



Management of indigenous pastures and cattle herds by the Fulani in northern Benin

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Introduction

- Pastoralism: A traditional lifestyle mainly based around animal husbandry.
- In northern Benin, pastoralists rely on livestock for food and other animal products.
- However, they face serious challenges in feeding their animals due to changes in vegetation composition and quantity.

Study aim

Improve the understanding of the impact of grazing pressure in two municipalities in northern Benin, and local herders' approaches to herd and rangeland management.

Methods

 **Sites:** 4 villages in northern Benin (Fig. 1)

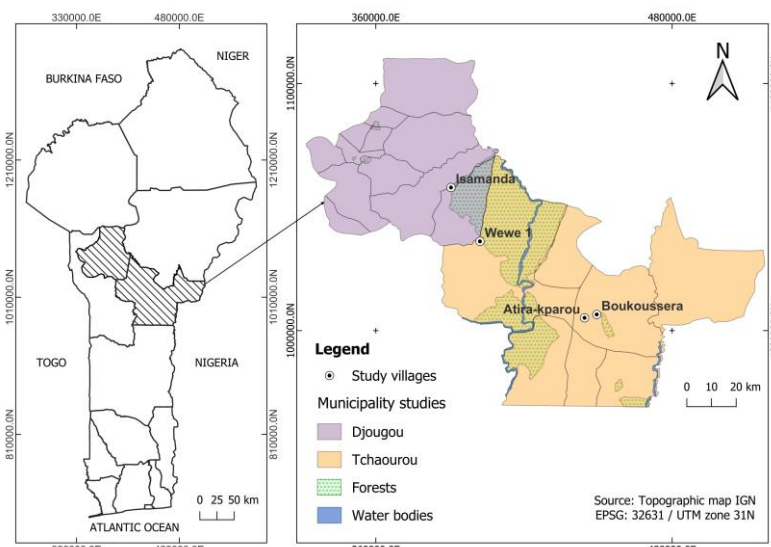


Fig. 1. Map of the 4 study sites (right) within the map of Benin (left)

Period



- February to April 2023
- July 2023 to October 2024

Approach



- Interviews with 80 agro-pastoralists and 12 focus group discussions
- Repeated identification of dominant herbaceous species on 5 selected rangelands per village
- Repeated recording of herd visits on all selected rangelands



Data analysis

- R software

Conclusion

- Severe feeding constraints threaten livestock productivity.
- Traditional herding practices persist with limited adaptive responses to challenges.
- Structural and knowledge barriers hamper adaptive rangeland management.

Results & Discussion

- Problems identified by agro-pastoralists included feed scarcity, rangeland management challenges, and issues related to land ownership and access rights (Fig. 2).

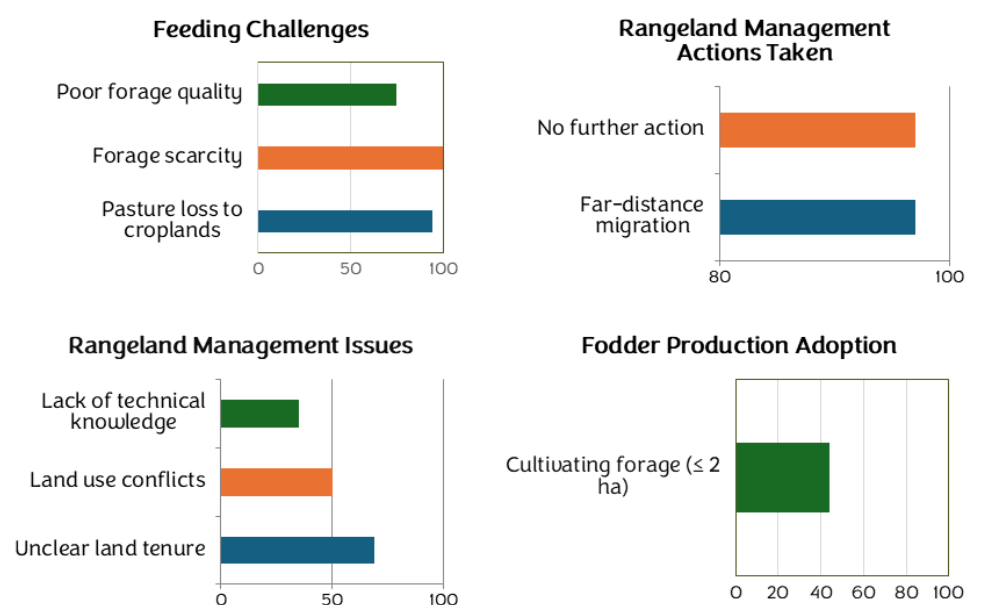


Fig. 2. Problems of agro-pastoralists in northern Benin regarding livestock feeding and rangeland management

- *Hyptis suaveolens* dominates the rangelands, pointing to poor forage quality and limited availability of nutritious feed for cattle (Fig. 3).

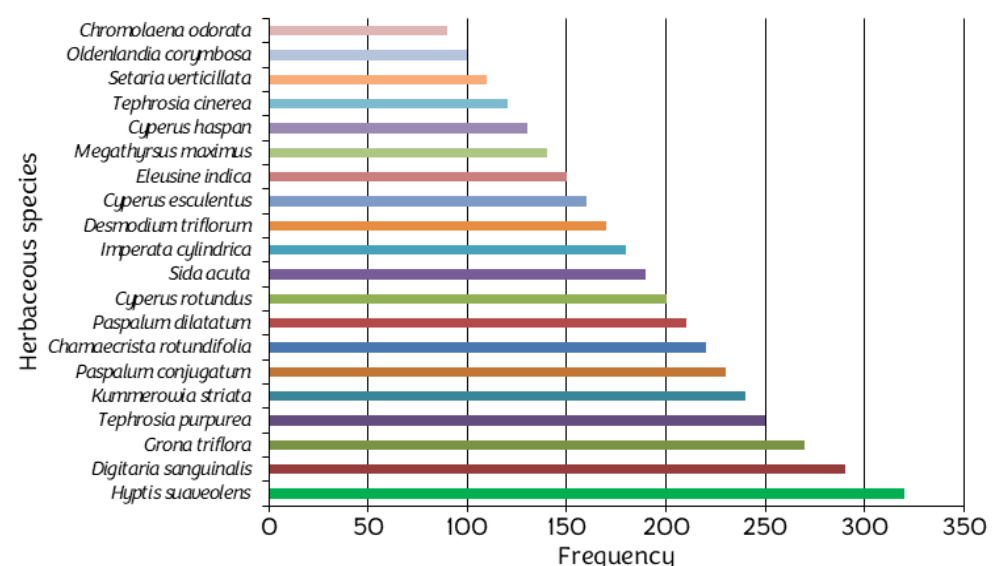


Fig. 3. The twenty most frequent species on the studied 20 rangelands

