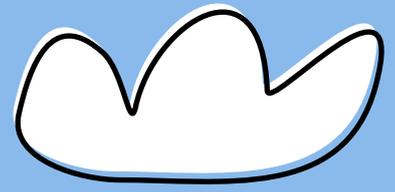


The Tree of Life

A life Support System



Trees last longer than most plants during prolonged drought, holding water in the trunk and root system. Their roots also penetrate deeper than plants to find water. Some trees can last up to a year without water. Shade is very important for people, livestock, and crops

The products that come from trees help create self supporting communities, reducing dependency on things that come from elsewhere. As well as supplying a communities own needs, tree products can also be traded, to help provide a sustainable income and living

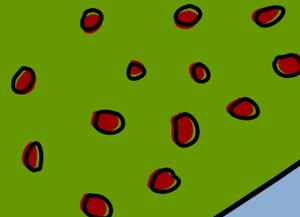
Trees act as a sponge holding onto moisture drawn from the air in the morning and forming as dew. In large numbers trees effect the local climate as the water they evaporate through their leaves [transpiration], recycles water back into the air increasing humidity and the chance of rain [large areas of dense tree cover around the equator are not called rainforest for nothing]



A huge variety of products can come from a tree. These include nutritious nuts and fruits that can be dried and stored for leaner periods. Many products can be processed by villagers into oils and medicines. Leaves from some trees can be used as food for people and animals

As natural wind-breaks trees help stop soil erosion and the spread of the desert

The canopy can support beneficial birds and insects, both for the tree and nearby crops

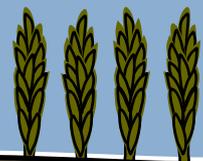
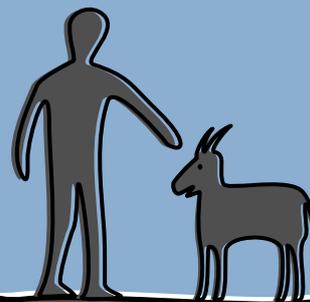


Tree blossom can support bee hives for making honey. The bees in turn pollinate trees and crops



Dead wood and prunings and even some barks can be harvested sustainably and used for making wood products and for fuel

Trees can yield more food using less space than crops. Some crops can be under planted creating a double yield over the same area. Crops can also benefit from a soil rich in leafmould



Roots help stabilise the soil by reducing soil runoff during floods and help to prevent erosion during periods of wind and drought. Roots also help the soil to absorb rainfall, recharging the water table

