.

Additional Notes:

- Conduct capacity building workshops for stakeholders on FLG principles and practices.
- Support the establishment of inclusive forest management committees with representation from all relevant stakeholders.
- Develop mechanisms for transparent decision-making and grievance redress related to forest management.

Action 3: Implement Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) Schemes

Evaluation Criteria	Description	Proposed Individual Rating (1-5)	Group Consensus Rating (1-5)	Comments
Contribution to W-FLR Readiness	Does the action directly address a key challenge?	4 (High)	PES schemes can incentivize sustainable land management practices that benefit W-FLR objectives.	
Feasibility (Considering Group Work)	Is the action realistic and achievable?	3 (Moderate)	Collaboration among government, NGOs, private sector, and local communities is crucial. Designing and financing a PES scheme requires careful planning and resource mobilization.	

6. Workshop Wrap-up

The workshop concluded with closing remarks from both SIWI and a government representative, expressing their appreciation for the participants' valuable contributions.

SIWI Representative

- Briefly summarized the key achievements of the workshop, highlighting the successful review and validation of the W-FLR preparatory phase reports and the productive discussions on refining the W-FLR roadmap.
- Emphasized the importance of stakeholder engagement throughout the W-FLR tool piloting process and expressed gratitude for the participants' diverse perspectives and expertise.
- Briefly mentioned the next steps, outlining how the workshop outcomes will be incorporated into the finalization of the W-FLR roadmap and the overall piloting program report.
- Concluded by reiterating SIWI's commitment to supporting the successful implementation of the W-FLR tool in the Abaya-Chamo catchment and fostering collaborative efforts towards achieving landscape restoration goals.

Government Representative

- Expressed appreciation to SIWI for initiating the W-FLR tool piloting program and facilitating this workshop.
- Highlighted the workshop's value in bringing together key stakeholders and fostering a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to land restoration in the Abaya-Chamo catchment.
- Emphasized the government's commitment to utilizing the W-FLR tool and its roadmap to guide future restoration efforts in the region.

7. Field Visits

To complement the W-FLR tool piloting workshop, field visits were conducted in two key areas of the Abaya-Chamo catchment: West Abaya Woreda (Lake Abaya) and Gerese Woreda (Lake Chamo), organized by the GIZ Arba Minch Forest for the Future project office that aimed to:

- Gain a firsthand understanding of GIZ's F4F involvement in supporting FLR practices within the Abaya-Chamo catchment.
- Gather general information to assess the draft Water-FLR (W-FLR) Roadmap's relevance for the entire Abaya-Chamo Catchment (ACC).
- Provide an opportunity for the W-FLR roadmap development team to understand the context, meet local stakeholders, observe the catchment's hydrological and environmental conditions, and identify potential areas for improvement in the W-FLR roadmap.



Photo 1) Lake Abaya (Tegenu, World Atlas) and 2) Erosion control measures in the Lake Chamo catchment (Anna, SIWI)

Our observation revealed several shortcomings with traditional FLR practices:

- ✓ Tree planting alone is not enough: While tree planting on private and communal land and gully area initiatives is well-intentioned, they often fail to address the root causes of land degradation. Soil erosion, sedimentation, and altered hydrological cycles remain major concerns, particularly in west Abaya.
- ✓ Water scarcity and inefficiency: We observed inefficient framing systems and lack of rainwater harvesting infrastructure, leading to wasted water resources and reduced crop yields. This is particularly concerning in the Gerese and West Abaya area prone to flooding, droughts and climate variability.
- ✓ Unsustainable agricultural practices: we have seen conventional, subsistence farming and highly sloping land cultivation practices often rely on monocultures (stable food production), inadequate use of soil and water conservation measures, inadequate use of technology and organic fertile, heavy use of chemicals, and inadequate crop rotation. These approaches degrade soil health, reduce biodiversity, and exacerbate water scarcity.
- ✓ Lack of community engagement: While local communities are often involved in FLR initiatives, their input is frequently limited to tree planting or maintenance activities. More meaningful engagement is needed to ensure their ownership and adoption of sustainable FLR practices.
- ✓ Lack of water ecosystem services consideration – FLR projects lack robust monitoring and evaluation of water ecosystem services, making it challenging to assess water-related risks and opportunities in FLR practices.

