



Sustaining Indigenous Plants Through Community Involvement

William Olupot, PhD
Director, Nature and Livelihoods, Uganda



Results of a recent (Jan 2012) study by Nature and Livelihoods on rural perceptions about tree and bush trends in the last 5 years

Trend	% Individual Tree Species	% Tree Species Generally	% Extent in Bush Cover	AVERAGE %
Decreasing	78	88	90	85
Increasing	13	9	9	10
Remaining the Same	9	3	1	4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100



NL study results continued: perceptions about causes of tree and bush loss on private lands

Cause of Decline	% Individual Tree Species	% Tree Species Generally	% Extent of Bush Cover	AVERAGE %
Fuelwood and Charcoal	44	47	27	39
Building Wood	30	22	12	21
Agricultural clearing	6	9	33	16
Bush burning	7	15	21	14
Other causes	13	7	7	9
TOTAL	100	100	100	



NL study results continued: suggestions about how to avert loss of indigenous plants on private lands

Suggestion	% of records
Inculcate a culture of and support tree planting	34
Find solutions to wood overexploitation and vegetation clearing	31
Provide bush burning solutions	11
Reduce unsustainable practices through legal restrictions	10
Conduct targeted restoration of threatened plants and sensitive habitats	7
Other solutions	7
Total	100

Implications of the study on **What IPSI Should do:**



- ▶ Find solutions to:
 - Unsustainable wood exploitation
 - Unsustainable agricultural practices
 - Excessive bush-burning
- ▶ Encourage/Support tree planting & plant restoration
- ▶ Support/Establish/Enforce policies & legal restrictions



What IPSI should do- Determine and Support Wood Solutions:



▶ Take advantage of existing local values for:

- Food e.g. fruit and leaf
- Medicine
- Agroforestry
- Livestock forage
- Amenity (tourism)
- Etc

▶ Support acquisition of:

- Wood- energy saving technologies
- Substitutes for power and lighting
- Alternatives to wood as a source of income
- Appropriate non-indigenous plant timber supplements for indigenous species

What IPSI should do- Encourage use of Sound Farming Practices:



- ▶ Promote tree retention on farmland
- ▶ Support preservation of agriculturally-marginal traditionally uncultivated lands
- ▶ Enhance production on existing farmland using locally affordable but sound practices such as agro-forestry & minimum tillage, and LS husbandry
- ▶ Support acquisition of high-yielding crop varieties and LS breeds
- ▶ Support eco-friendly pest management



What IPSI should do- **Support management of bushfire:**



- Educate on fire impact highlighting impacts on populations of socioeconomically important plants and environmental services
- Train in bush fire management including components such as early burning and use of fire lines

What IPSI should do- Support tree planting:

- ▶ Train in plant propagation
- ▶ Provide guidelines for tree planting in homesteads, along roadsides and in built-up areas
- ▶ Devise/Support habitat/species restoration programs
- ▶ Establish demonstration centres to showcase indigenous plants



What IPSI can do to implement these suggestions– mobilization & involvement



- ▶ Working through existing organized grass-root groups such as youth groups including involvement of youth in educational institutions
- ▶ Working with individuals that have a big stake in NRM management on settled lands e.g. large land owners and people earning a living based on extractive activities
- ▶ Conducting targeted research to support implementation
- ▶ Mobilizing resources– particularly funding to support activities

Thank you for listening!

