

Approaches to scaling up landscape restoration

Asking and beginning to answer some critical questions

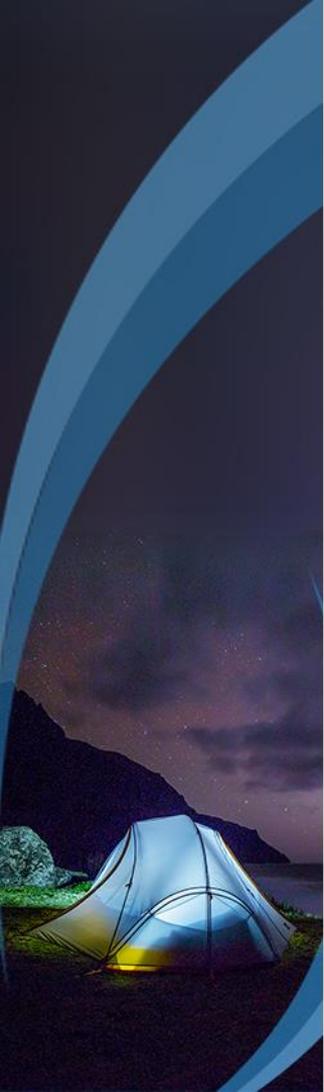
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By Seerp Wigboldus

Outline



1. Are we talking about the same things?
2. Possible complications?
3. What are appropriate ways forward in dealing with scale and scaling up in landscape restoration



**Scaling up landscape restoration –
developing a shared understanding
about what we are talking about
exactly**

Landscape – what's in a name?



Do we have the same understanding about what landscape approaches are about?

- Anything green or environmental?
- Anything to do with sustainability?
- Anything in the landscape?
- Any integrated approach?
- Any systems approach?

Or an integrated landscape perspective?

- Landscape as place/space based approach
- Interactions between all dimensions and dynamics of a spatial landscape
- Landscape appreciations included: identity, community, ...

Restoration – to what?



Do we have the same reference point when we talk about “restoration”?

- Restore to how it was (e.g. in 1950, or 900, or 2005)?

Who decides the reference point?

- Restore to certain (agreed) purposes? If so, which purposes?

Who decides about this?

What priorities and order in restoring applies?

- Economy (agriculture) first, then ecology?
- Ecology first, then ecology?
- People first, then plans?
- Simultaneous focus on different aspects?

Restoration – to what? (continued)



Restoration as what?

- Restoration as change management?
- Restoration as adaptation?
- Restoration as political alternative?

Restoration through what?

- Innovations, technologies?
- Back to the roots?

Scale up – what are we talking about exactly?



Do geographers, ecologists, development economists have different ways of conceptualising scale and scaling (and levels)?

- Geographical scales (and levels)
- Political scales (and levels)
- Ecosystem scales (and levels)
- (- besides flat ontologies)

Scale up – what are we talking about exactly?



Can we scale up restoration?

- Restoration is a concept relating to many possible things that can be restored
- **In effect**, things (usually what is called **innovation/technology**) is what will be **scaled up** (see the case studies for today to see this illustrated)
- Different ideas on **what makes for appropriate (landscape) restoration – hence what needs to be scaled up** (beware of what is concealed in scaling rhetoric!)

Does the idea of scaling up landscape restoration run the risk of **reducing landscape restoration** (and possibly landscape approaches as such) **to just a series of scaling up innovations/ technologies** in any landscape?

Jumping on the bandwagon of scaling innovations as the ultimate way to achieve development and progress?