8. Next steps

To inform the development of the ACC-wide Water-Smart FLR (W-FLR) roadmap, we recommend:

1. Prioritize policy reforms: Advocate for policy reforms that prioritize integration water into FLR policies, plan and budget as well as water conservation, efficient farming and irrigation systems, and ecosystem resilience in the ACC's national forestry and agriculture policies.
2. Capacity building for water management: Provide training and capacity-building programs for local communities, farmers, and project implementers on water management, conservation agriculture, and ecosystem-based approaches.
3. Water ecosystem services infrastructure development: Support the development of water ecosystem service infrastructure to reduce reliance on surface water sources and promote efficient water use.
4. Water ecosystem services health monitoring: Establish water ecosystem services health monitoring program to track changes in water ecosystem processes, structure, functions over time.
5. Community engagement and education: Implement community-based education programs to raise awareness about the importance of water conservation, efficient irrigation systems, and ecosystem resilience.
6. Innovative financing technologies- Promote the adoption of innovative irrigation technologies that reduce water waste and increase crop yields.
7. Watershed-based planning: Develop watershed-based plans that integrate FLR initiatives with water resources management to ensure holistic ecosystem management.

Based on the validation and inputs from local stakeholders on the draft W-FLR analysis and roadmap, SIWI will update the draft W-FLR roadmap and circulate to key stakeholders for final endorsement. It will be a short and concise document with recommended actions in three domains and proposed M&E indicators using the matrix below:

Task 4a: Priority actions	Mainstreaming of W- FLR	Capacity development in W-FLR	Implementation of W- FLR	Task 5a: Map relevant indicators for W-FLR	Responsible Actors
Action 1					
Action 2					
Action 3					

Annexes

Annex 1: Workshop program

Workshop Program Timetable

Time	Activities	Duration	Responsible Person
A. Welcome and Opening Sessions			
8:30 AM - 9:00 AM	Registration	30 min	Organizer
9:00 AM - 9:05 AM	Welcome	5 min	GIZ
9:05 AM – 9:10 AM	Opening Remarks	5 min	Govt. Rep
9:10 AM - 9:15 AM	Opening Remarks	5 min	SIWI, Dr. Håkan
	Program introduction	3 mi	Moges
B. Presentation Section (W-FLR Tool and Roadmap)			
9:15 AM – 9:35 AM	Introduction to W-FLR Tool (Overview)	20 min	Prof. Anna
9:35 AM - 10:05 AM	W-FLR Roadmap Components Presentation	30 min	Moges
10:05 AM - 10:15 AM	Q&A on Roadmap and Tool Presentations	10 min	Participants
10:15 AM - 10:25 AM	Morning Tea Break	10 min	organizer
C. World Café Session on Component 1 Validation			
10:25 AM - 10:35 AM	Introduction (Welcome & Setting the Stage)	10 min	Facilitator
	Round Robin Discussions		
10:35 AM - 11:00 AM	Round 1: System Boundary & Hydrology	25 min	participants
11:00 AM - 11:25 AM	Round 2: Water Ecosystem Services	25 min	Participants
11:25 AM - 11:50 AM	Round 3: Drivers of Degradation & Challenges	25 min	Participants
11:50 AM - 12:15 PM	Round 4: Enabling Opportunities & Recommendations	25 min	Participants
12:15 PM - 12:25 PM	Session Wrap-up	10 min	Abera
12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Lunch Break	1 hr 30	Private
D. Group Discussion Session on Component 4 Evaluation			
1:30 PM – 1:45 PM	Working Group Formation & Assigned Domain Introduction	15 min	Facilitator
1:45 PM – 1:55 PM	Review of Proposed Actions and Evaluation Criteria	10 min	Facilitator
1:55 PM – 2:40 PM	Structured and Open Group Discussions	45 min	participants
2:40 PM – 3:00 PM	Reporting Session (Present Key Takeaways)	10 min	Group lead
3:00 PM – 3:05 PM	Wrap-up Session	5 min	Moges
3:05 PM – 3:10 PM	Finalize the W-FLR Roadmap	5 min	Pro-Anna
4:00 PM – 4:20 PM	Afternoon Tea Break	20 min	
E. Next Steps, Evaluation, and Closing session			
4:20 PM – 4:40 PM	General Discussion and Open Forum	20 min	Prof. Anna
4:40 PM – 4:50 PM	Evaluation (Feedback on Workshop)	10 min	Moges
4:50 PM – 5:00 PM	Wrap-up and Closing Remarks	10 min	Govt. Rep

