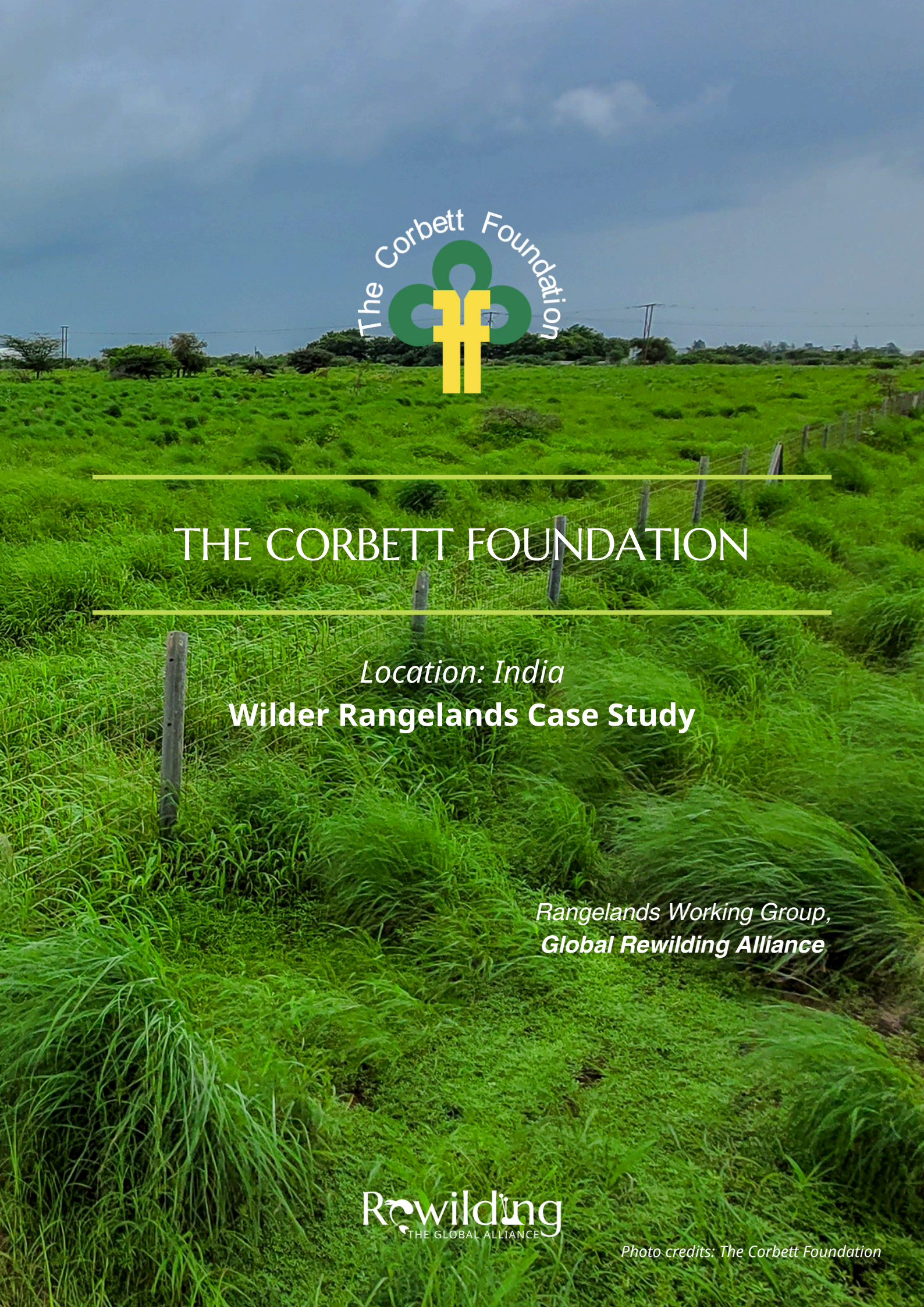

THE CORBETT FOUNDATION

Location: India

Wilder Rangelands Case Study

Rangelands Working Group,
Global Rewilding Alliance

Rewilding
THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE

Photo credits: The Corbett Foundation

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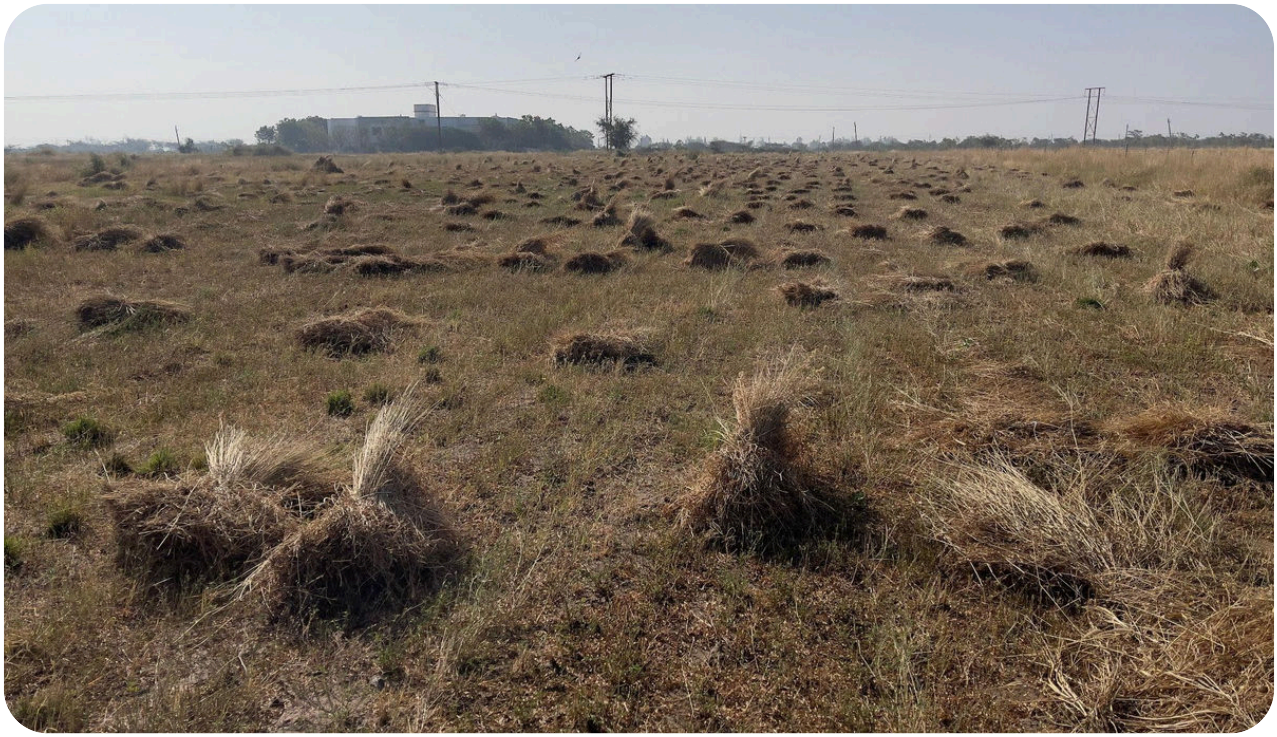
Grass seed collection. Photo credits: The Corbett Foundation

Overview

The Global Rewilding Alliance has convened Alliance Partners — including The Corbett Foundation — and cross-sector experts through its Rangelands Working Group to launch the Rewilding Rangelands Initiative: a coordinated effort to restore ecological function and foster coexistence across the world's rangelands.

The Corbett Foundation works across diverse landscapes in India to **promote human-wildlife coexistence and ecosystem resilience**. Their initiatives extend into rangeland and grassland ecosystems, critical yet often overlooked habitats that support biodiversity, livestock-based livelihoods, and ecological resilience.

