

Right tree, right place: seed project

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Nature-based solutions, such as landscape restoration, have the potential to achieve strong biodiversity outcomes and mitigate the effects of climate change. However, well-intentioned yet unsuitable solutions can inadvertently cause harm to our world's ecosystems. Reforestation and tree planting schemes still all too often focus on planting large numbers of fast-growing species for swift carbon capture outcomes whilst biodiversity and livelihood concerns and opportunities remain inappropriately addressed. Planting exotic and invasive species can accelerate native species extinctions and, in many cases contribute to increasing CO₂ emissions. Using native tree species in nature-based solutions is recognised as important element to achieve forest landscape restoration goals, but there is a significant gap between theory and practice. Bottlenecks include limited availability of seeds/seedlings of native species, gaps between planting policy and implementation, as well as knowledge and skill inadequacies in the existing tree-planting programmes, whilst the scope for advanced training in botanical sciences and conservation horticulture remains enormous. “The right tree in the right place for the right purpose: supplying high-quality tree planting material of native tree species (NTS) for landscape restoration in Sub Saharan Africa (RTRP-Seed)” is an initiative to address deficiencies in the native tree species seed and seedling supply sector with a view to support planting of more diverse, high-quality seedlings of native tree species in large-scale forest landscape restoration programmes in Africa. The session will present the project, highlighting the role of Botanic Gardens, and the importance of networking to strengthen tree seed and seedling systems for a range of appropriate native tree species thereby contributing to national climate change, biodiversity conservation and land restoration targets.