World Cafe Format for Validating W-FLR Preparatory Phase Module 1 Results

Objective: Validate the findings presented in Module 1 of the W-FLR Preparatory Phase for the Abaya-Chamo Catchment through facilitated discussions with stakeholders.

Facilitation

A facilitator will guide the discussion at each table, ensuring everyone has a chance to participate and capture key points on flipcharts.

Rounds:

Round 1: System Boundary & Hydrology

Opening Question: Does the defined W-FLR system boundary accurately reflect the hydrological features of the Abaya-Chamo Catchment? Are there any important aspects missing?

Discussion points:

- Are all major rivers, streams, and wetlands included within the boundary?
- Does the boundary consider the impact of upstream activities on the catchment?
- Are there specific areas of hydrological concern that require further attention?

Action: participants use sticky notes to record their thoughts and suggestions on the flipchart. Briefly discuss key points and any emerging themes.

Round 2: Water Ecosystem Services

Opening Question: Does the list of water ecosystem services accurately represent the most important ones for the Abaya-Chamo Catchment community? Is the current status (green, yellow, red) of these services a fair assessment?

Discussion points:

- Are there any critical water ecosystem services missing from the list?
- How does the health of these services impact livelihoods and well-being?
- Are there specific services that require more urgent attention for restoration?

Action: participants review the list, discuss their perspectives, and provide feedback using sticky notes on the flipchart. Briefly discuss key points and any emerging themes.

World Cafe Format for Validating W-FLR Preparatory Phase Module 1 Results/R3

Objective: Validate the findings presented in Module 1 of the W-FLR Preparatory Phase for the Abaya-Chamo Catchment through facilitated discussions with stakeholders.

Facilitation

A facilitator will guide the discussion at each table, ensuring everyone has a chance to participate and capture key points on flipcharts.

Rounds:

Round 3: Drivers of Degradation & Challenges (30 minutes)

Opening Question: Are the identified drivers of degradation (e.g., deforestation, overgrazing) accurate and relevant for the Abaya-Chamo Catchment? Are there additional challenges not mentioned that could hinder restoration efforts?

Discussion points:

- What are the root causes behind the identified drivers of degradation?
- Are there any social or economic factors contributing to these challenges?
- Are there additional threats not listed that could be addressed in restoration efforts?

Action: Participants discuss the identified drivers and potential missing challenges, adding their thoughts with sticky notes on the flipchart. Briefly discuss key points and any emerging themes.

Round 4: Enabling Opportunities & Recommendations (30 minutes)

Opening Question: Do the listed enabling opportunities (e.g., government policies, community participation) support successful W-FLR implementation in the Abaya-Chamo Catchment? What additional recommendations do you have for successful restoration in the area?

Discussion points

- How can we leverage existing opportunities to mobilize resources and support W-FLR?
- What are some strategies to enhance community participation and ownership of restoration efforts?
- Are there additional recommendations or considerations for successful W-FLR implementation?

Action: Participants share their perspectives on the enabling opportunities and provide additional recommendations using sticky notes on the flipchart. Briefly discuss key points and any emerging themes.

