

Policy achievements, gaps and opportunities for scaling agroforestry to meet climate change, biodiversity and restoration challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa

Mieke Bourne, Susan Chomba, Florence Bernard, Constance Neely, Endalkachew Wolde-meskel, Athanase Mukuralinda, Kiros Hadgu, Dennis Garrity, Fergus Sinclair

Mieke Bourne: m.bourne@cgiar.org, SHARED Hub, ICRAF, Regreening Africa Project SHARED Component co-lead.

Rational: Challenges in the policy space and institutional arrangements can limit scaling up and adoption of agroforestry technologies. This review was undertaken to advise policy engagement in the Regreening Africa project (<https://regreeningafrica.org/>) and share recommendations with partners.

Study approach: Through systematic desk reviews, national workshops and discussions with local communities, we interrogated key policies in agriculture, environment and climate change that affect agroforestry implementation in eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Mali, Niger, Senegal, Ghana, Somaliland/Puntland, Kenya, Rwanda and Ethiopia).

Finding 1: Countries are at different levels of developing agroforestry policies, strategies and plans but have integrated agroforestry in their sectoral policies

Agroforestry strategies exist or are being developed in Rwanda, Ethiopia and Kenyan with a policy in Ghana (1986). Strategies are seen as more achievable than policies in most countries.

Land, agriculture, and economic policies and incentive systems may have more influence on adoption than specific agroforestry policies or strategies.

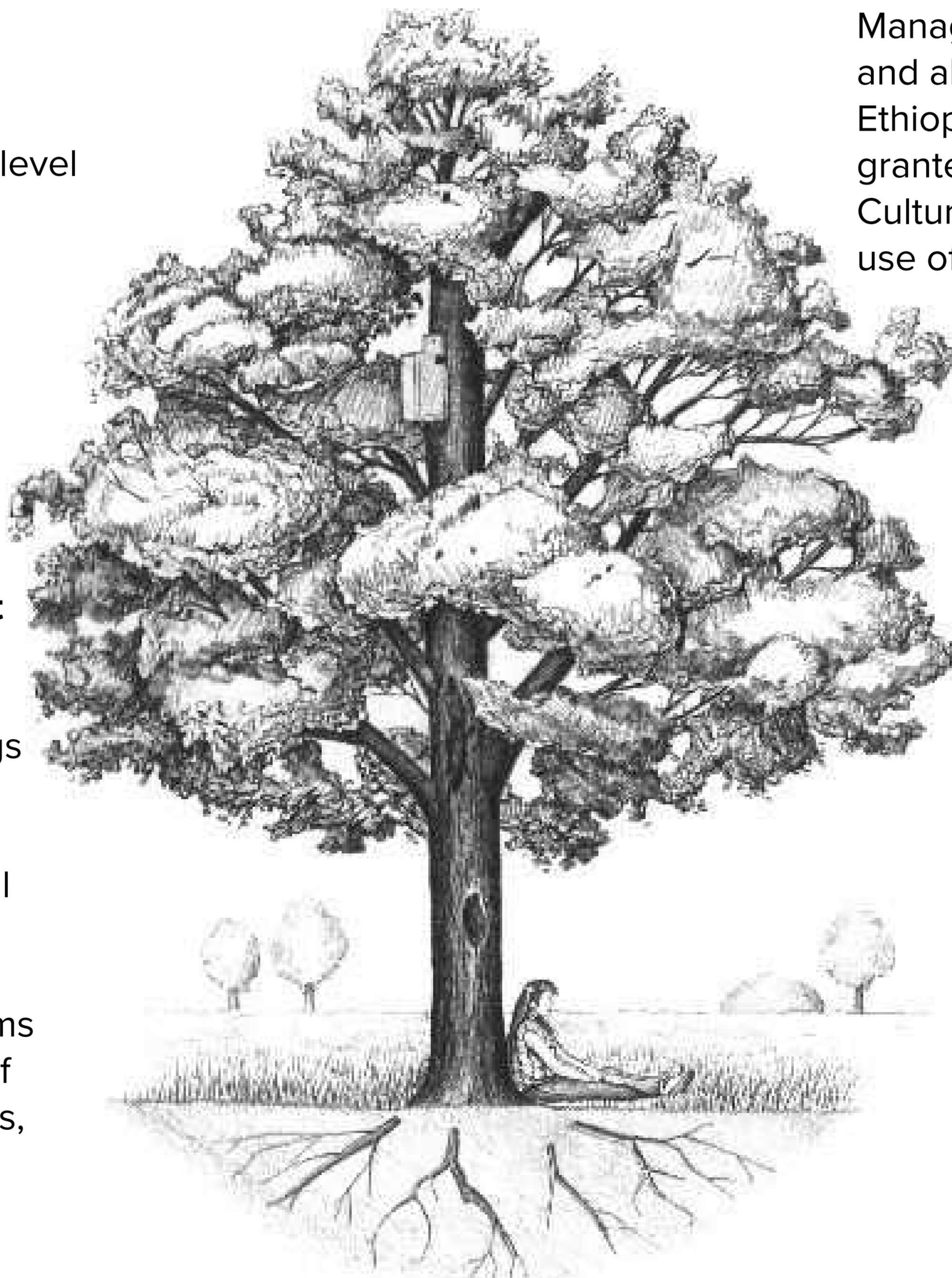
Finding 5: Implementation of policies, strategies and plans can be weak, due to:

- * Limited resource allocation.
- * Weak agroforestry advisory systems.
- * Devolution of responsibility to sub-national level but not capacity or resources.
- * Resources and capacity for implementation support not always available in the ministry responsible for agroforestry.
- * Weak germplasm supply systems.
- * Limited monitoring, reflection and learning.

Finding 4: Agroforestry is cross-sectoral, yet there is high fragmentation and lack of coordination between relevant government ministries

Agroforestry typically does not have an institutional home or policy space but belongs to many sectors. Various aspects of agroforestry are spread across agriculture, environment, forestry, natural resources, rural development and climate change policies or strategies.

Rwanda and Ethiopia are developing platforms for coordination to facilitate mainstreaming of agroforestry in various government structures, avoid duplication and harmonise monitoring and evaluation.



Finding 2: Most countries face similar challenges affecting farmer and pastoral rights of ownership, access and use of trees

Rights to trees are often separated from rights to land. Where secure access and use rights exist, permits for tree products may still be needed. In the Sahel, tree ownership or rights to tree products are often linked to the state and bureaucratic processes.

Niger recently released a decree on Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration, lifting restrictions and allowing tree product access and use.

Ethiopia has examples where user rights can be granted separate from land titles.

Culture impacts women and youth access to and use of tree products.

Finding 3: Legal pluralism, especially in West African countries, has provided an opportunity for farmers to practice agroforestry where colonial antecedents of restrictions to land and tree tenure persist under state law

An opportunity when customary rights to common pool resources including trees, forests and land take precedence over colonially informed state laws.

A challenge when punitive provisions under state laws supersede customary rights and claims.

Questions and consideration for further analysis and discussion:

*Can coordinated cross-sectoral efforts to support agroforestry succeed or will efforts need to be fragmented to align to sectoral ministries? What roles would a coordination mechanism need to play? We will review experience from other cross-sectoral policies.

*What government and sectoral ministry arrangements are more conducive to ensure policies and strategies are implemented?

*What incentives are needed and what has been tested to support agroforestry development? Examples include free seedlings, support to community based advisory providers, access to credit, and tax exemptions.

*Which policy approaches has been the successful in terms of agroforestry development outcomes?

Key references

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