Food versus forests in sub-Saharan Africa

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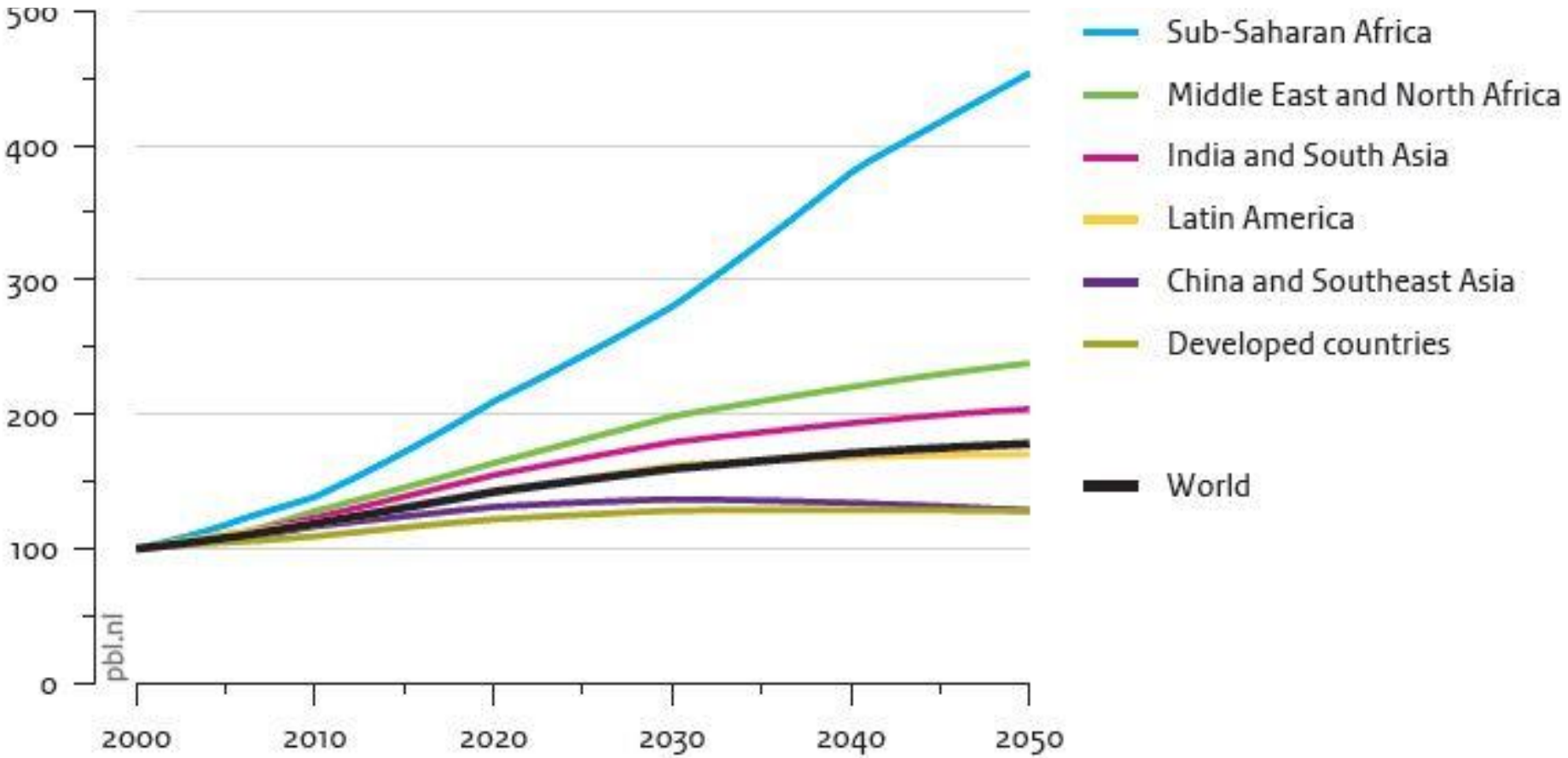
Growing food demand



