Development and commercialisation of bamboo for improved livelihoods in Uganda

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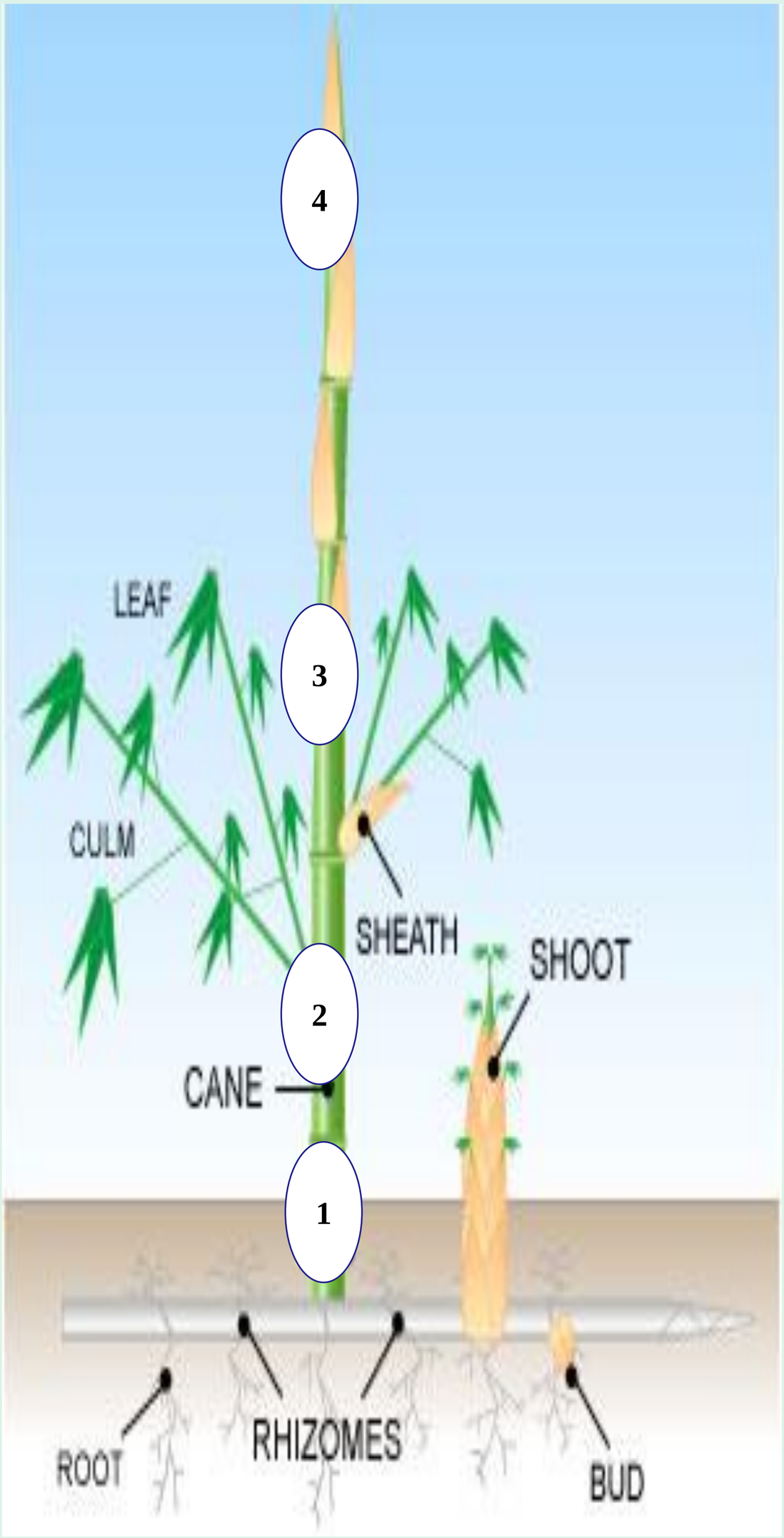
Potential uses of bamboo



