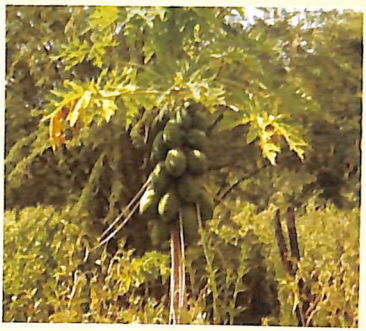
Reclaiming Land Invaded by Prosopis for Agricultural Production in Marigat, Kenya



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Introduction

Prosopis juliflora was introduced in drylands of Kenya in the 1980s to combat desertification as it is a drought tolerant tree. However, due to the species fast growth and prolific seeding, it became invasive suppressing all other vegetation within its vicinity.

Baringo County is one of the areas where Prosopis was introduced and the species has since become invasive. However, communities in Marigat Sub-county, Baringo County are reclaiming land under Prosopis invasion through various strategies including; removal of the species, and integration of other land use options such as food crop, fruit, and pasture production. This approach is informed by the fact that Prosopis does not survive in land under constant disturbance such as ploughing and weeding.

Thicket of Prosopis trees

Approaches of reclaiming land under Prosopis

- Identify land invaded by Prosopis to be reclaimed.
- Cut and uproot all Prosopis trees. This can be done manually using hand tools such as jembe, panga and axe.
- Plough the land.
- Re-silt/fill any gullies on the land with soil.
- Construct soil and water conservation structures such as cut-off drains.
- Fence the ploughed land using either Prosopis posts or twigs, live fence and/or chain link.
- Sub-divide the fenced land into portions for ease of management.
- Plant desired agricultural crops such mangoes, pawpaws, beans, green grams, melons, millet, or pasture grasses in different portions of the land.

Reclaimed land under crop production

Maintenance of reclaimed land

- Continuously uproot emerging Prosopis plants.
- Control weeds by use of appropriate herbicide or through manual removal.
- Practice crop rotation.
- Maintain soil fertility through application of animal manure.

Benefits of reclaiming land from Prosopis invasion

- Increased land productivity.
- Improved food and nutrition security.
- Increased pasture availability.
- Increased income from diverse farm produce.
- Natural regeneration of indigenous trees leading to improved biodiversity.
- Introduction of zero grazing system for dairy animals leading to increased milk production.

Reclaimed land under mango crop

Reclaimed land under pasture

Improved cattle

Improved sheep

Irrigation canal

This publication was compiled using information collected from Mr. Samuel Chepngaswa of Marigat Sub-county.

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For more information contact the Director:

Kenya Forestry Research Institute
P. O. Box 20412 - 00200 Nairobi, Kenya
Telephone: +254 722 157 414/734 251 888
E-mail: director@kefri.org
Website: www.kefri.org