



LAND, WATER AND ENVIRONMENT

FARM AFRICA'S APPROACH

 **FARM AFRICA**

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FARM AFRICA'S VISION FOR A PROSPEROUS RURAL AFRICA

Investing in smallholder farming is key to combating poverty in rural Africa. Prosperity depends on making agriculture work better, using natural resources well, creating strong markets for what farmers produce and facilitating access to finance to grow agri-businesses.

Almost half the world's extreme poor live in sub-Saharan Africa. The vast majority work in agriculture in rural areas. But agricultural yields and profits are a fraction of their potential.

The region is full of opportunities for growth, including much fertile land and water, and millions of smallholder farmers who are eager for change.

Farm Africa works with smallholders to develop practical solutions that work locally and can be replicated elsewhere. Our approach papers set what we aim to deliver, and how, in support of our vision of a prosperous rural Africa.



PREFACE

Farm Africa's approach papers set out what we aim to deliver, and how, in relation to:

Agriculture



- technology
- climate-smart agriculture
- land, water and environment

Environment



- forests
- rangelands
- landscapes

Business



- business development
- trade
- finance



PREFACE

The land, water and environment paper focuses on the **sustainability of** smallholder and agribusiness **production**. It considers **resource use**, soil **erosion**, and other forms of land degradation, and the use of **chemicals**. It also considers the role agriculture plays in **local landscapes**, with a focus on the **conservation** of essential biodiversity, woodlots and watersheds.

The paper derives from Farm Africa's longstanding experience in land, water and environmental management across eastern Africa, associated with its crops and livestock production, post-harvest management, apiculture and aquaculture projects.

Further details about how to increase crop and animal production and improve smallholder resilience to climate shocks and trends can be found in the approach papers on technology and climate-smart agriculture respectively.

The paper on integrated landscape management considers the holistic management of the wider landscape, comprising numerous villages, ecosystems, land use types and watersheds.

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

- The way smallholders use land and other resources today has an **impact on future resource use**. When the soil is left uncovered for prolonged periods of time, soil erosion may occur. Where soil organic matter decreases, soil fertility is threatened.
- This is particularly acute under **semi-arid** climatic conditions and in **mountainous** regions that are dissected by destructive gullies. Grazing lands are also affected, especially near water points. When insufficient water is used to drain salts out of irrigated fields, soils may become unproductive.
- The **excessive use of water and energy** has an impact on other farmers, communities and future generations. The excessive application of **fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides** affects human health and the environment. Environmental impacts such as these are subject to national legislation.