	Sheath & Rhizome	Handcrafts
	Shoots	Vegetables/food
1	Base	Charcoal, Pulp
2	Middle lower	Flooring, Laminated furniture
3	Middle upper	Blind, mats, carpets, chop sticks, toothpicks, Handcrafts
4	Top	Bamboo pole, scaffoldings
	Roots	Water purification
	Leaves	Manure, Fodder, Extracts, Medicine
	Leftovers & Processing waste	Fiber boards, Charcoal, Pulp, Lumber, Fuels

Bamboo distribution

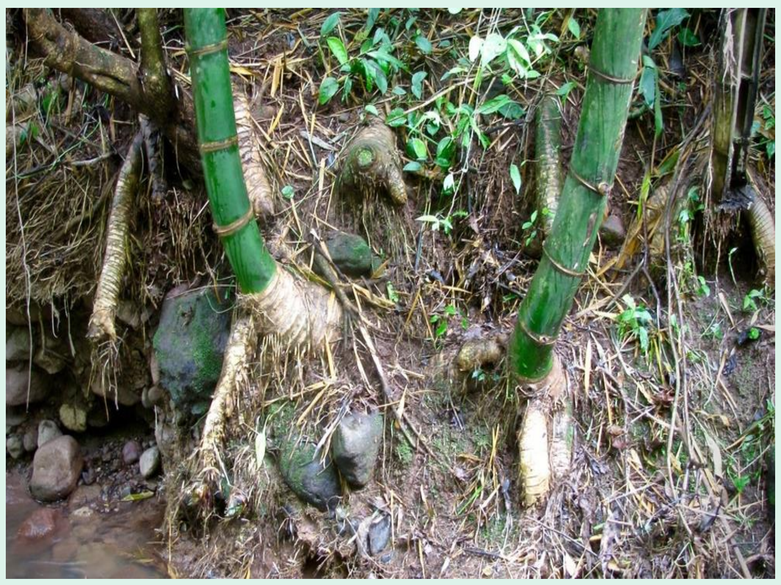
There are more than 1200 bamboo species worldwide. Over 50 bamboo species have been found to grow in Uganda with *Yushania alpina* (commonly known as mountain bamboo) offering the highest utilization potential. Most of the bamboo is found in the south-western, eastern and northern parts of the country mainly in protected areas of Echuya central forest reserve; Mgahinga, Bwindi, Mt. Rwenzori and Mt. Elgon national parks; and in the forest /games reserves of Ongom, Omier, Mt. Kei, Matidi, Lokung, Era, West Uru, Ayipe, Atiya, Aram, Agoro-Agu, Abiba,Otzi, Ozubu, Pao-Enyeme.



Bamboo stand in Echuya CFR

Ecological values

Bamboo is one of the world's fastest growing plants with some species reportedly reaching up to 1.2 m per day. Bamboo provides good economic and ecological values. Because of its fast growth, bamboo has a higher rate of carbon sequestration than most plantation trees species. Bamboo regulates the quantity and quality of water which are essential characteristics for managing watersheds. Using its dense root and rhizome systems, bamboo can protect water catchments and prevent soil erosion especially in the mountainous areas. Thus for people living in fragile areas such as those susceptible to soil erosion and landslides/mudslides, bamboo planting is recommendable. It is also known to absorb pollutants such as excess nitrogen and heavy metals from the soil.



Use of bamboo for watershed management

Bamboo products

Over 2,000 products have been produced from bamboo; including plywood, crafts, arts, charcoal, furniture, flooring, etc. As a construction material, bamboo properties are comparable to timber. In general, however, the production and consumption of bamboo and bamboo products in Uganda is very limited. Furthermore, several traditional uses of bamboo are still of low value addition. Sustainable production and use of bamboo products should therefore focus on value addition options and marketing.



Bamboo baskets are a source of livelihood in Kabale and Kisoro

About the project

The main objective of the project is to address technical gaps in the present bamboo production to consumption systems in Uganda. The specific objectives of the project are:

- To develop techniques for rehabilitation, management and sustainable use of bamboo forests
- To introduce and evaluate new bamboo accessions for specific applications
- To determine and demonstrate end-use and value addition options of bamboo
- To train local communities in the techniques for rehabilitation, management and sustainable use of bamboo forest
- To enhance partnerships among local and international authorities interested in bamboo

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