By integrating community development with habitat restoration, they address the dual challenges of ecosystem degradation and rural poverty in grassland regions.



Grass harvested in winter is being sun-dried for long-term storage in a godown. Photo credit: The Corbett Foundation.

The Corbett Foundation focuses on restoring ecological health in human-dominated landscapes through participatory and livelihood-linked approaches.

APPROACH:

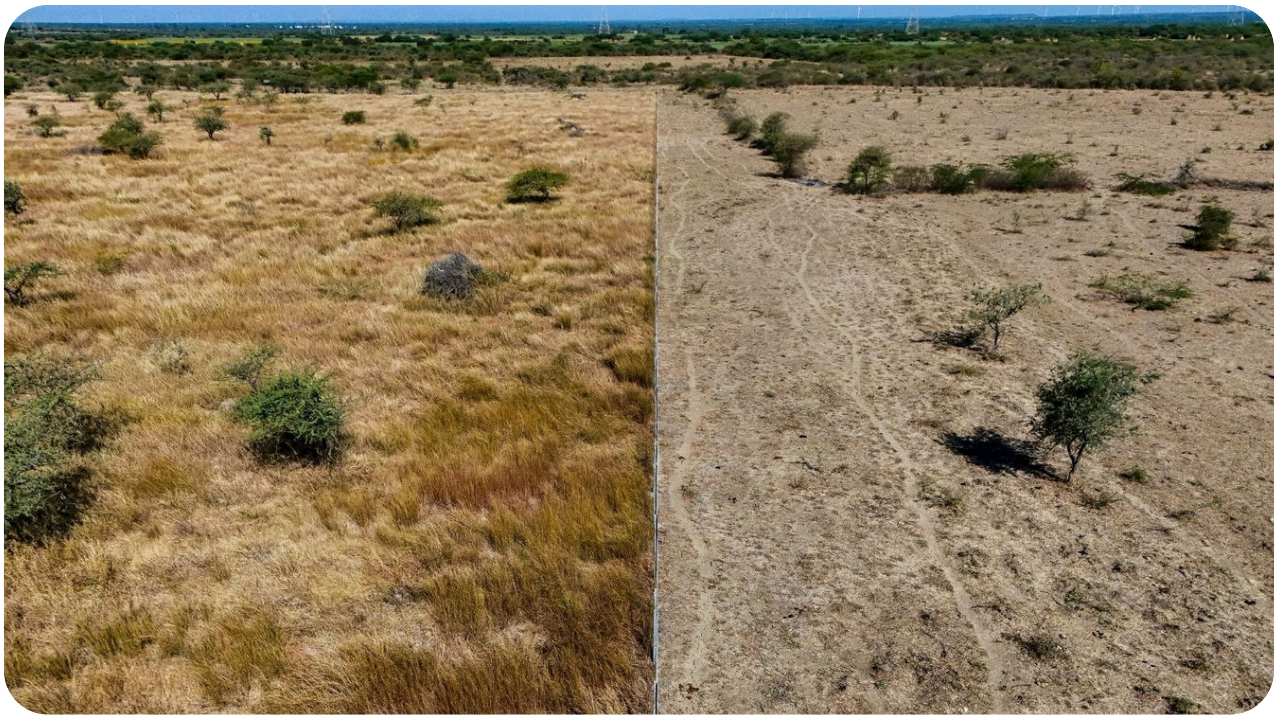
Community-Centric Grassland Restoration

Grassland restoration alongside communities

The Foundation undertakes **targeted restoration of degraded community grazing lands** (locally known as *gauchars*), particularly in grassland ecosystems critical for species such as the Great Indian Bustard. In Kutch (Gujarat), they started with a 52 acres site of *Neltuma juliflora*-invaded community pasture in Kanakpar village, turning it into a **self-sustainable native grassland** by removing invasive species and reseeding with local grasses.

A strong emphasis is placed on community-led and science-based management. Local villagers are trained in the 'Rotational and Controlled Grazing System' (RCGS), ensuring that restored grasslands remain productive while preventing overuse. Under this system, grazing is prohibited during the monsoon, so that grass reaches its optimum growth.

