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Woody Plants in Agro-Ecosystems of Semi-Arid Regions

with an Emphasis on the Sahelian Countries

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This book provides a quantitative analysis of the role of woody plants in semi-arid regions, for the assessment of their benefits in agrosylvopastoral land-use systems with productive and sustainability objectives. The insights presented and conclusions drawn allow the additional benefits of woody plants for specific climatic and physical site conditions and land-use systems to be estimated. The Sahel and Sudan zones in West Africa, on which the book focusses, represent resource-poor conditions, whose ecological dynamics have been relatively well studied. The role of woody plants in this region, as assessed in this book, is extrapolated to other semi-arid regions, leading to general conclusions on agroforestry's potential as an option for sustainable land use in semi-arid regions. The origins of this book go back to 1982, when the Club du Sahel requested that available data on woody plants in the Sahel region be synthesised, to provide basic information to enable better attention to be given to woody plants in rural development programmes. We are grateful to the Club du Sahel for this challenge. Various people contributed to studies used in this book. The preliminary inventory of the data available was made by Frits Ohler; later his work was continued by Franciska Dekker.

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