



Speech at the presentation of the
Great Green Wall

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For the GEF the Great Green Wall holds both physical and symbolic meaning. There is the physical presence: a sustainable, organic shield against the desert reaching from the Senegalese coast to the Indian Ocean. Yet what is equally important is what the Great Green Wall represents to the Senegalese people and their brothers and sisters in neighboring countries. The wall

- UNITES 11 countries with one shared purpose
- SOLIDIFIES a sustainable land framework, and
- REINFORCES and BUILDS the capacity people need and DESERVE to plant crops and preserve a way of life that should not be lost.

This is not just a tree planting exercise. So how do we turn the vision into reality?

In terms of the GEF-5 replenishment it is up to the countries themselves to set their own priorities in terms of sustainable land management. Of course if these interests look to build a common program around this idea, the GEF Secretariat stands ready to give support to make this happen.

Unfortunately a program dedicated to the wall only makes sense if the GEF replenishment is high enough to sustain such a robust plan. As things stand now, our sustainable land management portfolio does not get enough resources, especially compared to climate change or biodiversity to implement the program in a sustainable way.

Let me give you a few numbers to illustrate my point: In the 3 replenishment scenarios (\$4.5 – 5.5 and 6.5 billion), resources for SLM are respectively of \$ 450, 550, and 660 million. This is why we are inviting countries to pledge to GEF donors to obtain an important replenishment – and raise the resources allocated to SLM.