This restoration process includes **100% community participation**, from invasive species removal to long-term stewardship, ensuring long-term sustainability beyond project timelines.



Impact of overgrazing on fodder: Restored plot (left) showing the result of the RCGS method compared with the adjacent overgrazed plot at Kanakpar village.
Photo credit: The Corbett Foundation.

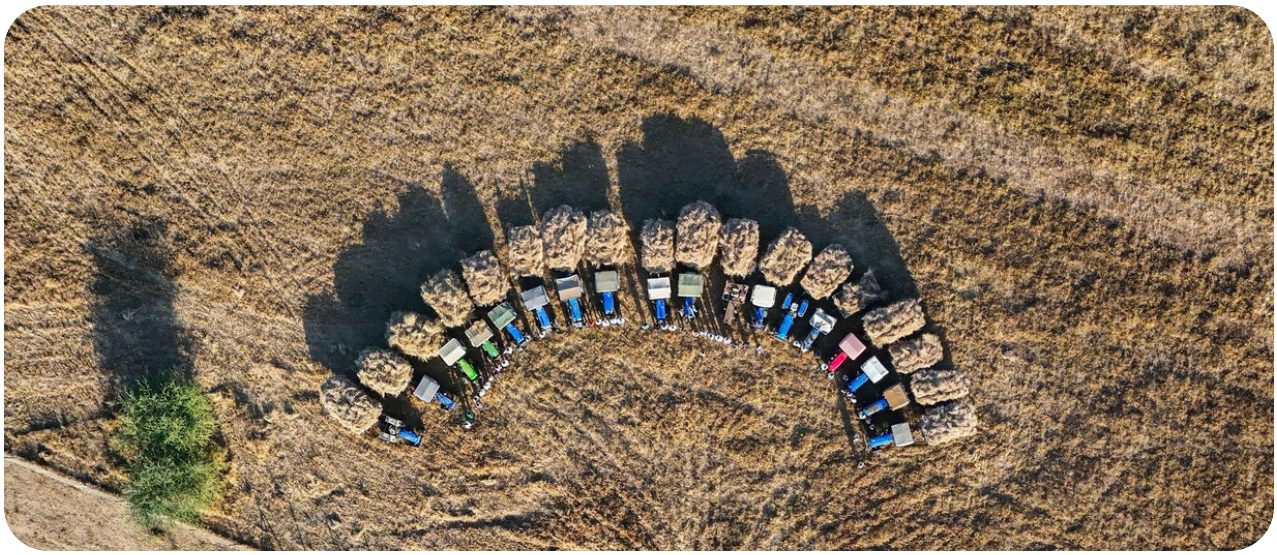
APPROACH:
Community-Centric Grassland Restoration

Within six years, this 52 acres of restored site has become a functional grassland habitat supporting over 70 bird species, 60 insect species, eight reptile species, and seven mammal species, demonstrating **rapid ecological recovery when pressure is reduced**. This success story has inspired the team to take up more land, all with the trust of communities. Currently, restoration work is underway on ~350 acres of degraded pasture, and another project is restoring 500 acres of degraded pasture.

Tangible livelihood benefits

Recognizing the dependence of local communities on grasslands, the Foundation promotes **improved livestock management, fodder security, and alternative income sources**. By reducing pressure on natural grasslands, these interventions help prevent overgrazing and allow ecosystems to recover.

In the Kutch restored grassland site, communities **now harvest approximately 2 tonnes of grass per hectare**, which is stored in the godowns and stall-fed to livestock in summer. This reduces grazing pressure on remaining natural grasslands and helps prevent further degradation. Additionally, village women have begun producing organic ghee (clarified butter) from cattle's milk. They sell the final product for ₹1800-2000 per kilogram, generating extra income.



The harvested sun-dried grass from one-fourth of the area is collected and stored in godowns for later use in the summer season. Photo credit: The Corbett Foundation.

