

Seeds in Africa: A History of Unintended Consequences

James C. McCann, Boston University
Political Economy of Cereal Seed Systems in Africa
IDS, University of Sussex, 13-14 July 2009

What if we looked at the world as one giant farm field?

In tomorrow's global food economy, every crop will grow where it grows best. And ADM can link farmers to almost any market in the world. It's a natural way to improve agricultural efficiency, make food more affordable, and feed a hungry world. Nature has answers. Is anyone listening?

Yes.

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The advertisement is a collage with a central globe. A farmer in a hat and glasses is on the left, holding corn. A man in a turban is on the right, holding a wooden staff. The globe is surrounded by a circular frame with four arrows pointing outwards. The text is overlaid on the collage.

African Seeds: Migration, Diversity, and Local Knowledge

La description de la figure No. 13.

Ceste pourtraicture représente les herbes & bleds qu'on trouve icy, A est la Canne de Sucre, B est le Mays ou Ble de Turquie, C est le Ri, D est le Avoilles dont il se seruent pour ble pour en faire pain, E a ceste herbe croissent des petites pois rouge & noire, fort gayemen: tachettes de couleurs, F est le persil de mer, G est le Gingember, H est une arbre grande a laquelle les sebaes croissent, qu'on a bien une paulme en rondeur, I est le Grain ou Maniguette.