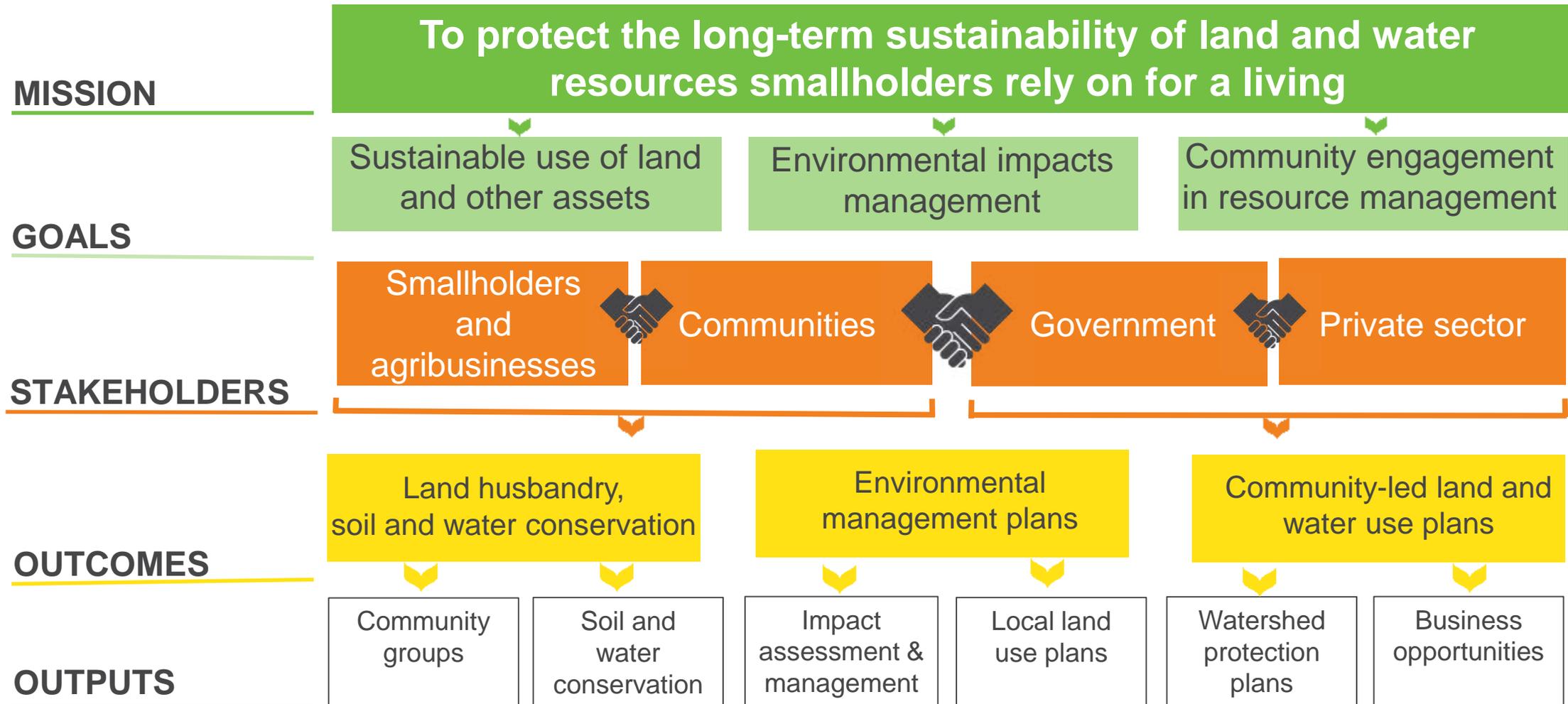


WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

- Farms and grasslands are part of a complex local landscape that provides **essential environmental services**: pollinating insects require high biodiversity, many communities rely on local woods for fuel and construction, and local rivers and streams need protecting.
- The local landscape may belong to an area with **official restrictions**, such as nature reserves and conservation forests.
- Smallholders may lack **awareness of impacts on neighbours** and future generations and of national legislation on resource use and chemicals. Assessing environmental impacts of farming and livestock requires community, business, local government and scientists' participation. Local institutions and land and resource use plans are an integral part of sustainable agriculture.



THEORY OF CHANGE



FARM AFRICA'S APPROACH

Community-led testing and adoption of approaches that protect the long-term sustainability of the local resource base smallholders and agribusinesses rely on.



FARM AFRICA'S APPROACH

We build awareness about land husbandry, land use, watershed and environmental management

We assess soil erosion, land and rangeland degradation, environmental impacts, compatibility of local land and water use with wider landscape and watershed management guidelines

We strengthen local land husbandry, environmental management, land use and watershed management plans in collaboration with local communities, government and businesses

We consider the political economy drivers of land use, including access rights and tenure and the extent to which gender affects land and water resource development

We identify, develop and incubate business opportunities that will increase the long-term sustainability of smallholder agriculture

METHODOLOGY

Phase 1. Mobilisation and assessments	A. Initial identification of key stakeholders
	B. Rapid rural appraisals: initial screening of land, water and environmental constraints on sustainability
	C. Participatory technical/community assessments and recommendations
	D. Identification of potential business/market opportunities



METHODOLOGY

Phase 2. Implementation	A. Test, adapt and scale up new approaches and technologies — especially land husbandry
	B. Manage and monitor local land use, including woodlands and pastures, according to agreed plans
	C. Manage and monitor local rivers and streams according to agreed watershed management plans
	D. Manage and monitor resource use efficiency and environmental impacts, according to agreed plans
	E. Business development
	F. Community organisation



