

Case 16: N A M I B I A

Charchoar Making Using Encroacher Bush/Trees

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Namibia is facing serious bush encroachment taking over productive farmlands. Bush encroachment said to be lowered the livestock capacity of rangeland up to two thirds. It further reduced biodiversity and limits the recharge of ground water.

The government in collaboration with various stakeholders’ farmer’s unions, charcoal association and traditional leaders developed de-bushing operation mechanisms. Whereby, Forestry officials conduct bush assessment/ inventory before issue harvesting and transportation permit. Forest permit is company by specific conditions that applicants have to adhere during the de-bushing and burning operation. Charcoal is exported to other continents such as Asia, Europe, America and Africa through registered traders. Producing charcoal out of discarded encroacher bush regarded as value addition, employment creation in rural areas and additional income to farmers in Namibia. It is categorized as foreign currency earn in Namibia.

Implementing Organization	Directorate of Forestry Add : P/Bag 13184 Email : joseph.hailwa@mawf.gov.na	WEB URL : http://209.88.21.83/web/forestry
Funding Source	Government of Republic of Namibia	
Implementing Period	02/2016 – 02/2020	
Project site	Communal and commercial areas	

Key Words: Local people, income generation, charcoal, encroachment of bush/trees



Rangeland invaded by acacia species. Area shows that no or less grass growing underneath of bush/trees. Picture, taken in June 2017 in the area adjacent to one below at Okandjatu communal land



Area adjacent to area in picture above. Rangeland de-bushed and grass density and quality improved.

Background of the Project

Namibia is affected by bush encroachment on massive scale. The phenomenon currently affects about 26 to 30 million hectares of farmland. Bush encroachment covers 9 out of country 14 regions. That mounts about 30% of Namibia land area. Bush encroachment has lowered the livestock capacity of rangeland by up to two thirds. It further reduced biodiversity and limits the recharge of ground water.

The government in collaboration with various stakeholders' mainly Namibia Charcoal association (NCA), farmer unions and traditional leaders developed de-bushing mechanisms operations. The Forestry officials conduct bush assessment / inventory, before issue harvesting and transportation permits to the applicants. Namibia charcoal Association (NCA) has been established to promote environmentally, socially and economically sustainable charcoal production and equitable business practices along the value chain. NCA is a non-profit voluntary membership Association created to serve the charcoal industry in Namibia from producers and processors to suppliers and all other stakeholders. Charcoal production is an important activity for managing bush encroachment. Namibia charcoal is exported to Indonesia, Myanmar, Paraguay, Poland, Laos, Philippines, Cuba and Mexico. It is also used locally as energy source especially in urban and peri-urban. Producing charcoal out of discarded encroacher bush regarded as value addition, employment creation in rural areas and additional income to farmers in Namibia. It is categorized as foreign currency earn in Namibia.

Overall Goal and Objectives of the Project

- ✓ Control bush encroachment at the same time adding value to discarded wood materials.
- ✓ Generate income that contribute livelihood improvement.
- ✓ Create balance between farming productivity and environmental stability.

Challenges and limitations of good practice implementation

Charcoal production regard as informal sector that recruit low-skilled labourers. Charcoal burners are highly likely to cause unwanted forest fire. Charcoal processing is health risk and less environmental-friendly.

Major Activities

- ✓ Application of forest permits
- ✓ Forest inventory
- ✓ Training for harvesters and burners
- ✓ Packing and marketing

Direct Outputs from the Project

- ✓ Less illegal harvesting
- ✓ Livelihood improved
- ✓ Local people employment
- ✓ Earn income

Indirect Impact of the Project

- ✓ Adding value to encroacher bush Livelihood improved
- ✓ Encourage farmers to maintain and manage regeneration for future.
- ✓ Increase productivity of farmland by regulating grass ratio over bush
- ✓ Additional income to the farmers.

Intervention of Central/Local Government and other stakeholders

- ✓ Facilitate the regulations and compliance of charcoal production conditions.
- ✓ Coordinate the communications within farmer unions, charcoal association, suppliers and traders.
- ✓ Issuing forest permit and monitoring charcoal production operations.
- ✓ Provide technical and advisory service to charcoal producers.
- ✓ Monitor and arbitrate labor conflicts.

Way Forward

Supporting farmers with technical and relevant training. Government to strictly monitor the adherence and compliances of harvesters to avoid deforestation.

Reference Documents/Materials

Community forests integrated management plans; <http://209.88.21.83/web/forestry>

Resource Persons

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Community forest office (Otjiu-west) where people issued with forest permits. Local people are no longer travelling long distance to DoF offices for apply forest permits.



Communities' awareness meetings on how to apply and implement community-based forest permits. It very important for forest users to have better understanding of community-based forest system for sustainable forest management.