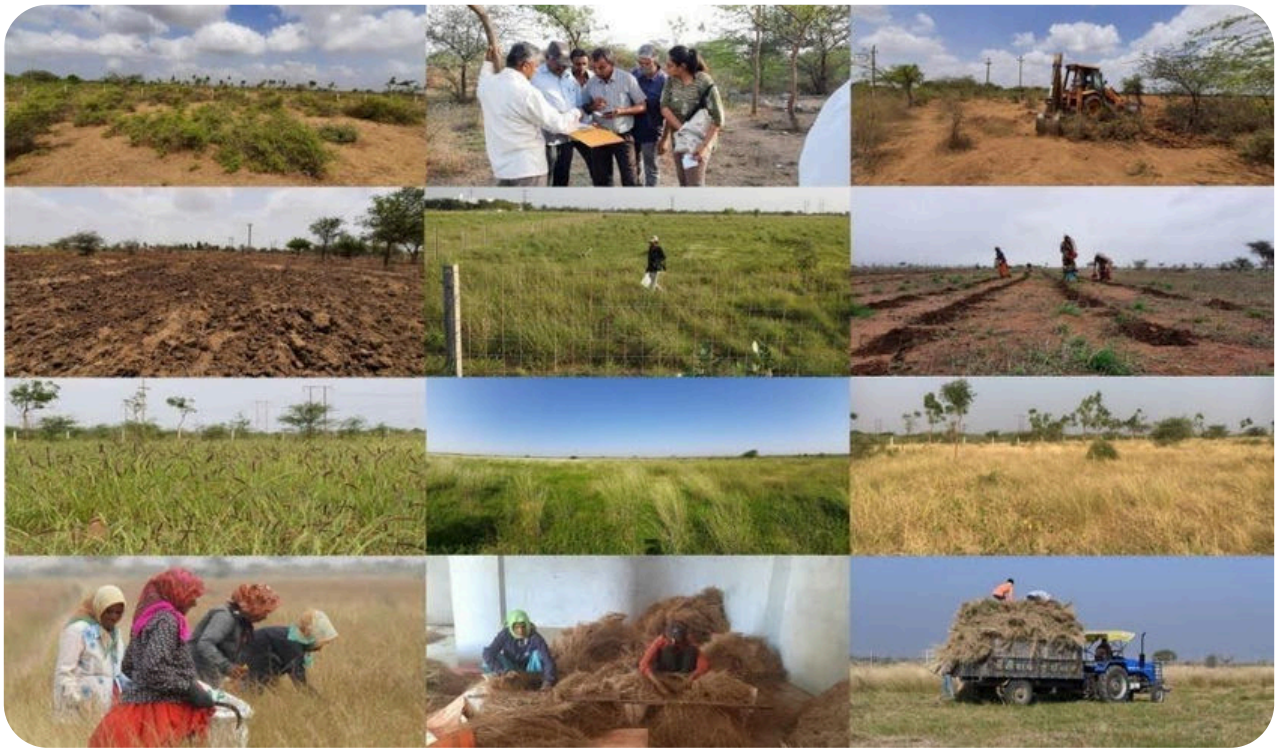
APPROACH:
Community-Centric Grassland Restoration

Conservation of Grasslands in Priority Bustard Habitat

India has now recognised the importance of restoring grasslands; the 74th meeting of the NBWL, under Agenda 3/74.3, also **highlights the urgency of grassland restoration**. The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India's landmark judgement dated 19.12.2025 further strengthens the case for grassland restoration in Kutch and the Jaisalmer region.

Therefore, TCF's grassland restoration work aligns with national policies, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)'s Bustard recovery guidelines, and SDGs 10, 11, 12, 15, and 17.

Such restoration work not only reduces grazing pressure on the breeding habitats of critically endangered species such as the Great Indian Bustard (Ardeotis nigriceps) and the Lesser Florican (Syphetotide indicus), but also during the breeding season. Such restored habitats, at the end of 7-9 years, have become **home to more than 350 species of flora and fauna**. The vulnerable species, like Bristled Grassbirds (Schoenicola striatus) have started breeding in this area.