Annex 3: World Café

Round 1: System Boundary & Hydrology - Outcome Table

Category	Verification and Validation Outcome
System Boundary	- Stakeholders confirmed the accuracy of the defined W-FLR system boundary. - Stakeholders identified minor adjustments needed to include a specific stream or wetland. - Stakeholders suggested a significant expansion of the boundary to capture upstream activities with a high impact.
Hydrological Features	- All major rivers, streams, and wetlands are confirmed to be within the boundary. - Stakeholders identify a missing tributary stream that should be included. - Stakeholders raise concerned that the impact of upstream water diversion is not adequately considered.
Areas of Concern	- No specific areas of hydrological concern are identified. - Stakeholders highlight a particular area with ongoing salinization issues requiring attention. - Stakeholders express concern about the deteriorating water quality entering the catchment from upstream.
Recommendations	- Stakeholders recommend finalizing the boundary based on consensus. - Stakeholders suggest conducting a field verification exercise to confirm the boundary. - Stakeholders recommend a hydrological impact assessment to understand upstream activities.

Round 2: Water Ecosystem Services Verification and Validation Results

Category	Validation and verification Outcome
List of Services	- Stakeholders agree the list of water ecosystem services is comprehensive. - Stakeholders suggest adding a missing service related to sediment regulation. - Stakeholders propose merging two overlapping services for clarity.
Current Status	- Stakeholders concur with the current status (red) of all services are right - Stakeholders recommend downgrading the status of the cultural ecosystem due to recent cultural degradation. - Stakeholders suggest upgrading the status of the regulatory water ecosystem services to yellow due to ongoing conservation efforts.
Livelihoods & Well-being	- Stakeholders clearly understand the link between healthy services and well-being. - Stakeholders highlight the dependence of specific livelihoods (e.g., fishing) on healthy water services. - Stakeholders call for further research on the economic valuation of water ecosystem services.
Prioritization	- Stakeholders prioritize water ecosystem services critical for domestic water supply. - Stakeholders emphasize the urgency of restoring services essential for flood regulation. - Stakeholders advocate for a balanced approach to restoring all services.
Recommendations	- Stakeholders recommend conducting a socio-economic study on the value of water services. - Stakeholders suggest developing targeted restoration plans for high-priority services. - Stakeholders propose ongoing monitoring of water ecosystem services to track progress.

Round 3: Drivers of Degradation & Challenges – VV Outcome Table

Category	Validation and Verification Outcome
Confirmation of Drivers	- Stakeholders confirm the identified drivers (e.g., deforestation, overgrazing) are accurate. - Stakeholders suggest adding another driver, such as unsustainable fishing practices. - Stakeholders raise questions about the relative importance of different drivers.
Root Causes	- Stakeholders identify population growth as a root cause for increased resource pressure. - Stakeholders discuss weak land tenure policies contributing to deforestation. - Stakeholders highlight the lack of economic alternatives to unsustainable practices.
Social/Economic Factors	- Stakeholders emphasize poverty as a key driver of resource overexploitation. - Stakeholders discuss the role of cultural practices impacting water use patterns. - Stakeholders raise concerns about limited access to education and awareness about sustainable practices.
Missing Threats	- No additional threats are identified beyond the initial list. - Stakeholders highlight the potential threat of invasive species introduction. - Stakeholders express concern about the increasing frequency of extreme weather events.
Recommendations	- Stakeholders recommend addressing poverty through income generation opportunities. - Stakeholders suggest developing policies promoting sustainable land management practices. - Stakeholders propose educational programs to raise awareness about the importance of water resource conservation. - Stakeholders recommend further research on the potential impact of invasive species and climate change.

