



Conversations in Common Places – Decentralizing Agroforestry in North America and Beyond

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A deeply dedicated network of scientists, consultants, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and individual visionaries have long promoted agroforestry. Virtually all wonder why it has not been broadly embraced. The good news from North America is that things are changing, but not necessarily in the classic institutional sense. Rather, agroforestry's next chapter is unfolding at local and regional levels, driven by networks of creative individuals, communities, provincial organizations, and enterprise. Institutional nudges play a role in some cases, but increasingly it is without formal intervention. I believe this decentralization signals an extraordinary shift and validates the perseverance of the global agroforestry community. Yet it also prompts questions about ownership, technicality, and models of collaboration. I will discuss these and other issues, and provide examples of distributed initiatives in the United States where diverse partners work to achieve broad impact in common places.