



Prosopis invasion near Lake Bogoria, Kenya.

In the 19th and 20th century, many trees and shrubs were planted outside their native range; some of them have become invasive and now cause serious impacts on nature and human wellbeing. In Eastern Africa, *Prosopis juliflora* (prosopis or mathenge) is considered the most threatening invasive non-native tree species. It affects hundreds of thousands of livelihoods while reducing access to water, diminishing the use of valuable range- and cropland, and affecting the health of people and livestock.

Between 2015 and 2020, the Swiss-funded Woody Weeds (WW) project assessed the effects of prosopis on the environment and on rural livelihoods in Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania and explored management practices to reduce its spread and to mitigate its negative impacts.

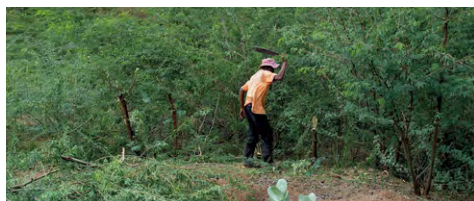
In 2020, the government of Kenya drafted a National Prosopis Strategy based on the Kenya Vision 2030 and on scientific findings from the WW project.

Woody Weeds + (WW+; www.woodyweeds.org) aims to strengthen livelihood security and environmental integrity in areas affected by prosopis by supporting, between 2021 and 2024, the implementation of the National Prosopis Strategy in pilot counties in Kenya.

Key research findings of WW



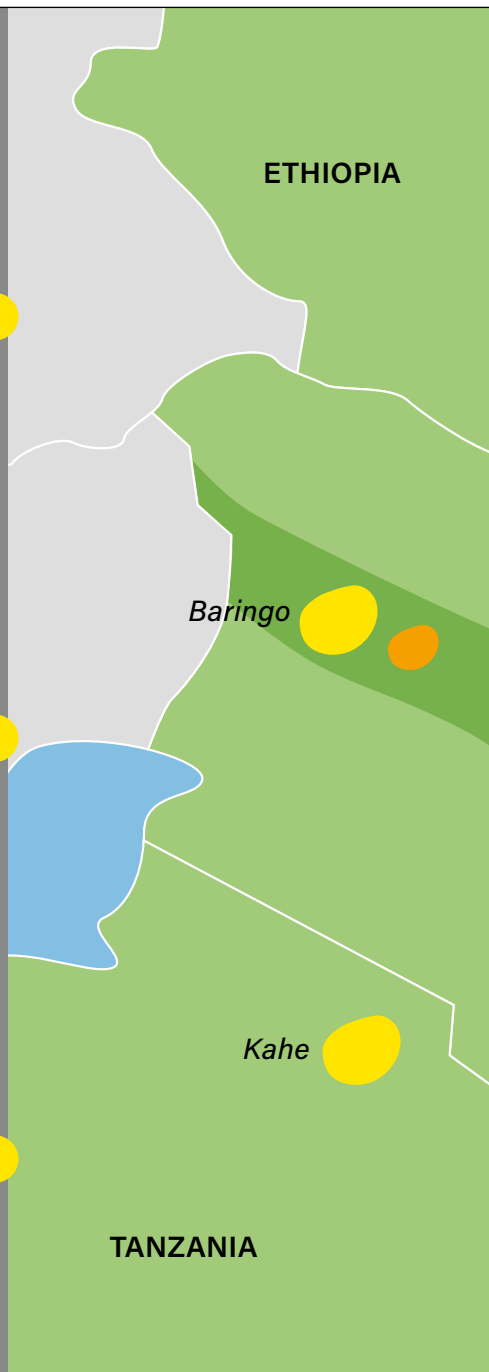
Since 1990, prosopis has invaded 1.2 million hectares in Afar Ethiopia. A prosopis tree consumes 1-36 liters of water per day. In Afar, prosopis already uses more than half of the annual rainfall in the invaded range.



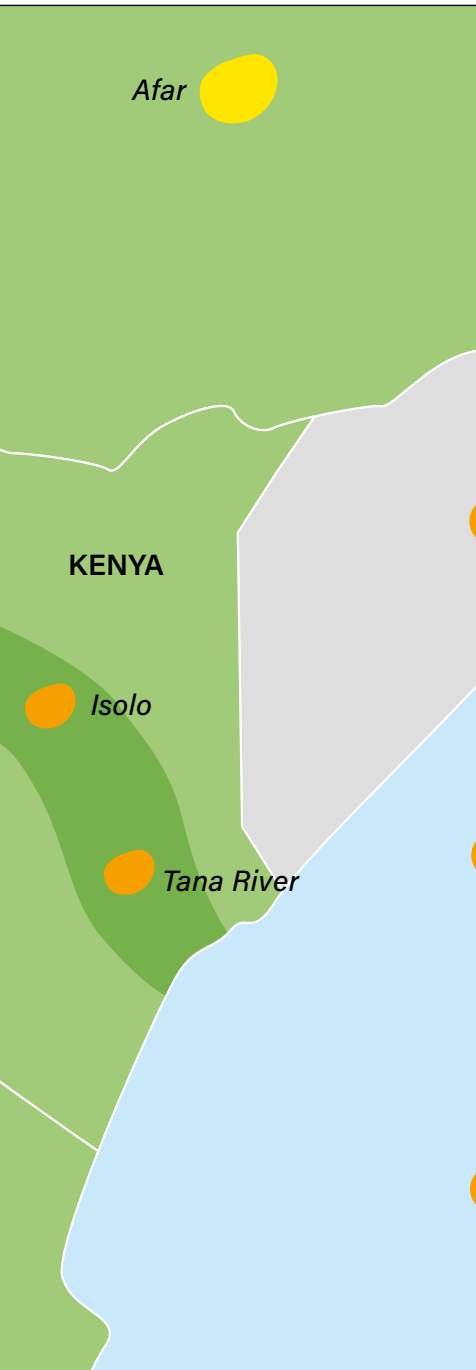
In East Africa, management through utilisation was encouraged by government to control prosopis. In Baringo Kenya and elsewhere, this approach has not stopped or slowed down the invasion process.



Grassland degradation leads to a 40-50% decrease of soil organic carbon (SOC). Restoration of grasslands instead of prosopis invasion replenishes SOC stocks and restores fodder for livestock.



Case study regions in Eastern Africa



Implementation focus of WW+

Acting at the invasion front. We will target an area cutting across Kenya from West to East and following the southern edge of the country's so-called northern rangelands. This belt, which includes West Pokot, Baringo, Laikipia, Isiolo, Meru, and Tana River Counties, is of particular importance as some of the most dynamic and threatening invasion processes in the country are taking place there.

Creating responsive institutions. We will support the establishment of a governance system that links actors and institutions at the national, sub-national and local levels.

We will help these institutions to operationalize the National Prosopis Strategy by developing spatially explicit management approaches and interacting them in existing land use and development plans.


Shaping a long-term process. We will disseminate knowledge, set up demonstration trials for best practices, empower community based organisations, national and county coordinators to successfully implement the National Prosopis Strategy.

WW+ will co-develop innovative financing mechanisms to secure the long-term sustainability of prosopis management and land restoration.



Woody Weeds +

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