



Forests

- retain run-off **water** and regulate ground water
- wood is an important source of **energy** and is seeing renewed interest as biofuel
- local forest coverage can positively impact agriculture and **food** production (agroforestry)

Wider current challenge

Climate change will aggravate the situation in the coming 50 years, compromising water resources and affecting food security

Ecological degradation might increase migration pressure

Region has been heavily deforested by centuries of human activities, with a negative effect on climate

What roles can forests play in addressing these challenges?

Can **large scale reforestation campaigns** help reverse these developments, and

- improve living conditions locally
- improve climatic conditions regionally
- contribute to reducing CO₂ levels globally (carbon capture)?

The policy challenge

Reforestation is possible at local level, with limited success...

Is this an issue that should be addressed at a larger scale, pooling resources and creating synergies...

- To promote exchange of experience, share know-how on successful reforestation campaigns
- Create synergies / economies of scale
- Promote the emergence of a new sustainable forest and wood-based economic sector (biofuel, construction material, eco-tourism, ...)
- Have a larger impact on the climate of the whole region and thereby create new opportunities for agriculture and human development?