Leading to a 29% reduction in forest cover by 2030

Source: Netherlands Environmental Agency, 2012

Reduce losses

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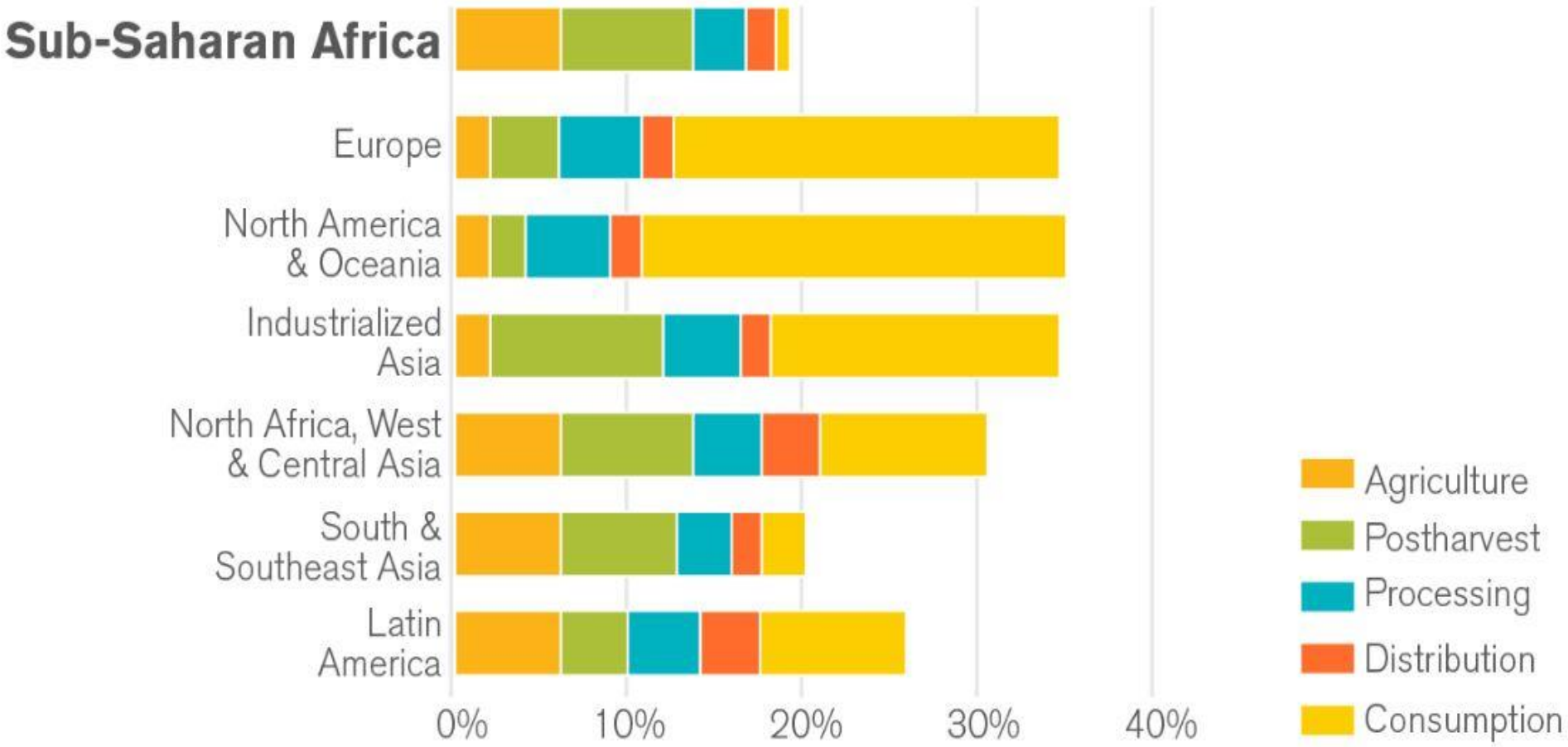

