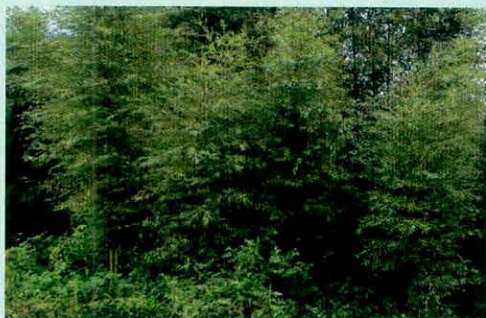




Unlocking the potential of bamboo through product development and commercialisation in Uganda

Introduction

Bamboo is an evergreen multipurpose plant that is widely distributed in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world. In Uganda, the most common bamboo species are *Yushania alpina* and *Oxytenanthera abyssinica* commonly known as mountain bamboo and low land bamboo respectively. Most of the bamboo is found in the south-western, eastern and northern parts of the country mainly in protected areas of Echuya central forest reserve; Mgahinga, Bwindi, Mt. Rwenzori and Mt. Elgon national parks; and in the forest /games reserves of Ongom, Omier, Mt. Kei, Matidi, Lokung, Era, West Uru, Ayipe, Atiya, Aram, Agoro-Agu, Abiba, Otzi, Ozubu, Pao-Enyeme.



Bamboo in Echuya Forest



Giant bamboo from China



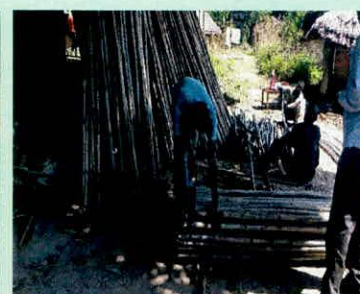
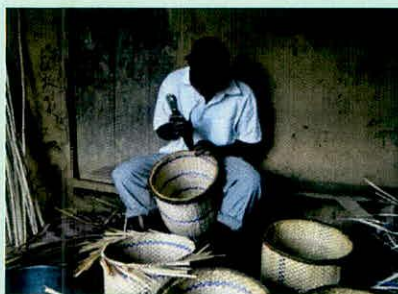
Highland bamboo on-farm

Ecological values

Bamboo has a higher rate of carbon sequestration compared to plantation trees species because of its fast growth. Bamboo is one of the world's fastest growing plants with some species reportedly reaching up to 1.2 m per day. Bamboo can also be used in watershed management where its known to improve the quality of water. Using its dense root and rhizome systems, bamboo can protect water catchments and prevent soil erosion especially in the mountainous areas. It is known to absorb pollutants such as excess nitrogen and heavy metals from the soil.

Bamboo products

Worldwide, bamboo offers potential for improving livelihoods through product development. In Uganda however, bamboo product development still lags behind. The common products include bamboo crafts (baskets, trays, mats) furniture, and poles for construction



Local utilization of bamboo in Uganda

About the project

Main objective: To enhance bamboo product development and promote its production and utilisation for improved livelihoods

The specific objectives of the project are:

1. Generate assorted high quality bamboo products from existing bamboo resources
2. Establish a centre for demonstration and promotion of high value bamboo products
3. Establish a bamboo germplasm base at Kifu forest for sustainable production of raw materials needed for product development

Achievements



Different bamboo species established in the degraded Kifu forest



Bamboo product development

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