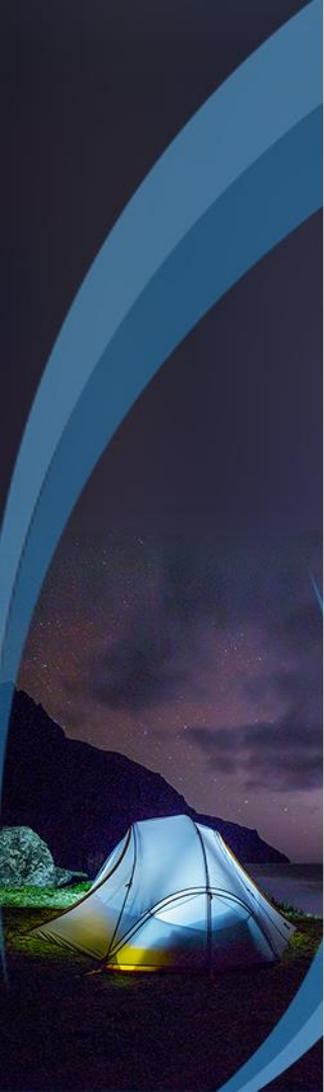


Why the choice of framing things in terms of scaling up? Donors call, you haul?

If it is essentially about seeing landscapes being restored (see earlier notes) in many places – why use the scaling language?

The language is not neutral, but relates to a particular paradigm (ideology?) about what makes for development and progress!

Potential complications of scaling talk and principles of landscape restoration



Is the term “scaling up” really helpful?



Perhaps rather concealing what exactly is meant to go to scale on what scale? Includes confusions because different ways of using the term scale and scaling across scientific disciplines and in the context of scaling innovations.

Assumes already agreed appropriateness of what is meant to go to scale (so just remove barriers for scaling)

Tends to depart from a thinking of **generalizable solutions**.

As mentioned earlier, this **connects to a particular paradigm/ideology** about what makes for development and progress, which often focuses on reductionist perspectives on efficiency (origins often found in business thinking)

Intermezzo



Schurman, R. (2018) Micro(soft) managing a 'green revolution' for Africa: The new donor culture and international agricultural development. World Development 112, 180-192:

“I argue that the Gates Foundation’s heavy emphasis on strategic planning has produced an approach to agricultural development that abstracts away from smallholder farmers’ sociocultural worlds and relies on a ***generalizable*** set of development ***solutions.***” (bold italics added)

Ben Tiggelaar in column NRC in November 2012:

“If pilots were a succesful way of getting to change, why not continue doing pilots? ***Stop the rolling out.*** Just do pilots” (translated from Dutch)

Scaling (up): a recipe for creating distortion and disruption?

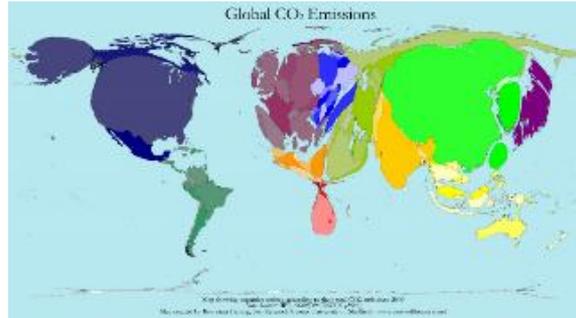


Need to be careful about what scaling innovations/restorations (in terms of particular activities) may imply for the landscape and its actors

Selective scaling: getting more of the same and losing diversity



Asymmetric scaling: pulling things out of proper proportions



Excessive scaling: depleting resources



But, you will say, this is the current problem in many landscapes and we want to bring restoration.

Response: If you work with the same methods which caused the problems (scaling innovations) you will get similar results.

An integrated landscape or dissected landscape perspective?

