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Oral presentation

Presentation title

Agroforestry and Citizen Science in Togo, West Africa

Authorship

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Abstract (max 250 words)

The native forests of Togo, West Africa have seen widespread deforestation, resulting in erosion, depletion of organic matter from the soil, and the loss of diversity, habitat, and cultural provisions across the country. These issues present an urgent series of problems facing the health of its land and residents, including the indigenous peoples that call the area home, as a loss of ecological stability will continue to deplete remaining natural elements of the forests, and forest products represent a potentially sustainable source of building materials, fuel, and food. A local non-profit group, the Institute for Community Partnerships and Sustainable Development (ICPSD), is collaborating with staff, faculty and students from the University of Idaho's Center for Forest Nursery and Seedling Research (CFNSR) to develop a native plant nursery in the town of Notsé, Togo. A local women's cooperative is being trained to staff the nursery, which will serve as both a demonstration site, and an area in which to host educational opportunities.

This collaboration with ICPSD and related partners in Togo aims to exchange sustainable growing practices, target species identification, and provide educational opportunities to growers and agriculture students. Seed procurement remains a significant challenge, due to both the absence of accurate species literature and the lack of proper seed storage facilities. This presentation will focus on the successes and challenges that have emerged in the first year of the project, including nursery construction, species identification, training, overcoming language barriers, seed procurement and propagation protocols, and on-going project financing.

Category

Objective 4.2: Partnerships: Working together

Presenter Bio

Becca Lieberg is a graduate student with the College of Natural Resources at the University of Idaho. Her research interests center around native plant restoration and greenhouse management, especially in the international arena. She has had extensive experience with managing restoration programs, projects and greenhouse crops, in nurseries throughout Utah, Arizona, Idaho, Washington, as well as in the Philippines and Togo. Becca also loves everything outdoors and generally tries to get dirty on a daily basis.

Anthony S. Davis, is a Professor in the College of Forestry at Oregon State University. He is recognized globally as a leader in native plant nursery production and the behavior of plants under varied environmental conditions, specifically for the restoration of degraded ecosystems and improved forest regeneration practices. Working with an outstanding team of graduate students and research scientists, as well as collaborators from across academia, agencies, and private industry, the Davis Lab Group aims to conduct research that leads to better understanding of plant development and improves regeneration success for seedling users in the sustainable use, conservation, and restoration of native plants and their habitats.

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