Increase production

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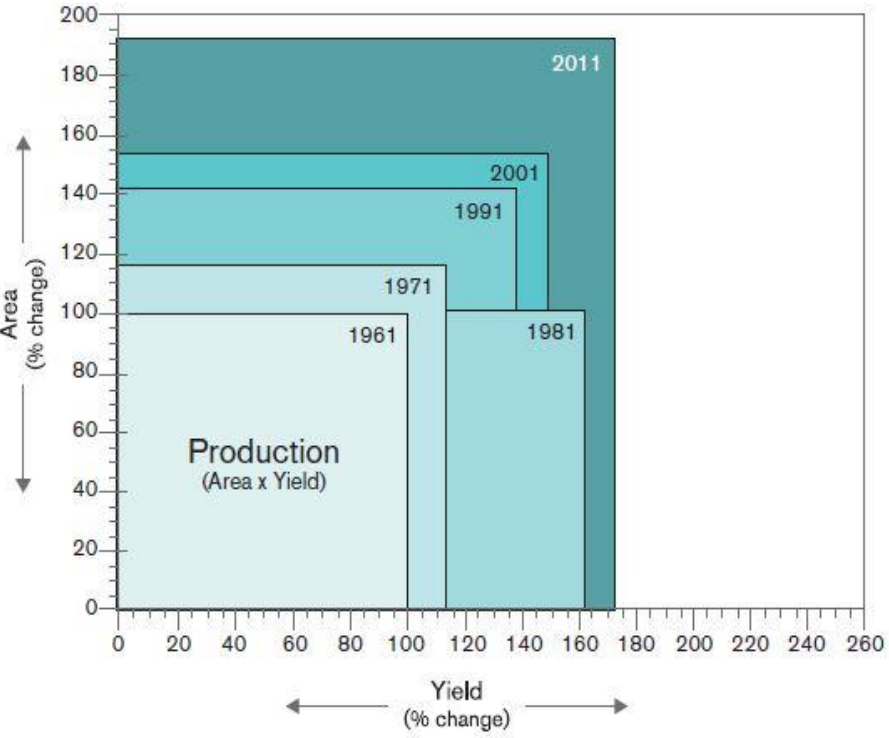
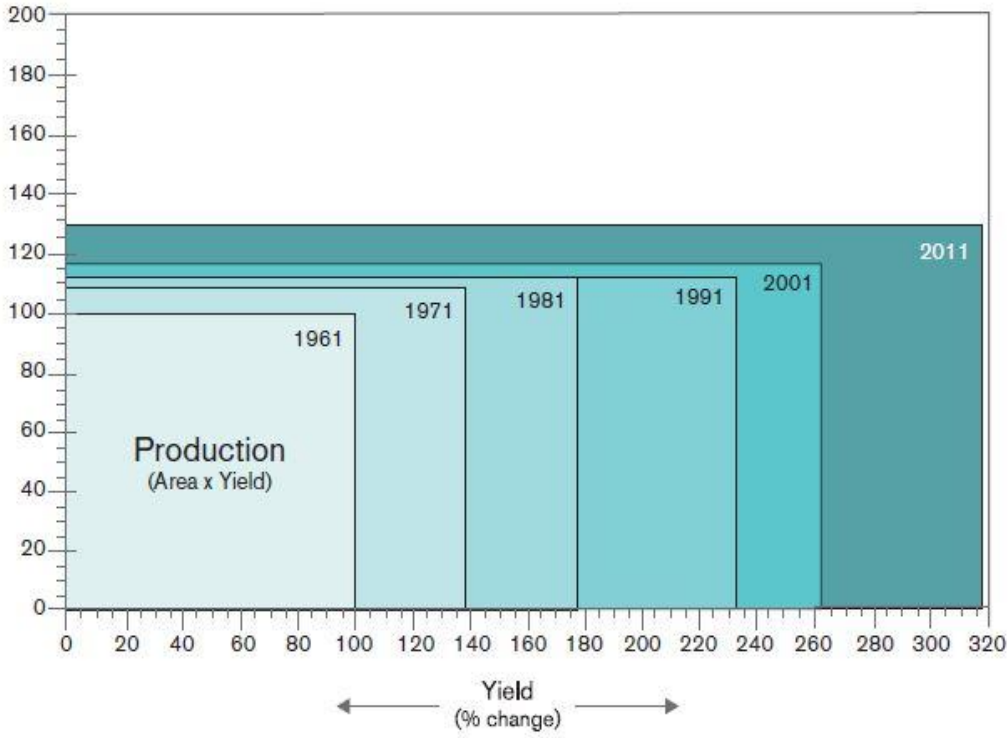
Cereal production 1961-2011