METHODOLOGY

Phase 3. Learning and adapting	A. Agree indicators of successful adoption and progress review process
	B. Collect and analyse data
	C. Collate feedback to and from local communities and adjust approaches as required
	D. Consolidate learning and share with public and private sector



HOW TO USE FARM AFRICA'S APPROACH PAPERS

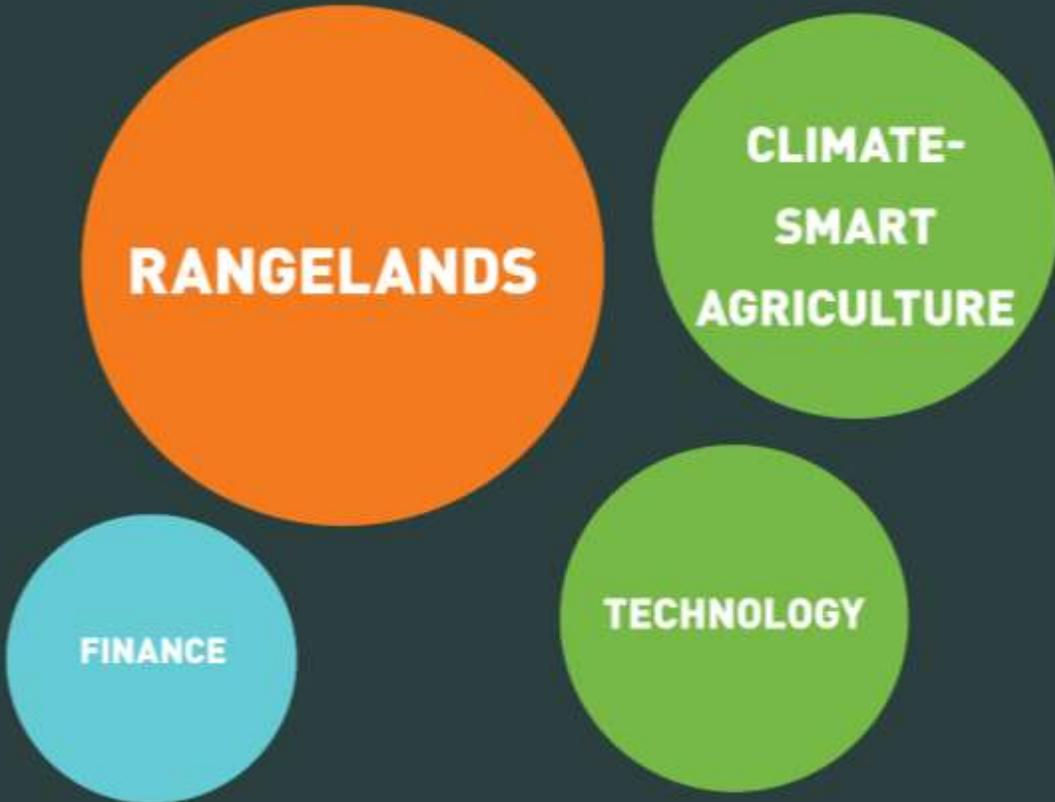


What the approach papers are for:

- Provide clarity to the communities we work with and those who support us about what we do, and how
- Build coherence across our operations
- Ensure each project is based on our experiences, lessons learnt and consolidated knowledge

HOW TO USE FARM AFRICA'S APPROACH PAPERS

A typical natural resource management project



How to use the approach papers in project design:

- The structure of our approach does not mirror the organisation of our individual interventions. The latter are constructed by combining elements from the approach papers – as illustrated in the diagram to the left.
- While the approach papers give detailed guidance about how to do things, this will not always be followed to the letter in all projects. Local context and needs will continue to guide Farm Africa's project design and implementation.

We continuously learn and adjust our approach. The approach papers are regularly updated to reflect the dynamic nature of our experience.