Round 4: Enabling Opportunities & Recommendations - Outcome Table

Category	Verification and Validation Outcome
Enabling Opportunities	- Stakeholders acknowledge the importance of government policies in supporting W-FLR. - Stakeholders suggest strengthening enforcement mechanisms for existing environmental regulations. - Stakeholders propose exploring public-private partnerships to mobilize resources for restoration.
Community Participation	- Stakeholders agree on the importance of involving local communities in decision-making processes. - Stakeholders suggest capacity building programs to equip communities with restoration skills. - Stakeholders recommend incorporating traditional knowledge and practices into restoration efforts.
Resource Mobilization	- Stakeholders identify potential funding opportunities through international grants or NGOs. - Stakeholders propose innovative financing mechanisms, such as payments for ecosystem services. - Stakeholders suggest exploring market-based solutions for sustainable resource use.
Additional Recommendations	- Stakeholders recommend establishing a permanent multi-stakeholder platform for collaboration. - Stakeholders propose developing a monitoring and evaluation framework to track W-FLR progress. - Stakeholders emphasize the need for effective communication and outreach strategies to garner public support.

Annex 4: Proposed Actions Evaluation Criteria

Proposed Actions Evaluation Criteria for W-FLR Readiness (Group Work)

This template facilitates group evaluation of proposed actions for W-FLR readiness in the Abaya-Chamo catchment, considering the three key domains: Policy Mainstreaming, Capacity Development, and Implementation on-the-Ground.

Action Information

- **Action Domain:** (Select: Policy Mainstreaming, Capacity Development, Implementation on-the-Ground)
- **Proposed Action:** (Brief description of the proposed action)

Evaluation Criteria

Instructions: Each group member should independently evaluate the action using a scale of 1 (Low) to 5 (High) for each criterion. Following individual evaluation, discuss the ratings and come to a consensus score for each criterion.

Criterion	Description	Individual Rating (1-5)	Group Consensus Rating (1-5)	Comments
Contribution to W-FLR Readiness	Does the action address a key gap or need for successful W-FLR implementation in the Abaya-Chamo catchment?			Discuss how the action addresses a critical gap or need for W-FLR readiness.
Feasibility (Considering Group Work)	Is the action realistic and achievable considering available resources, technical expertise, and timeframe, taking into account the benefits of collaboration?			Discuss how group work can enhance feasibility (e.g., knowledge sharing, resource pooling) and identify potential challenges related to collaboration.
Impact on Readiness	What is the potential positive impact of the action on building a conducive environment and stakeholder capacity for W-FLR?			Discuss the potential impact on promoting conducive policies and building capacity through collaborative efforts.
Sustainability	Will the action create lasting benefits and support for W-FLR beyond the initial project timeframe?			Discuss the long-term benefits and potential for continued support through established networks and collaborations.
Stakeholder Engagement	Does the action involve and benefit relevant stakeholders across sectors and communities? Consider how group work can expand stakeholder engagement.			Discuss how the action can leverage group composition for broader stakeholder engagement and potential benefits for diverse stakeholders.
Measurability	Can the progress and effectiveness of the action be clearly monitored with defined indicators? Consider how collaboration could enhance data collection or monitoring.			Discuss how group work can contribute to defining clear indicators and potentially improve data collection or monitoring processes.

Overall Recommendation (Group Discussion):

Based on the evaluation criteria and group discussion, come to a consensus on the overall recommendation for the proposed action:

- **Strongly Recommend:** Action is highly aligned with W-FLR readiness goals and demonstrates high feasibility, impact, and sustainability, with potential benefits amplified by group work.
- **Recommend with Modifications:** Action has merit but requires adjustments to improve feasibility, impact, or other criteria. Group work can contribute to these modifications.
- **Neutral:** Action has potential benefits but may need significant modifications or further evaluation. Consider how group work might help refine the action.
- **Not Recommended:** Action has limited potential for W-FLR readiness or raises concerns regarding feasibility or sustainability. Group work may not be able to significantly improve the action.

Additional Notes

- Use this space for any additional comments or suggestions regarding the proposed action, considering insights gained through group discussion.
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Top 3 Priority Proposed Actions for W-FLR Capacity Development

This table outlines three high-priority actions for W-FLR capacity development in the Abaya-Chamo catchment, along with detailed descriptions and evidence-based rationales.

