

From Local Actors to Leaf Protectors: A Collaborative Modeling Approach for Rethinking Tree Management and Protection Measures in Senegal's Groundnut Basin

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Abstract

How can a participatory simulation model contribute to understanding the socio-ecological dynamics and fostering innovative strategies for sustainable management of trees, crops, and pastoralism in the peanut basin?

In the agro-pastoral zones, the Sahelian ecosystems have undergone significant degradation, characterized by a reduction in tree cover, as a consequence of the droughts in the 1960s and 1990s. The peanut basin stands out for its positive interrelationships between trees, crops, and pastoralism. However, the regeneration of the *Faidherbia* park has declined since the major droughts. Through collaborative efforts with agro-pastoral farmers, we have developed a simulation model that aims to unravel the complex social and ecological dynamics at play and explore potential strategies in partnership with local communities.

By exploring the results of the model co-designed with local stakeholders, we have identified more effective management strategies, as per the request of the local actors. However, more importantly, we have collectively questioned the conditions for improving tree cover and the viability of the socio-ecosystem, particularly in relation to the demand for firewood and local cereal for sustenance. This has prompted the stakeholders to engage in community-wide discussions and transform agro-pastoralists into leaf protectors.

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$$\begin{aligned} A &= \frac{\pi r^2}{2} \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \pi r^2 \end{aligned} \tag{2}$$

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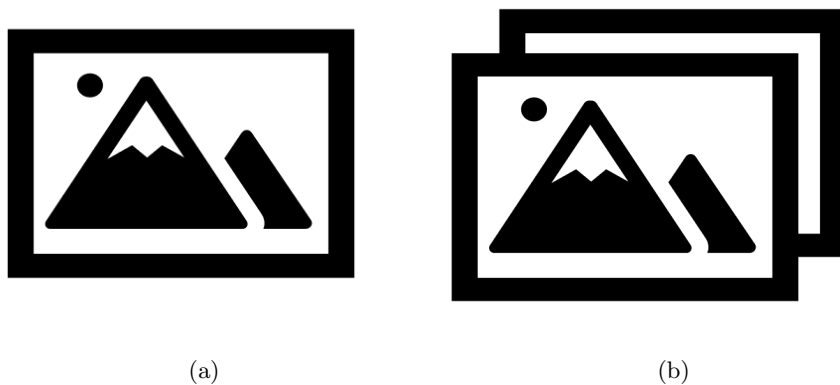


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