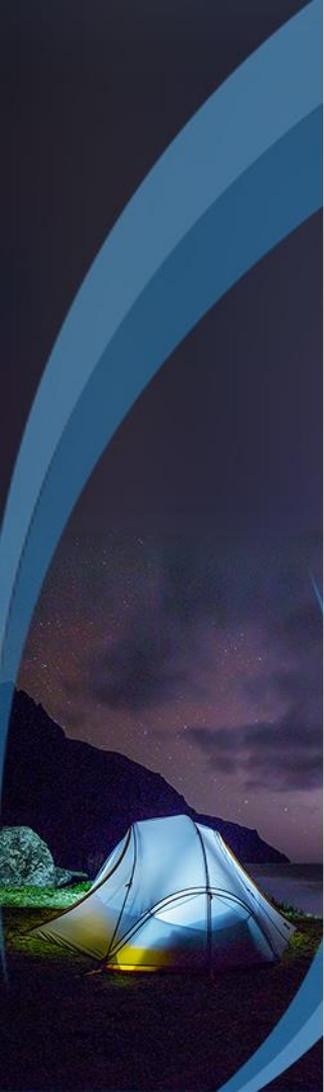


If landscape restoration is a mere sum of all kinds of things (innovations/ technologies) which are supposed to contribute to landscape restoration, is this in line with fundamental principles of landscape approaches?

Are these core principles in landscape restoration?

- That which brings peace, balance, proportionality, harmony between landscape dwellers, activities in the landscape, aspects of the landscape, etc.?

If so, does the scaling innovations potentially undermine this?



**Towards appropriate approaches
for dealing with scale and scaling
in landscape restoration**

What scaling approaches to shy away from for what reason?



- Tendency that this in effect reintroduces the infamous **blueprint approaches**
- Tendency to become a **scaling the factory-method** of rolling out pre-packaged “solutions”
- Increasing uniformity resulting from scaling innovations tends to **play into the hands of the powerful**
- Tendency that scaling a particular innovation **becomes purpose in itself** (being motivated to **scale up organisational success?**)
- Tendency of innovation processes getting on the “**automatic pilot**” in scaling rather than Stimulating processes of continuous creativity.

Renewing our thinking on scaling innovations



We need to move away

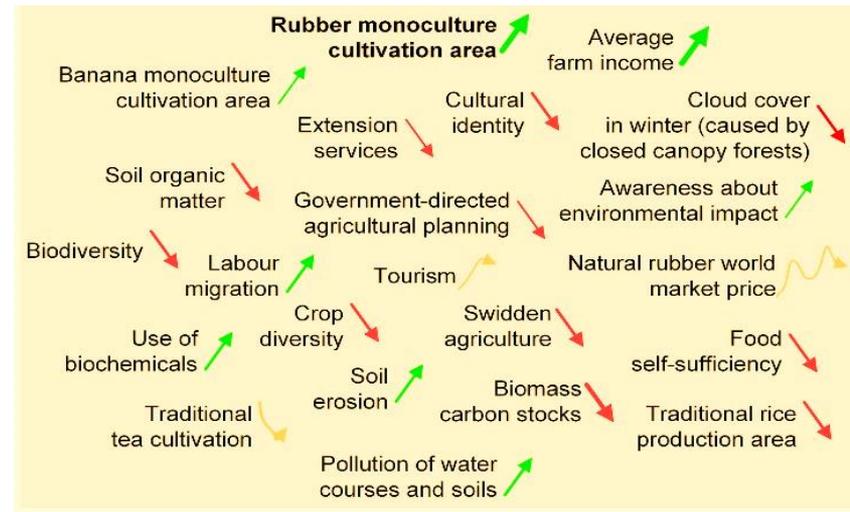
- **from** aiming for *generalizable solutions* to be “massively scaled” (technology push)
- **towards** identifying *generalizable* design and application *principles and purposes* to learn from and inform variable and diverse designs/applications-in-context

What approaches help in dealing appropriately with scale and scaling in landscape restoration?



Developing integrated, holistic perspectives on interactively scaling phenomena within an integrated landscape perspective

Apply principles of what makes for responsible scaling of innovations



Further reading



Wigboldus, S.A. (2018). To scale, or not to scale – that is not the only question. Rethinking the idea and practice of scaling innovations for development and progress. PhD thesis. Wageningen University & Research

eBook available at: http://www.digitaalproefschrift.nl/ebooks/seerp_wigboldus

PDF available at: <https://bit.ly/2Pw8all>

Contact author: seerp.wigboldus@wur.nl