A collage showing the entire process of grassland restoration at Kutch, Gujarat by TCF. Photo credit: The Corbett Foundation.

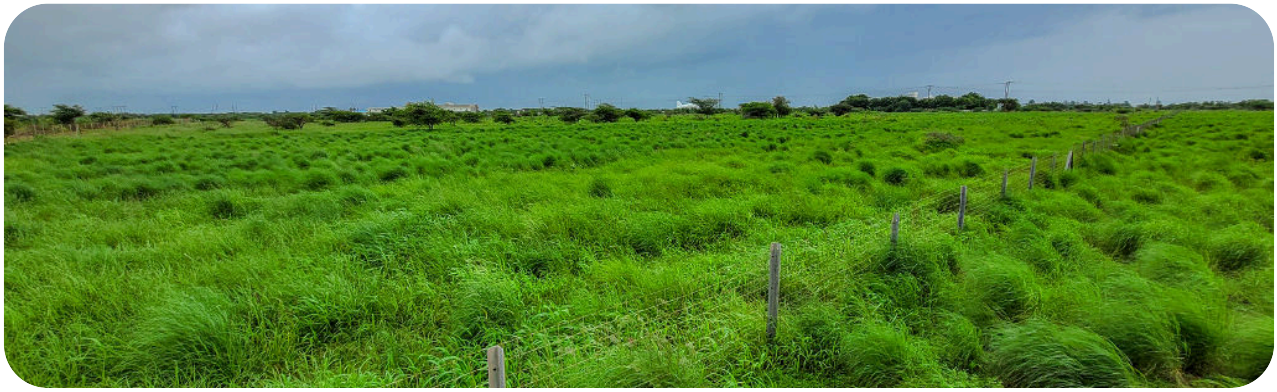
Outcomes & Impact

- Restoration of degraded grasslands, including **conversion of invasive-dominated land into productive rangelands**
- Adoption of the **Rotational and Controlled Grazing System** (RCGS) at the community level
- Measurable increases in **biodiversity and fodder production**
- Reduced pressure on natural grasslands through **stall-feeding** and improved **nutrient-rich fodder** availability
- Strengthened **community stewardship** and long-term sustainability of rangeland ecosystems
- Approximately 300 acres of restored land had about 800 tonnes (dry weight) of Neltuma juliflora removed, processed into bichar, and reused on the same site to enhance **soil fertility**.

The Corbett Foundation demonstrates that effective grassland restoration in human-dominated landscapes depends on aligning rewilding with community needs.

Their model highlights how rewilding rangelands can simultaneously support biodiversity, climate resilience, and rural livelihoods in some of the world's most vulnerable ecosystems.

Learn more about them here.



A pastureland restored to grassland by The Corbett Foundation at Kanakpur village, Abdasa, Kutch, Gujarat, India. Photo credit: The Corbett Foundation.

Part of a larger effort

These case studies are part of the the **Rewilding Rangelands Initiative —** a collaborative effort to restore ecological functionality and uplift coexistence across rangelands through coordinated action across disciplines, sectors, and geographies.

A growing coalition of the Global Rewilding Alliance, Alliance Partners and experts have joined the Rangelands Working Group.

Explore other **case studies** and learn more about the **Initiative**.

ABOUT THE GLOBAL REWILDING ALLIANCE

The Global Rewilding Alliance is a worldwide organisation catalysing the rewilding movement by bringing together an active network of over 290 partners, working on every continent to help nature heal herself and secure a thriving future for people, nature and planet.

Our mission is to mainstream rewilding in science, policy and practice.

The core support of our Global Rewilding Champions is enabling us to build the hopeful, growing, global rewilding movement.

Rewilding THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE

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HIGH AMBITION COALITION FOR NATURE AND PEOPLE

UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION 2021-2030