

DRYLAND FORESTS AND AGRO-SILVOPASTORAL SYSTEMS

2021 FAO PUBLICATIONS

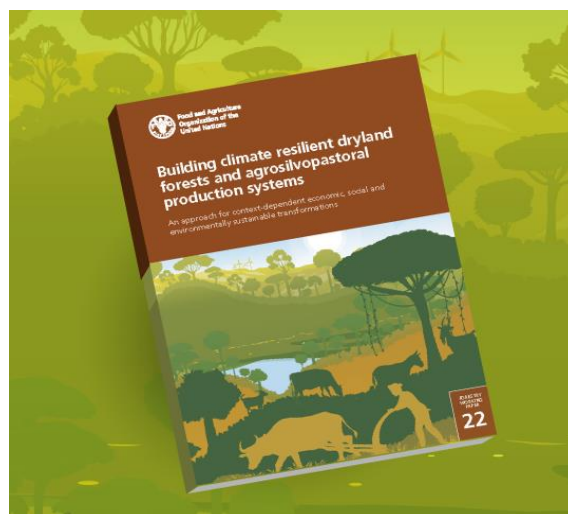
To accompany the celebrations of the [International Day of Forests 2021](#), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has presented in its website an important set of materials to guide policymakers, practitioners and local communities in strengthening initiatives for a sustainable management of forests and ecosystems in view of achieving the SDGs by 2030, while contributing to sustainable livelihoods and climate change mitigation.

One of these materials is the document [Building climate-resilient dryland forests and agro-silvopastoral production systems](#). An approach for context-dependent economic, social and environmentally sustainable transformations. The document brings together current trends, examples and experiences of changes in the management of dryland production systems that have contributed to meet major environmental, social and economic challenges faced by dryland forests and agro-silvopastoral systems in different contexts and countries.

Drylands constitute 41 percent of the global land area and are significant parts of all continents. They are the home and lifeline to more than 38 percent of the total global population. The document highlights the following Key facts on dryland ecosystem services:

- Often considered as barren, remote and unproductive, drylands produce about 60 percent of the world's food in 44 percent of the world's agricultural land, mainly concentrated in Africa and Asia.
- Drylands support over 50 percent of the world's livestock, which is the main source of income for about 25 million pastoralists and 240 million agro-pastoralists;
- Drylands play a vital role in global climate regulation as they store approximately 46 percent of global carbon reserves.

The document highlights the necessary transformational change in the management of drylands and their associated agro-silvopastoral systems needed to ensure that they continue to provide critical goods and services to dryland communities, ensuring food security and healthy livelihoods. At the same time, by protecting and restoring biodiversity, soil fertility is enhanced and carbon storage increased in soils and biomass. This paper focuses on the change needed in the management of the three interconnected social, economic and environmental sustainability pillars. The paper also presents case studies portraying practices ongoing in different world's countries that have led to progress in sustainability and are directly related to the expected transformations.



The Policy brief [Blooming drylands – a practical approach for context-dependent economic, social and environmentally sustainable transformations](#) was also published in 2021. The paper relies on the extensive knowledge and lessons learned by both local people, as well as dryland forest and agro-silvopastoral experts in many different contexts and outlines nine transformational actions to sustain dryland production systems for the three interconnected economic, social and environmental pillars. For each of these pillars, three ongoing practices in different countries are presented, showing how local communities have been able to adapt to extreme environments using their rich heritage of knowledge and new technologies complementing traditional practices.

These documents and the [set of materials published by FAO](#) for a sustainable management of forests are also relevant in view of the launch of the [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration \(2021–2030\)](#) scheduled for June 5, 2021. The UN Decade aims to prevent, halt and reverse degradation of ecosystems worldwide in order to give people and nature a sustainable future. [Forests and farmlands](#) are part of the Earth's ecosystems considered by the Decade and the transformative approach proposed by the FAO materials, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and valuing the essential role of local communities, represents an important contribution for the practices that will be developed in the future.

To know more

[FAO publications for the 2021 Day of Forests](#)

[Publications on world forests restoration and recovery in unccd.int website](#)

[Building climate-resilient dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral production systems – FAO 2021](#)

[Blooming drylands FAO 2021](#)

[Article on drylands in FAO website](#)

[Forest and Landscape Restoration in FAO website](#)

[Action Against Desertification in FAO website](#)

[UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration \(2021 – 2030\)](#)

[The State of the World's Forests 2020 in FAO website](#)

[Digital Report 2020 online](#)

[Interactive Report](#)

[Recent FAO Forestry Publications](#)