Sub-Saharan Africa



Asia



Yield vs area by country

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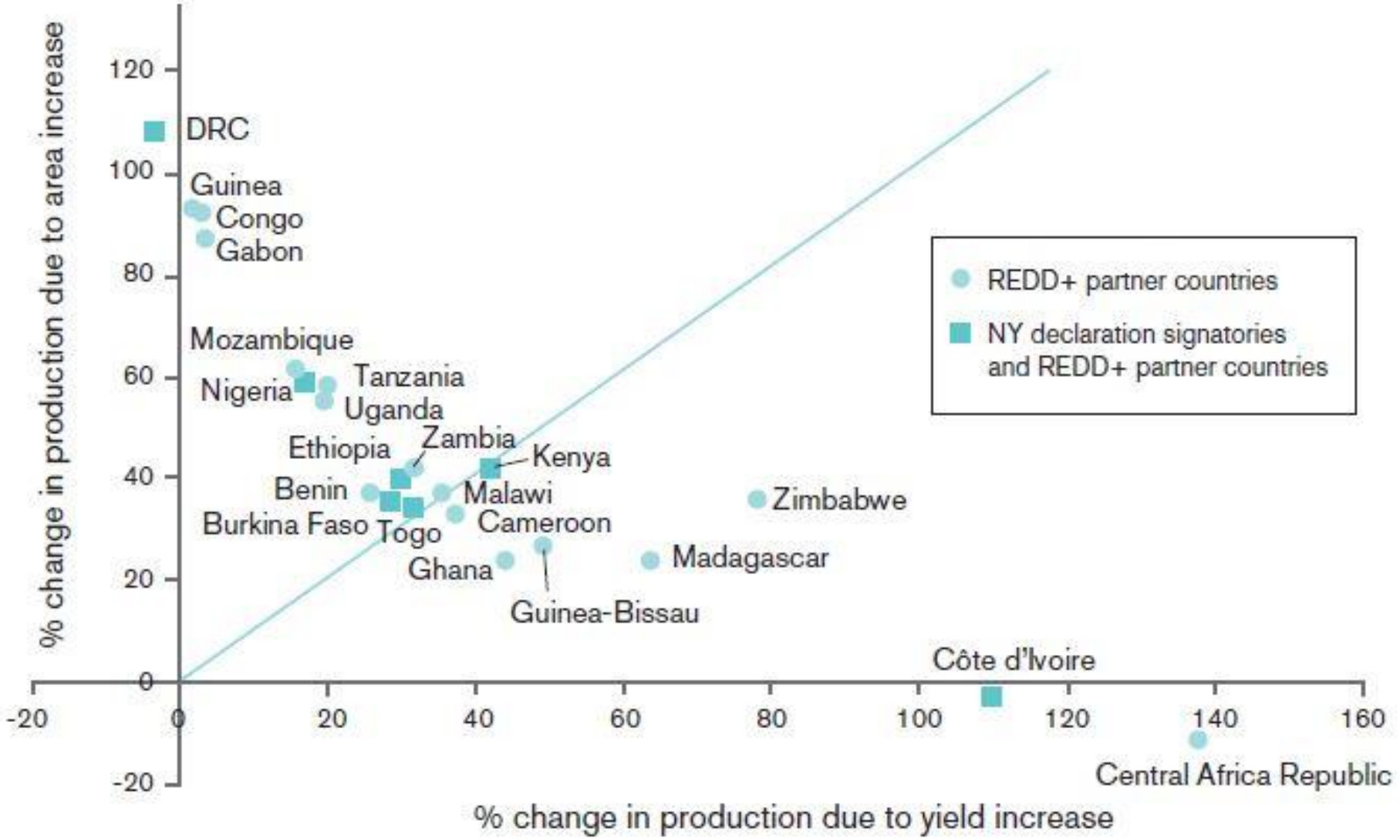

Ethiopia case study

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- 15-30% of the total land area is forests and woodlands (depending on the forest definition)
- Annual deforestation rate 1.2-2.4% (2004)
- 32% of total land area is under crop production with 92% of this area in farms of <5ha (2014)
- Population in 2050 is projected to be 2.2X more than in 2010
- Food demand in 2050 is projected to be 2.6-3X more than in 2010