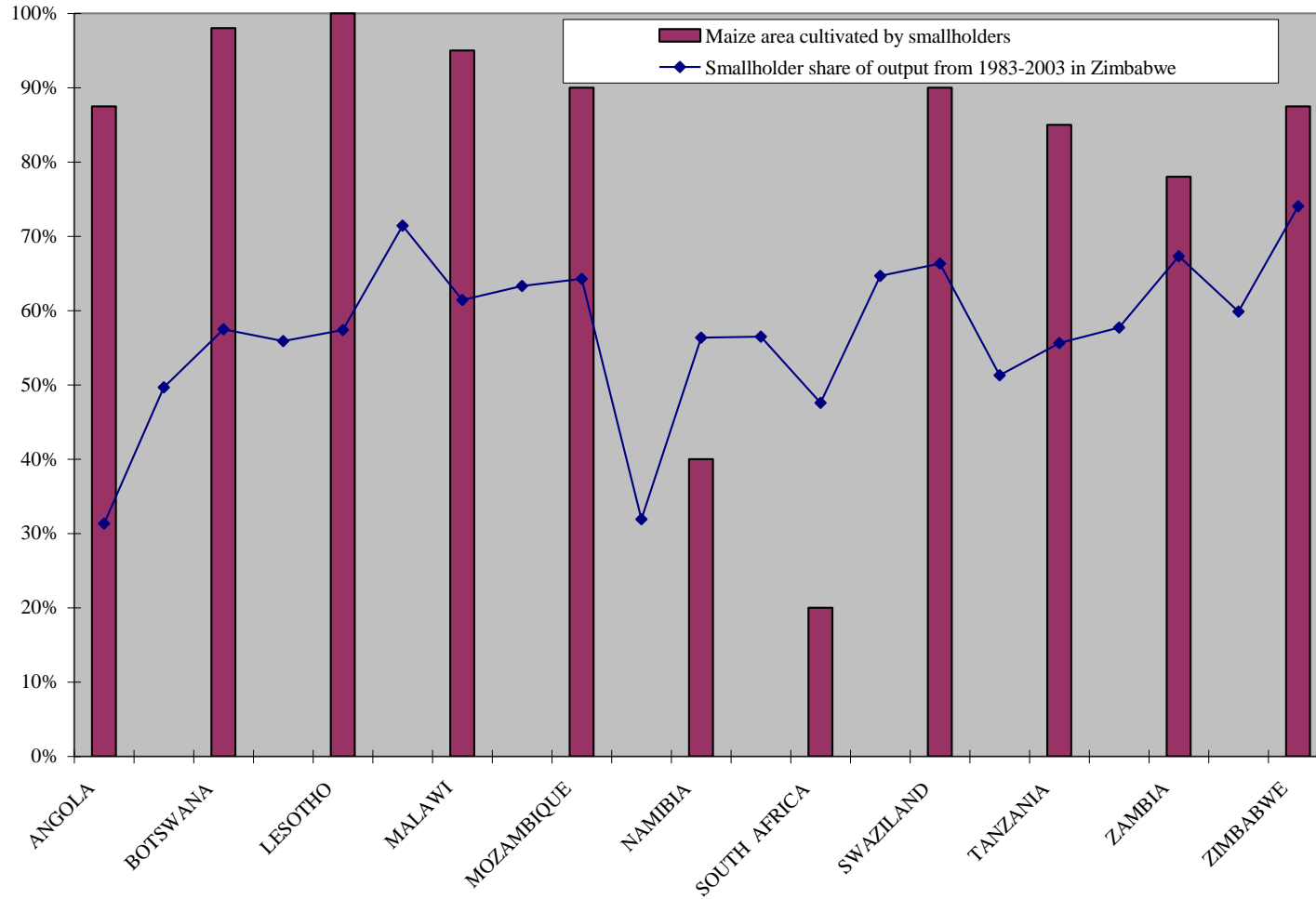




African Smallholders: Consumers and Seeds



Smallholder role in maize production, 1983-2003





African Seed Selection: Field, Fair, or Storage



FIG. 91.—Exhibit of the Division of Botany, Transvaal Department of Agriculture, at the First South African Ma and Citrus Show, Johannesburg, 1910.

6. Shape of ear, and character of tips and butts;
7. Yield of grain per ear.



FIG. 88.—Selecting seed-maize: the final selection.

All these points have a direct bearing on the yield per acre. The final selection consists in classifying the picked 100 ears into groups of ten each, according to depth of grain and weight of ear, etc. (Fig. 88). The weights of each group of ten are then taken; they are arranged in a row, with



