Forest Landscape Restoration in West Africa through Community Forestry: Keys to Success

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Community forestry = forest management having ecological sustainability & local community benefits as central goals, with some responsibility & authority for forest management formally vested in the community

Community forests vary & should reflect local conditions & needs

Effective governance structures and partnerships are critical

Incentive mechanisms for restoration linked to conservation are needed

Community forests were created on village lands previously held by family landowners via contracts transferring them to village ownership

Governance institutions developed in a democratic & participatory manner w/ formal recognition by state

Secure land tenure

Sustained partnerships between communities, local/regional governments, NGOs, donors

Project location = PZ1                   PZ2

Savanna grasslands where trees are planted

Secondary forests with supplemental tree planting

Primary forests that are protected

Community development projects

Revenue generation through sustainable harvest of forest products

Protection of valued ecosystem services

Ongoing challenges: (1) finding effective community incentives for restoration; (2) enforcing conservation bylaws; (3) avoiding displacement of unsustainable practices; (4) long-term support