Domestic consumption not export

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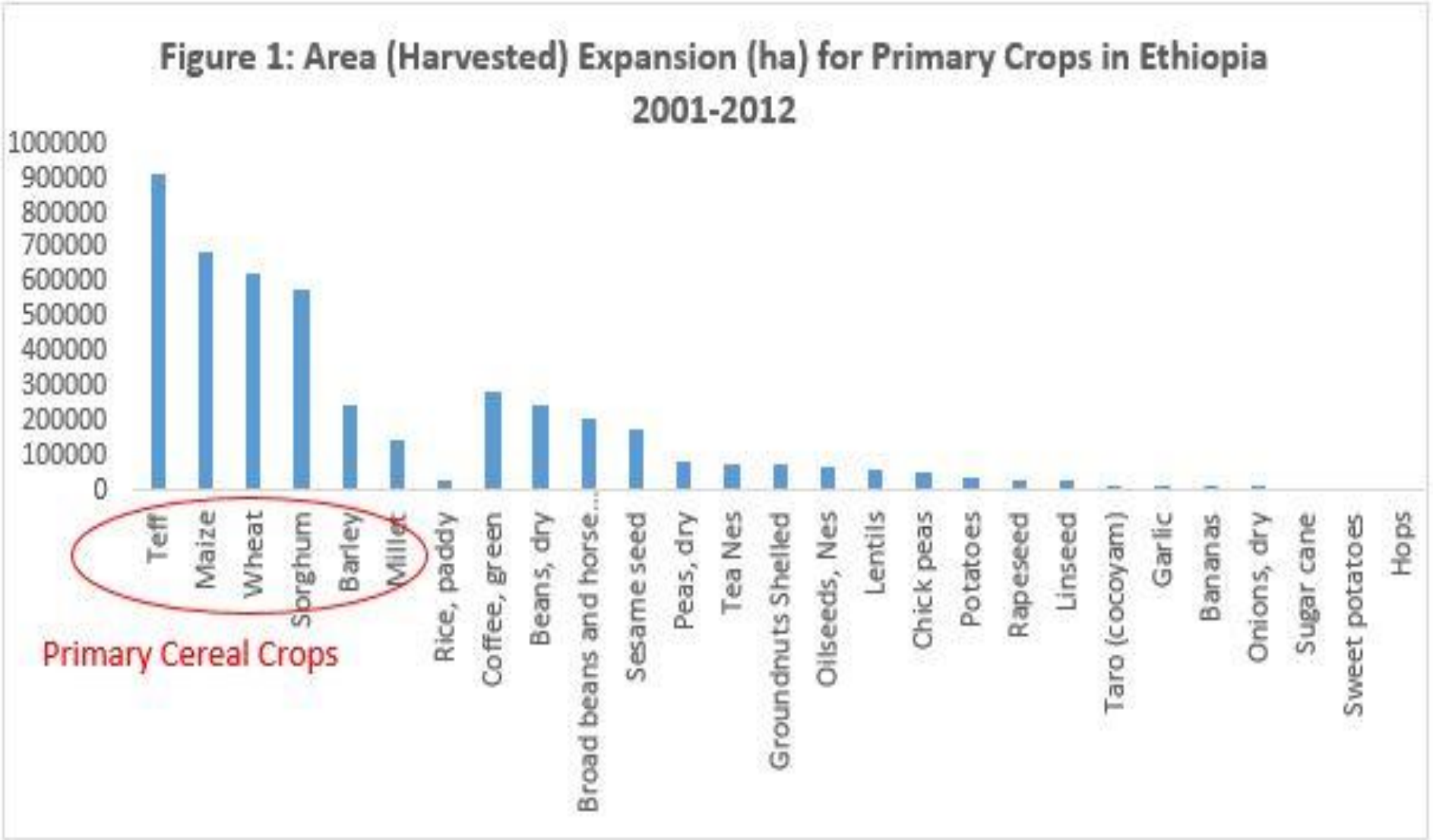

Trends in cereal area and yield:

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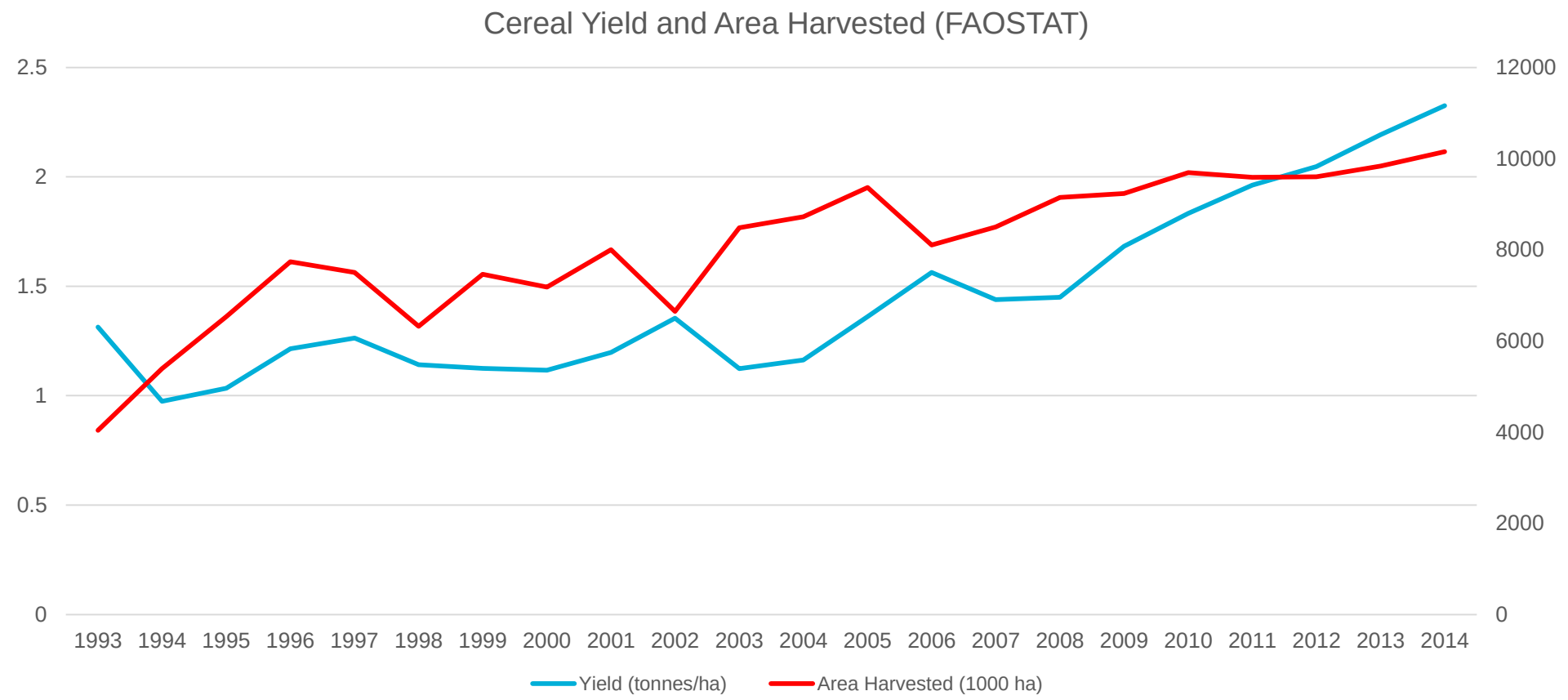
Cereal yield has enjoyed a steady increase in recent years but not sufficient to meet increasing demand, resulting an increase in net imports (mostly for wheat, maize and sorghum) and area expansion.