HYBRID SEEDS
WAKALA

KIPITA PERBUJIAN

WAKALA

KIDUME BEST MOJA ONE

Sportsman

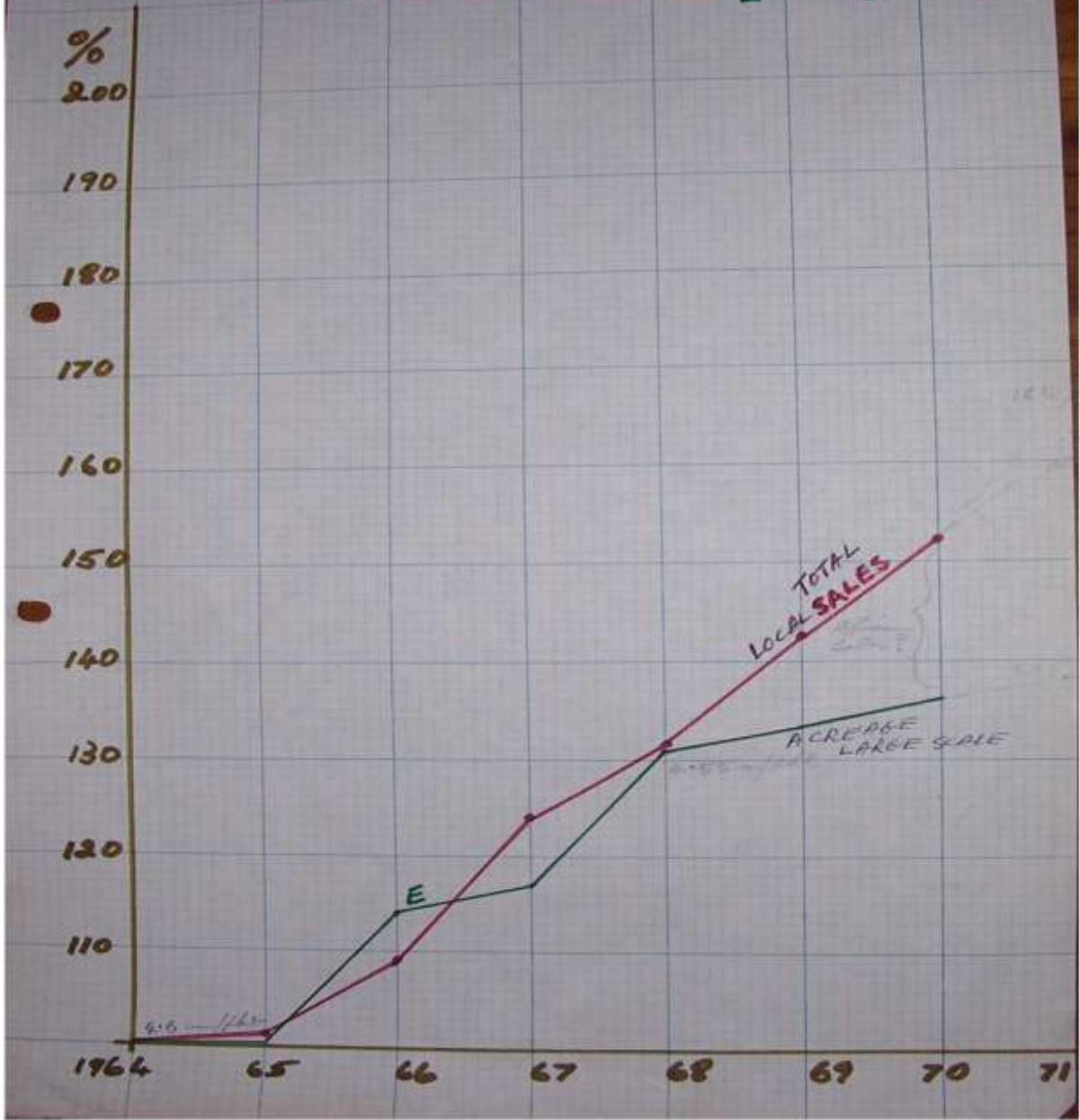






LOCAL SALES - ACKEMO

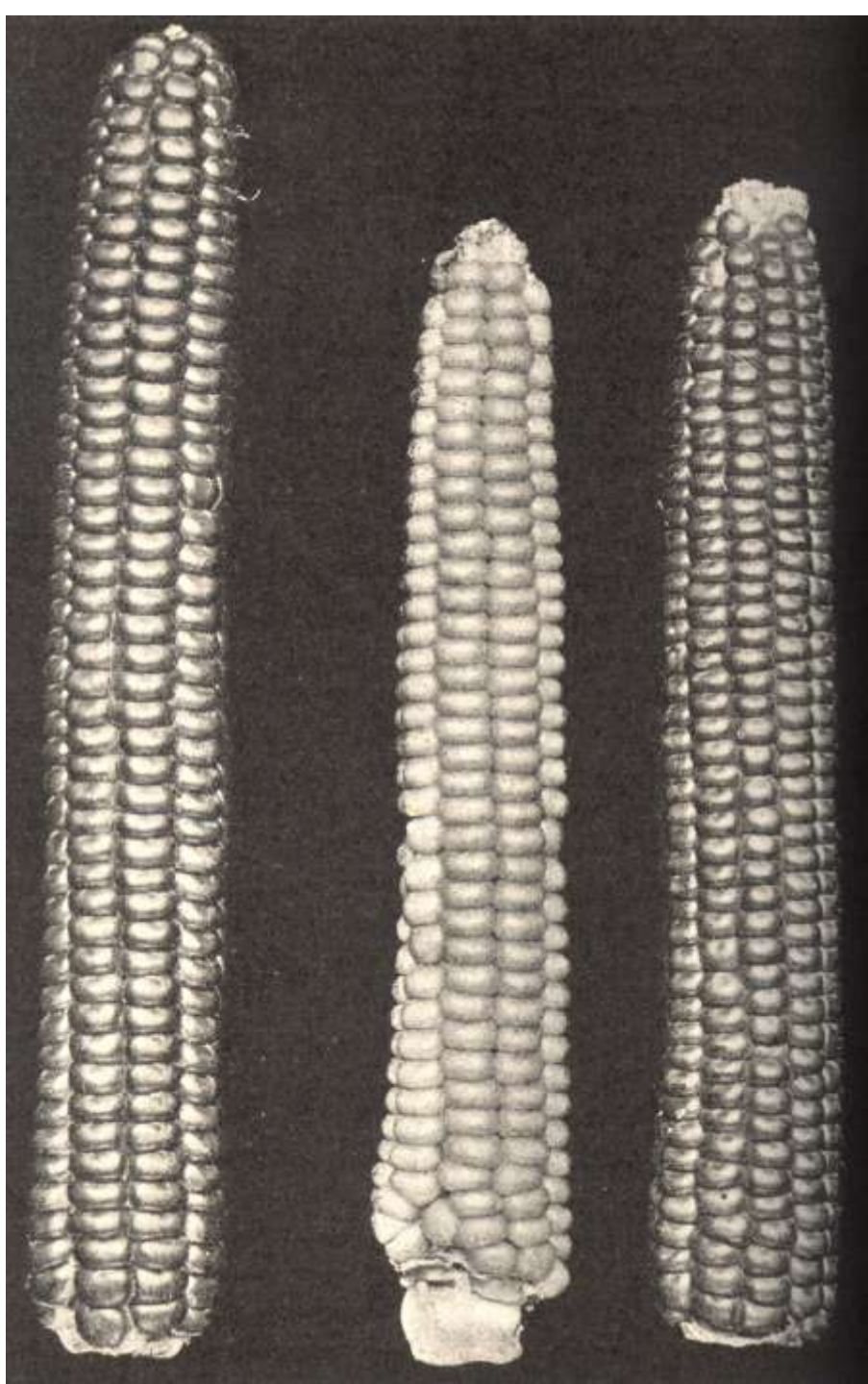
100% = 1964 SEASON 99,000 K₂PK₂
E 451



Local Knowledge: Genotype and Phenotype











2003/2004 SEASON MOTHER AND BABY TRIALS
AT BEMBEKE

ATTRIBUTES OF ZM623 (GP)

