

Dear Colleague,

We are pleased to share with you today a special edition of our newsletter focused on Sentinel's **Horizon Scanning** research. Please read on to find out how you can participate in Stage 2 of this important part of the project.

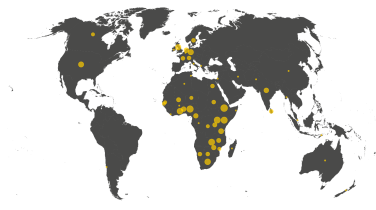
[Help us ensure we are asking the right questions! - Take our survey](#)

The Sentinel project team, in partnership with the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), are leading a horizon scanning activity to identify the 100 most critical research questions that, if answered, would have the greatest positive impact on food security, ecosystem health and inequality in sub-Saharan Africa.

**We now need YOUR help to shortlist the questions.** We want to ensure that the final 100 research questions are the ones with the potential to yield the most profound social impacts - and we need your views to ensure that everyone's views are equally represented.

**How you can help:** We would like you to score the importance of a random subset of 28 research questions. We will use the scores you provide to rank the questions ahead of a final project workshop later this year. Follow the [link here](#) to find out more information and take the survey. You do not need to have any in-depth knowledge of a particular research area to participate. We are very keen to hear from anybody involved in the region.

Please note that the deadline for responses is **22 February 2021**.



Explainer

## [Horizon Scanning - Our Approach](#)

Despite the urgent need for evidence-based policy, there is often very little information exchange between decision-makers and researchers. This is driven by the fact that there exists a potential mismatching between the priorities of the producers (i.e. academic researchers) and consumers (i.e. the policy makers and local practitioners) of research. In order to narrow this gap, we have used an interdisciplinary and inclusive horizon scanning approach, that engages and involves representatives from a wide range of organisations and professions in and outside sub-Saharan Africa.

Horizon Scanning is a widely used technique for looking ahead. While initially developed for businesses to identify future issues and opportunities, today it is utilised by a multitude of sectors, including conservation. The end goal of our horizon scanning activity is not only to identifying the 100 most critical research questions, but to ensure this is done in a transparent and inclusive manner, that gives a voice to those stakeholders who don't often get a chance to get involved in the research development process.



## [Our progress so far](#)

In Stage 1 of the Horizon Scanning activity, more than 1300 questions were collected from 318 colleagues across diverse backgrounds and countries. 75% of respondents were from sub-Saharan Africa. Most self-identified as academic researchers or producers of research.

Preliminary analysis has suggested that Food security & nutrition is seen as the priority thematic area, whilst reducing inequality was seen as a lower priority. Our current work under Stage 2 seeks to look into these priorities in greater depth by asking participants to score the questions in terms of importance.

More information on the analysis to date can be found in the [Sentinel Horizon Scanning Report from April 2020](#)

---

**Sentinel** is an interdisciplinary research project seeking to address the challenge of achieving 'zero hunger' in sub-Saharan Africa, while at the same time reducing inequalities and conserving ecosystems.



This email is from International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), 235 High Holborn, Holborn, London WC1V 7LE



Information about this newsletter can be found on the [Sentinel website](#). You can stop receiving this newsletter at any time by [updating your preferences or unsubscribing](#).

Email not displaying correctly? [View in a browser](#).