Conversion of forest to agriculture

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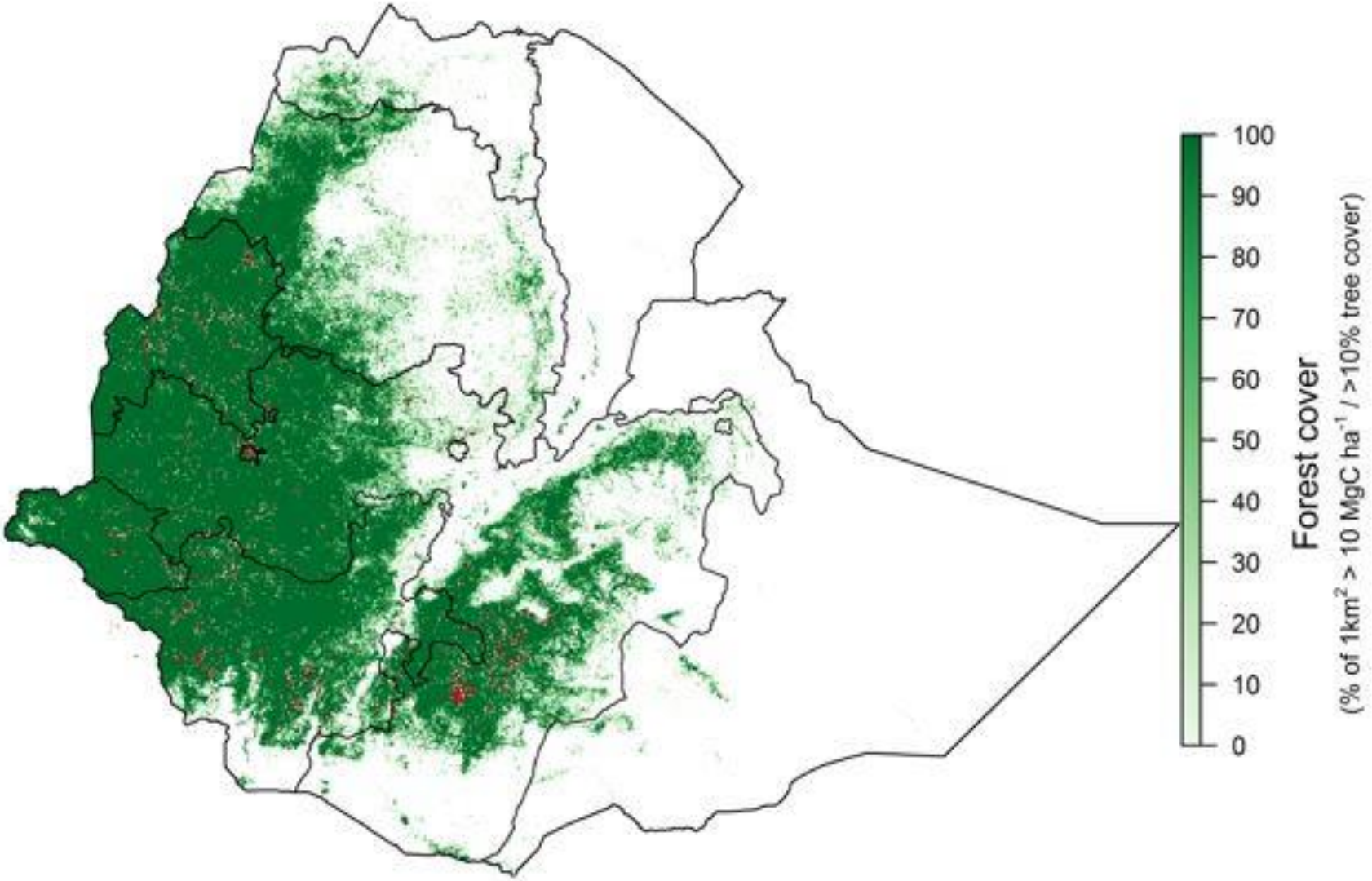
- Ethiopia's Climate-Resilient Green Economy strategy (2011)
  - agricultural land expansion of 3.9% per year
  - In 2030, 55% of this expansion will be coming from forests (down from 69% in 2011).

YET

- In signing the New York Declaration on Forests Ethiopia has committed to strive to eliminate loss of natural forests by 2030.

Ethiopia forest cover (2013)