1. Tolerance to drought - Excellent
2. Nitrogen use Efficiency (NUE) - Excellent
3. Tolerance to G.S & H.C - Very Good
4. Tolerance to low soil P - Excellent
5. Yield Potential 7-10 t/ha
6. Yield higher than market by 10%

ZM623

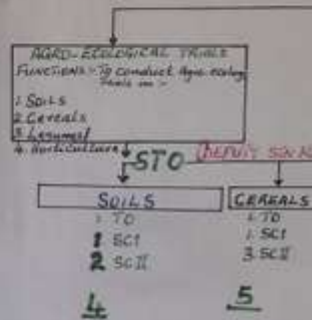


7. Grain Texture - Excellent (very firm)
8. Adaptation to a wide range of ecotypes - Excellent

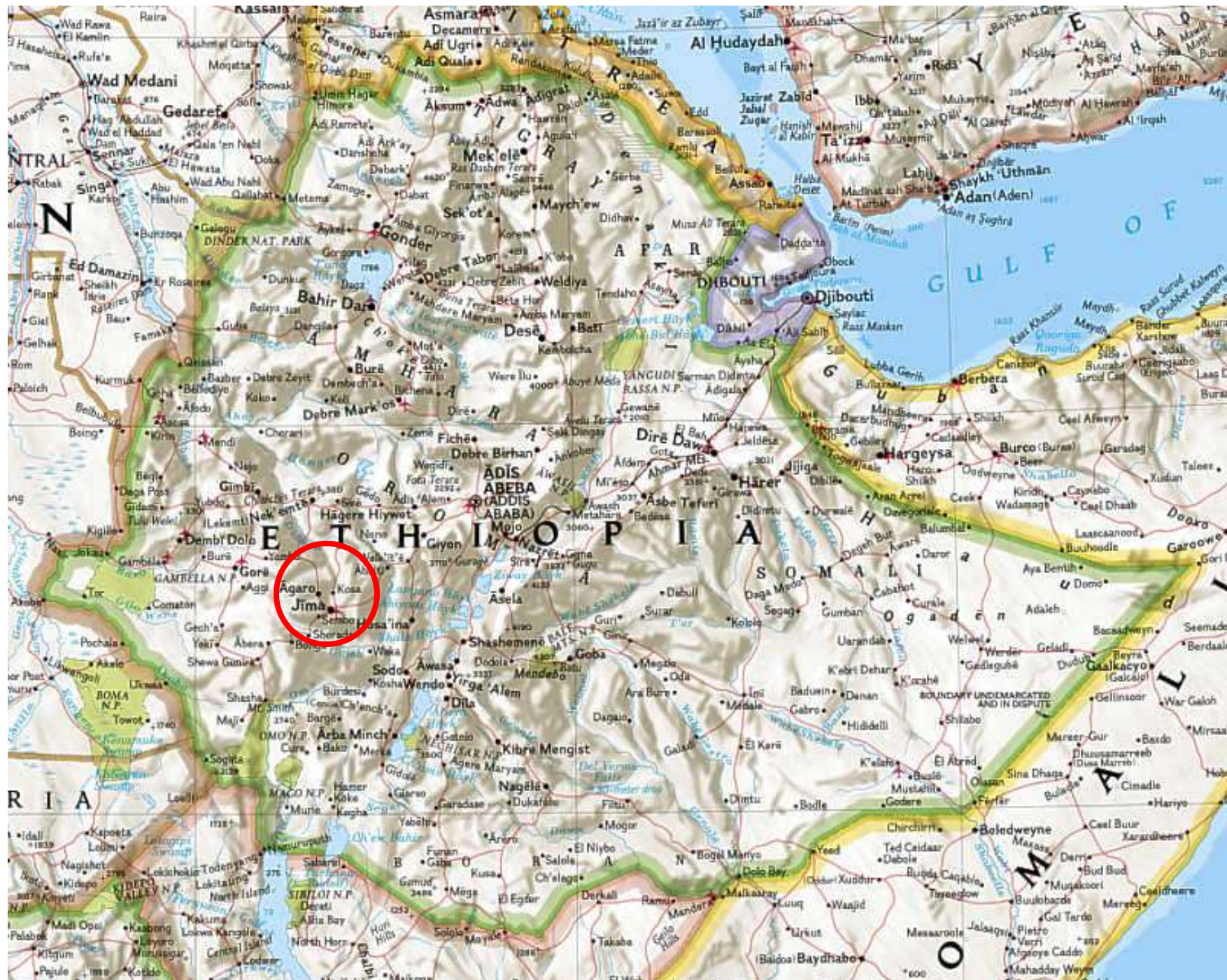


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M-B. TERRELL

ORGANIS



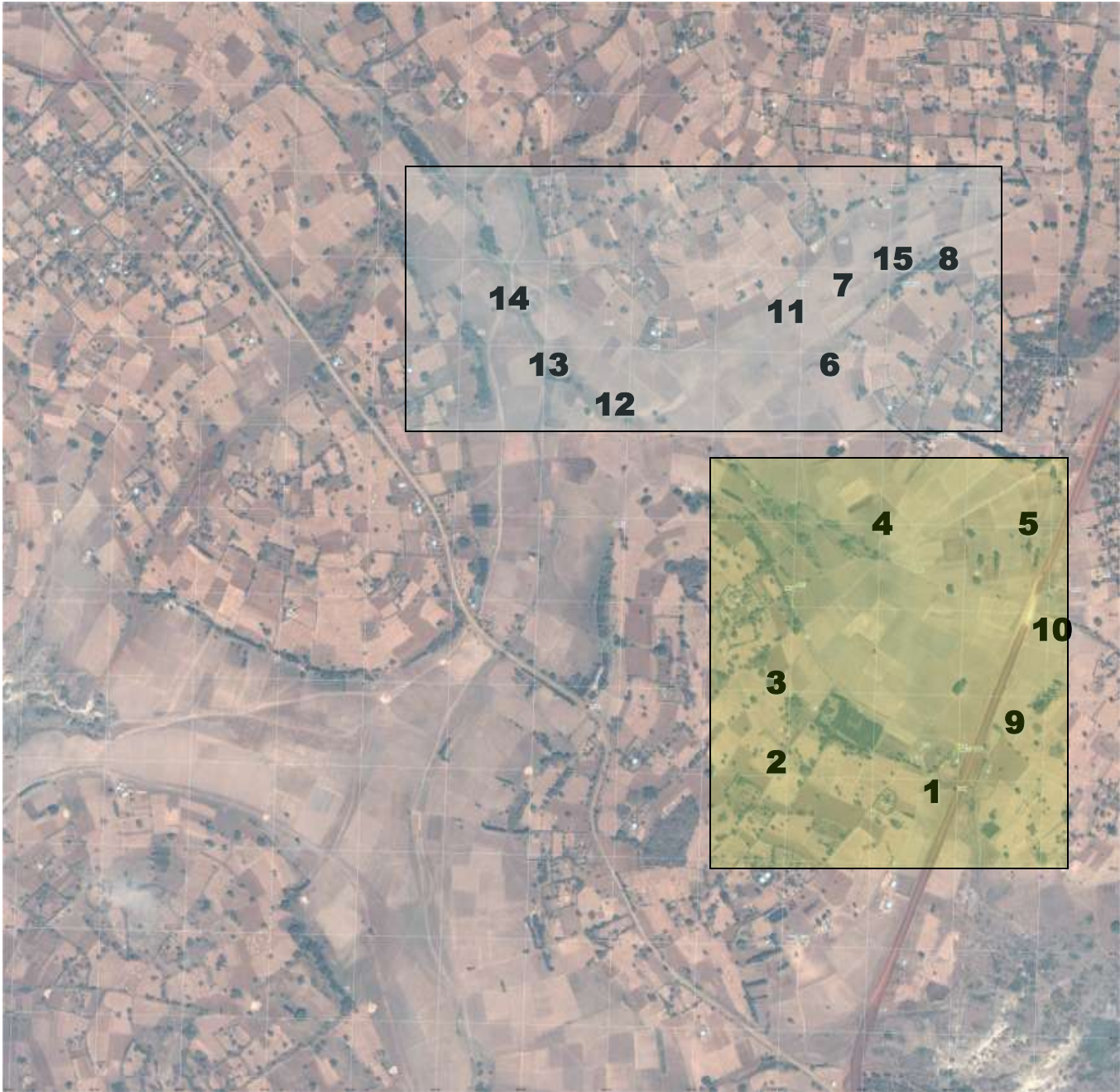




Seed Packages, Local Knowledge, and Unintended Consequences













African Seeds: Past as Prologue

