



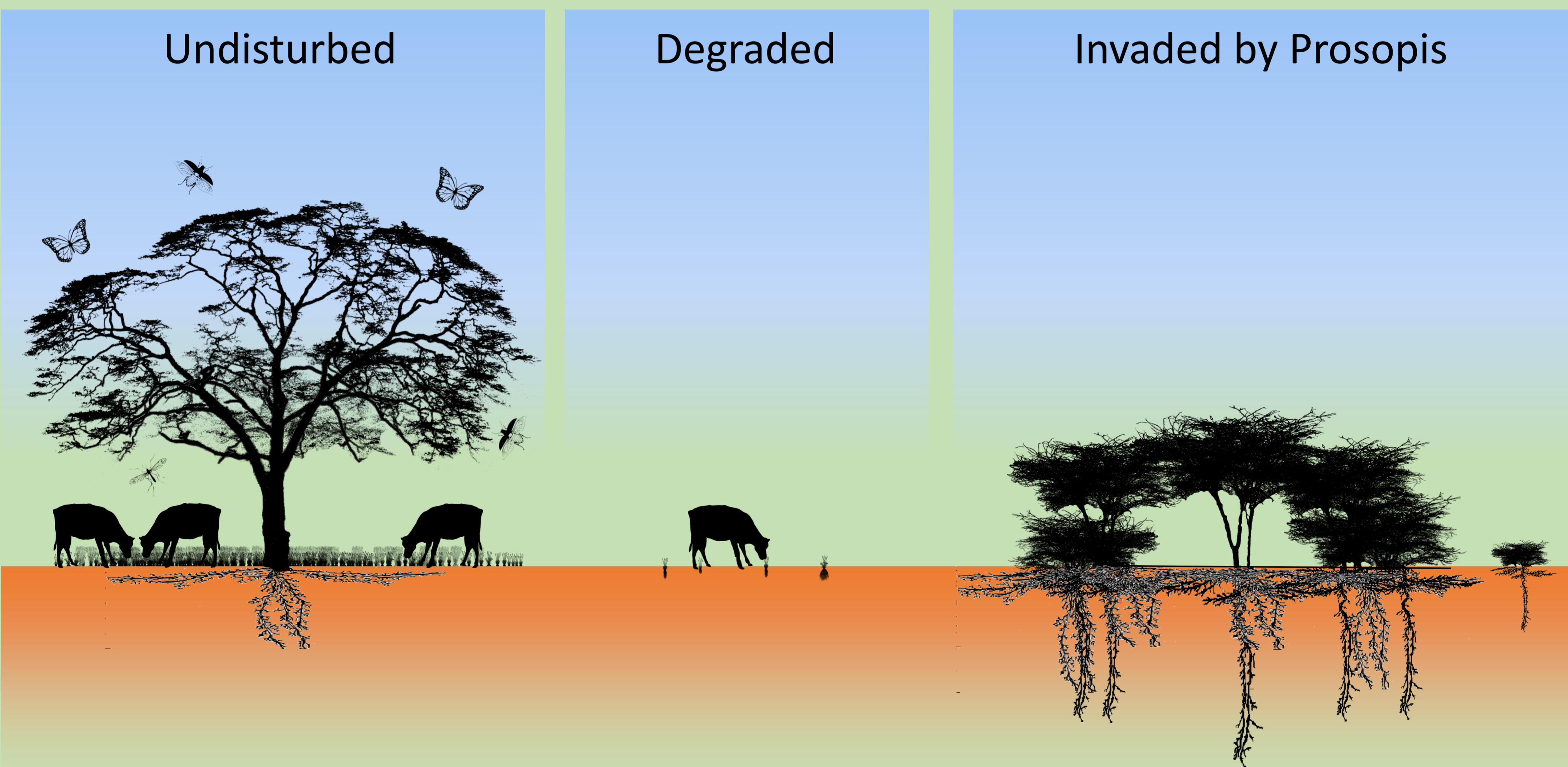
# Woody invasive alien species in Eastern Africa

Assessing and mitigating their impacts on ecosystems and rural livelihoods

## Environmental Impacts of Prosopis

*Prosopis juliflora* is a fast growing evergreen species. It forms dense, impenetrable thickets with a thick litter layer, in which nothing else grows. It is stronger than other species because its roots go deeper, making it very drought tolerant. Prosopis stabilises soil and reduces wind speed when growing in areas with little other vegetation. It is said to improve soil fertility and to reduce soil salinity. The flowers are attractive for insects, but no native insects feeding on it can grow to adults, leading to reduced numbers and diversity of important pollinators.

Below, we compare the environmental characteristics of areas that are undisturbed, degraded, or invaded by Prosopis. Degradation of undisturbed vegetation is often caused by overgrazing. This leads to low vegetation cover and diversity, low numbers of important insects, reduced soil nutrient content and wind erosion. Prosopis can revert some effects of degradation but not all.



Characteristics of undisturbed, degraded and Prosopis-invaded environments.

😊 indicates positive, and 😞 indicates negative environmental state.

	Undisturbed	Degraded	Invaded
Useful insects	😊	😞	😞
Other plants	😊😊	😞	😞😞
Wind erosion	😊	😞	😊
Soil nutrients	😊😊	😞	😊
Soil carbon	😊😊	😞	😊
Ground water	😊	😊	😞😞