Likely agricultural expansion

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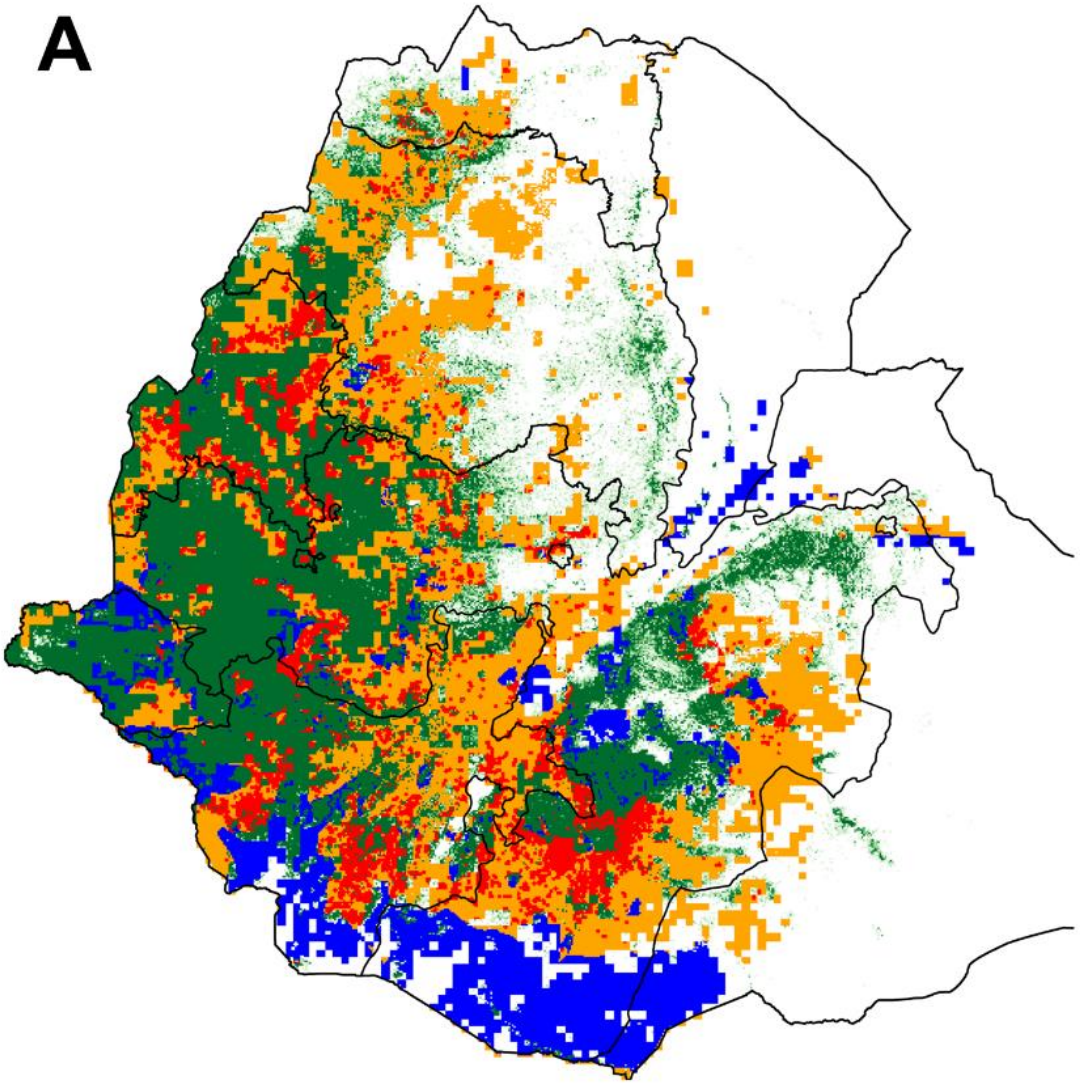

Likelihood of agricultural expansion

- **High** (suitable for crops, near recent deforestation, no protection)
- **Moderate** (suitable for crops, >2km from recent deforestation, no protection)
- **Low** (suitable for crops, >2km from recent deforestation, but a protected area)

Summary

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- Clear disconnects between agriculture and forest sector targets and policies
- Risky assumptions (eg re sustainable intensification)
- Unrecognised trade-offs (and synergies)
- Insufficient attention to climate risk
- Serious implications for forest ecosystem services *and maybe food security ??*
- Why does this situation exist and persist?

  –> realm of political economy

Political economy drivers – examples from SSA

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- Sectoral silos (agriculture, forestry, food etc)
- Scale silos (local-landscape-national)
- Market failures
- Insufficient/inappropriate incentives
- Culture of weak accountability/impunity
- Social trends (eg rural-urban migration)
- Historical legacies (eg colonial, structural adjustment)
- Prevailing narratives (eg “small-scale farming in less productive than large-scale farming”)
- Power imbalances

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Thank you

For more see http://www.iied.org/food-demand-forests-sub-saharan-africa