

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of forest resources in Ethiopia.....	1
1.2 Deforestation, dryland degradation and its impacts	2
1.3 Savanna determinants and adaptive traits	5
1.4 Rationale for the study of the savanna woodlands in the Rift Valley of Ethiopia .	7
1.5 Research objectives	9

2 Study area and species

2.1 Abernosa	10
2.2 Awash National Park.....	17
2.3 Description of the study species.....	18

3 Adaptation of five co-occurring tree and shrub species to water stress and its implication in restoration of degraded lands

3.1 Introduction.....	21
3.2 Materials and methods	
3.2.1 Study sites	22
3.2.2 Data collection	23
3.2.3 Data analysis	24
3.3 Results	
3.3.1 Water potential of species in undisturbed sites.....	24
3.3.2 Impact of disturbance on the status of plant water	28
3.4 Discussion	31

4 Plant osmotic potential of five co-occurring species at different biophysical settings and disturbance regimes

4.1 Introduction.....	36
4.2 Materials and methods	
4.2.1 Study sites	37
4.2.2 Data collection	38
4.2.3 Data analysis	39
4.3 Results and discussion	
4.3.1 Midday and predawn osmotic potential of species in undisturbed sites.....	40

4.3.2	Impact of disturbance on osmotic potential	43
4.3.3	Saturated osmotic potential (site comparisons)	45
5	Plant water relations as indicators and regulators of bush encroachment in Awash National Park, Central Ethiopia	
5.1	Introduction	47
5.2	Materials and methods	
5.2.1	Study site and species	49
5.2.2	Data collection	49
5.2.3	Data analysis	50
5.3	Results	
5.3.1	Plant water potential	50
5.3.2	Plant osmotic potential.....	52
5.3.3	Species and site characterization	54
5.4	Discussion	56
6	Climate-growth relationships of the dominant tree species from semi-arid savanna woodland in Ethiopia	
6.1	Introduction	62
6.2	Materials and methods	
6.2.1	Study area and species	64
6.2.2	Tree ring analysis.....	64
6.2.3	Growth analysis	65
6.2.4	Climate data	66
6.2.5	Data analysis	66
6.3	Results	
6.3.1	Tree (growth) ring formation	67
6.3.2	Radial growth.....	68
6.3.3	Cross-dating	70
6.3.4	Species response to precipitation	70
6.3.5	Site (master) chronology and precipitation.....	73
6.3.6	Tree ring Pointer years, drought (famine) and ENSO events	75
6.4	Discussion	76
7	Stable carbon isotopes in tree rings of co-occurring tree species: patterns and climatic signals	
7.1	Introduction	82
7.2	Carbon isotope theory	83
7.3	Materials and methods	85
7.3.1	Sampling and sample preparation.....	85
7.3.2	Measurement of stable isotope.....	86

7.3.3 Data analysis	87
7.4 Results	
7.4.1 $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ curves of individual trees.....	88
7.4.2 Species specific $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ patterns	89
7.4.3 Site- specific (master) $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values.....	92
7.4.4 $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and ring width	93
7.4.5 $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and climate.....	96
7.5 Discussion	
7.5.1 Species specific $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ patterns and trends	100
7.5.2 Effect of climatic factors on $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ signature.....	102
7.5.3 Climatic significance of multiple species $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (master $\delta^{13}\text{C}$)	104
8 Relationship of $\delta^{13}\text{C}$, tree growth and plant water potential and its implication in screening species for reforestation	
8.1 Introduction	106
8.2 Material and methods	107
8.3 Results	
8.3.1 Species specific mean $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values.....	107
8.3.2 Comparing species $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values in drought and moist years.....	108
8.4 Discussions.....	109
9 Summary	113
10 Zusammenfassung	119
11 References.....	126
Acknowledgments.....	142