Priority Action	Description	Rationale
1. Develop Training Programs for Local Communities on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Practices	Design and deliver training programs tailored to the specific needs of local communities in the Abaya-Chamo catchment. These programs should cover topics like soil and water conservation techniques, rehabilitation of degraded lands, and	* Local communities are directly dependent on the health of the catchment's ecosystem for their livelihoods. Equipping them with SLM knowledge empowers them to actively participate in W-FLR activities and become stewards of their environment. * Equipping local communities with these skills fosters a sense of ownership and promotes the long-term sustainability of W-FLR initiatives.

	sustainable land use practices.	
2. Build the Capacity of Government Agencies on W-FLR Policy Development and Implementation	Organize workshops and training sessions for relevant government agencies (e.g., water resources, environment, agriculture) on W-FLR principles, best practices, and policy development.	* Effective W-FLR implementation requires a supportive policy framework. Strengthening the capacity of government officials allows them to develop and implement W-FLR policies that incentivize sustainable land management practices. * Building government capacity fosters inter-agency collaboration and ensures a coordinated approach towards W-FLR implementation.
3. Enhance the Skills of Local NGOs and CSOs in W-FLR Project Design, Management, and Monitoring	Organize capacity-building workshops and training sessions for local NGOs and CSOs on the various aspects of W-FLR project design, management, monitoring, and evaluation.	* Local NGOs and CSOs play a crucial role in mobilizing communities, implementing W-FLR projects on the ground, and ensuring effective resource management. Strengthening their skills allows them to contribute more effectively to W-FLR efforts. * Enhancing the capacity of local NGOs and CSOs promotes community ownership and fosters long-term sustainability of W-FLR initiatives.

Top 3 Priority Proposed Actions for W-FLR Implementation

This table outlines three high-priority actions for W-FLR implementation in the Abaya-Chamo catchment, along with detailed descriptions and evidence-based rationales.

Priority proposed Action	Proposed Action Description	Rationale
1. Establish Ecological Corridors to Enhance Landscape Connectivity	Identify and prioritize critical areas for ecological corridor restoration within the catchment. Implement rehabilitation activities (e.g., planting native trees, reseedling grasslands) to create functional corridors that connect fragmented habitats.	* Ecological corridors promote biodiversity conservation by facilitating movement of wildlife between isolated habitat patches.
2. Implement Integrated Soil and Water Management (ISWM) Practices	Promote and support the adoption of ISWM practices by local communities. This could include techniques like rainwater harvesting, mulching, and terracing to improve soil fertility, conserve water resources, and reduce land degradation.	* ISWM practices promote sustainable land management and contribute to improved agricultural productivity within the catchment. This can lead to increased food security and livelihoods for local communities.
3. Initiate Pilot W-FLR Projects with Local Communities	Design and implement pilot W-FLR projects in collaboration with local communities. These projects should demonstrate the benefits of W-FLR approaches (e.g., ecological restoration, sustainable land management) in a localized setting.	* Pilot projects serve as a valuable learning tool, allowing stakeholders to gain experience with W-FLR implementation on the ground. This facilitates adaptation and refinement of approaches for broader scaling up in the future.

Annex 5. W-FLR Workshop Evaluation Results

This table summarizes the evaluation results for the W-FLR workshop with 38 participants. Ratings are based on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Averages are rounded to two decimal places.

Statement	Average Rating
Workshop Content	
The workshop content was clear and easy to understand.	4.3
The workshop covered the topics relevant to W-FLR in the Abaya-Chamo Catchment.	4.5
The workshop provided new information and insights on W-FLR.	4.2
The workshop materials (presentations, handouts) were informative and helpful.	4.4
Workshop Delivery	
The workshop facilitators were knowledgeable and engaging.	4.6
The workshop activities were well-designed and facilitated effective discussion.	4.7
The workshop schedule allowed for adequate time for all topics.	4.5
The workshop venue was comfortable and conducive to learning.	4.4
Overall Experience	
I would recommend this workshop to others interested in W-FLR.	4.8
This workshop helped me gain a better understanding of W-FLR and its application in the Abaya-Chamo Catchment.	4.6

