

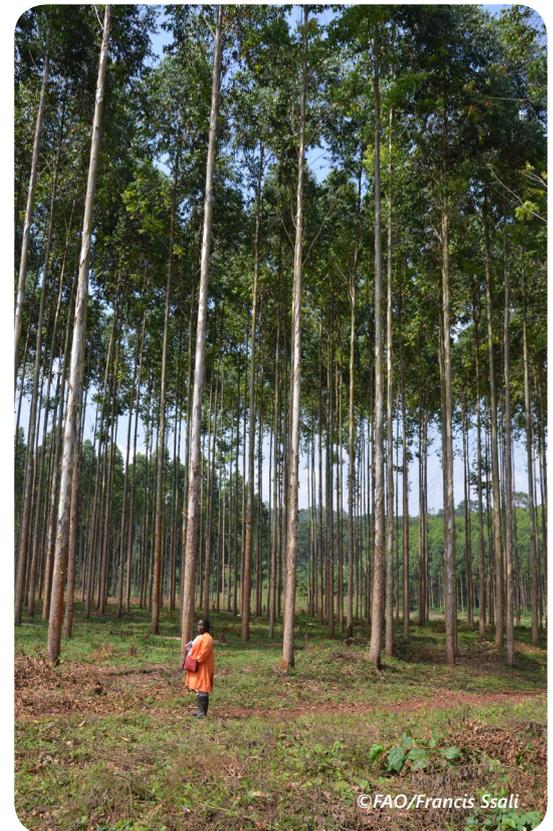
COMMEMORATING EUROPE DAY- 9 May 2020: Key Milestones of SPGS Phase III

Since 2004, the European Union has sustained funding for the Sawlog Production Grant Scheme (SPGS)- a unique project to encourage tree planting by the private sector, rural communities and institutions in Uganda. With support from the Ministry of Water and Environment as a partner in the project, FAO is implementing SPGS Phase III (2016 - 2021), building on achievements of the previous phases of the project. By providing partial grants and technical assistance to private tree farmers and seedlings to rural communities and institutions, SPGS has contributed to increasing the country's forest cover; with close to 70 000 hectares of quality plantations established since its start. In addition to climate change mitigation through intensive afforestation, the SPGS project has helped to improve livelihoods by creating jobs for rural communities living around planted forests and enhancing skills of many forestry value chain actors.

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Developing commercial plantations to acceptable national standards

- **362** tree farmers received partial grants & technical assistance, and planted **25 600** hectares (ha) of diverse tree species e.g. Eucalyptus, Teak, *Melia volkensii* and *Terminalia superba* (umbrella tree)
- **200+** communities, including refugees (~**6300** members) received **4.5million** seedlings and planted over **3 700ha** of community forests. **35%** of the community group leaders are women
- **80** institutions e.g. prisons and schools received seedlings and planted about **1 500ha** of woodlots. The institutions were trained to enhance their technical skills in managing the planted trees.
- **130** tree farmers received grants for pruning and thinning of **5 000ha** of planted forests
- About **1 200** stakeholders, including private sector tree farmers, national and local government staff, have been trained in various fields including: Forest establishment & management, Nursery management, Preparing bankable business plans and Chain of Custody certification
- In 2019, **100+** commercial tree nursery operators and **25** forest contractors were certified to produce high quality seedlings and to provide forestry services respectively; enabling tree growers to maintain healthy plantations for quality timber and sawlogs



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Facilitating forestry stakeholders to better perform their mandates

- Supported **Nyabyeya Forestry College** to incorporate commercial forestry in its curriculum. Established a **10ha** demo and a clonal tree nursery at the College, to support practical learning. The Project assisted **33** students to get internship placement with commercial forest enterprises.
- Through the **Forest Sector Support Department** of the **Ministry and Water and Environment**, supported formation of the National Forestry Consultative Forum, to enhance networking of stakeholders and information exchange in forestry sector areas like Commercial forestry, Natural forests, Research and training and Forestry governance
- Through **Uganda Timber Growers Association**, SPGS III supported establishment of associations for nursery operators and forest contractors, to enhance members' knowledge-sharing, networking, negotiating and advocacy.
- Supported **Ministry of Water and Environment and Uganda National Bureau of Standards** to develop Uganda's National Timber Grading Standard, as well as Plantation management and Nursery standards, due for approval as national standards.



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Downstream industrialization of processing and utilization of forest products

- Facilitated discussions on the mode of implementation of downstream processing in Uganda, including financing models, appropriate sawmills, processing and utilization requirements, local and regional market studies, appropriate waste management and occupational health and safety
- Carried out studies to estimate wood resources available in Uganda and related appropriate technologies for wood harvesting and processing
- Conducted training sessions in Forest harvesting and road planning, FSC Forest Management, Timber Grading, Forest inventory and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) for timber

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Integrating applied research along the forestry value chain

- Working with the National Forestry Resources Research Institute (NaFORRI), FAO/SPGS III **is conducting field trials for dryland species** in Mbarara, Isingiro, Nakason-gola and Karamoja. Results will inform evidence-based recommendations for relevant species and site conditions in drylands.
- Supported **review of the Pests and Diseases Guidelines**, to enable tree farmers and other forest stakeholders to identify and manage pests and diseases in commercial forest plantations.
- **Supported a study** to assess the cause of widespread death of pine trees in some parts of Uganda
- In 2018, **conducted a study** to examine the possibility of acquiring intermediate revenues from resin tapping in Uganda
- Through SPGS III, FAO continues to **support the forest research** agenda in Uganda, through stakeholder engagement in the Commercial Forestry Research and Training (COMFORT) working group

FAO, the EU and Government of Uganda are committed to working together to support the sustainable impact of their projects, invest in initiatives that yield long-term results and continue to build on their achievements to the benefit of Uganda as a whole.