Prospects for Enhancing Nature and Livelihoods in Global Food Value Chains

The Case of Agroforestry in Ghanaian Cocoa and Vietnamese Coffee Value Chains

Overview

Agroforestry-based reforestation in agricultural landscapes has been identified as a potentially powerful nature-based solution to climate mitigation and adaptation challenges, whilst supporting biodiversity and other sustainable development goals. However, many potential risks and challenges with reforestation strategies have also been identified, including displacement of commodity production and equity issues. Actors (companies and governments) in commodity value chains, such as cocoa and coffee, are making commitments to agroforest-based reforestation, for example with 21 million new trees pledged under the recent Cocoa and Forests Initiative. In order to ensure the risks of these commitments are mitigated and their potential livelihood, biodiversity and climate benefits realized, local, practitioner and scientific knowledge must be better integrated.

Objectives

To help facilitate the integration of local, practitioner and scientific knowledge, this project will work directly with a consortium of coffee and cocoa value chain actors to co-design the High Agricultural Reforestation Potential (HARP) Toolkit. This project will consist of tools that support stakeholders in overcoming key user-identified challenges in implementing agroforestry-based reforestation in coffee and cocoa landscapes. To co-design this research toolkit we will utilize a transdisciplinary research approach:

Preliminary Results from Value-Chain Stakeholder Interviews in Ghana:

- Farmers' challenges
  - Mature shade trees on cocoa farms present risks to farmers from illegal chainsaw operators and Forestry Commission concessions to timber companies.
  - Seedling survival rate is a challenge when they decide to incorporate shade trees.
  - Agroforestry training takes valuable time as does planting and nurturing shade trees.
  - Agroforestry adoption is not a priority: Farmers state that their main challenges are persistent low yields, pests, and a lack of incentives to invest labour in planting shade trees.
  - Planting shade trees can require felling one or two cocoa trees to make space, which farmers are highly reluctant to do.
  - Poor market access for agroforestry products.

- Company directions
  - Multiple cocoa manufacturers and traders incorporate agroforestry into their sustainability policies.
  - Manufacturer and trader SSIs generally have high ambition in terms of scale but low ambition relating to their proposed agroforestry transformation both in terms of the process and the end goal.
  - Resulting agroforests lack structural complexity, shade density, diversity (mostly no more than 5 different shade tree species have been distributed).
  - Mismatch between agroforestry claims in CFI reports (transformation to diverse agroforests with multiple benefits) and what has been delivered broadly across supply chains (low density shade trees included in cocoa monocultures).
  - Commitments made under CFI designed based on reportability rather than potential for impact.
  - Actors framed agroforestry as a junior component of their productivity focussed sustainability programmes.

- Government's role
  - Private sector SSIs do not act in isolation: Government has sector wide extension programme promoting agroforestry.
  - Specific Ghanaian Government-designed cocoa sector institutions local to producing regions provide vehicles for implementation of private sector policies.
  - Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme (GCFRP) is the major Ghanaian Government policy influencing adoption of agroforestry under the framing of Climate Smart Cocoa.
  - These institutions give SSIs potential to scale inside and outside company specific supply base: This has created a governance infrastructure to deliver agroforestry extension through HAs (multi-district scale), CREMAS (multi-community scale) and CRIMCs (community scale).
  - Limited longevity of these institutions - these institutions have become dormant after a lack of support since the initiation process.
  - Company SSIs are restricted in their ability to offer carbon finance incentives for agroforestry adoption to farmers by GCFRP.

What are the design features of company policies that promote agroforestry?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operational design theme</th>
<th>Operational design feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group training</td>
<td>Multiple farmers trained on agroforestry benefits, establishment, management.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>One-to-one focus groups with local cocoa farmers, and interviews with key informants.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demarcation data</td>
<td>Limited, community, farms established, with &quot;example&quot; agroforestry configurations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centralized</td>
<td>Cocoa variety assessments were conducted by the Cocoa Board and their &quot;Opportunity, Transform, Adapt&quot; (CiAT) to inform agroforest configuration and documentation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genetic material</td>
<td>Geographical genetic material assessments have been done for specific cocoa varieties to inform agroforest configuration and documentation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home-based</td>
<td>Cocoa varieties assessed for cocoa growing area, coffee growing area, &quot;transformation to diverse agroforests&quot;.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>Ghanaian Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme (GCFRP) is the major Ghanaian Government policy influencing adoption of agroforestry under the framing of Climate Smart Cocoa.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance Payments</td>
<td>Payments for seedling survival, not comparable in value to FS or Carbon Credit. Inputs also considered by some</td>
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