Land suitability service in Angola:

Planting options for closing the yield gaps

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Introduction

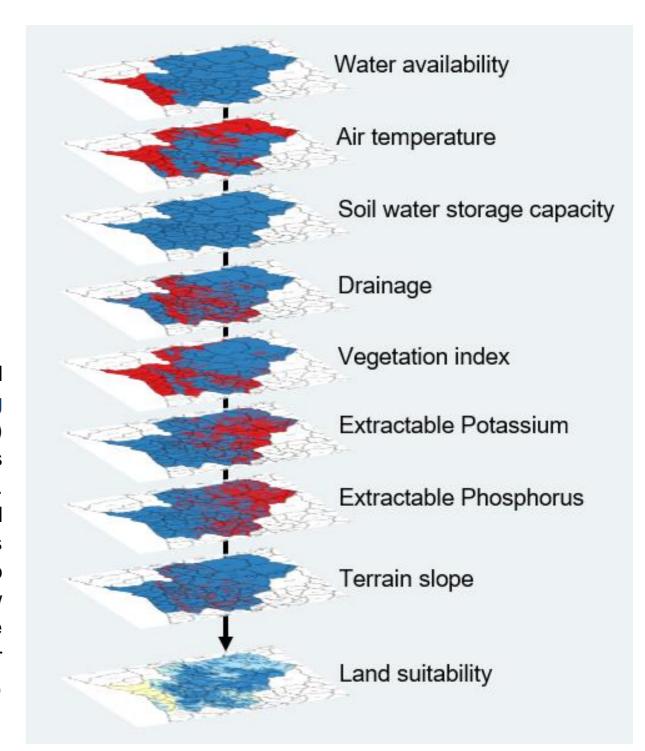
The overall goal of the **Mavo Diami project** is to improve sustainable food and income security for >100,000 smallholder farmers in Angola, by accelerating their agri-business performance through informed decisions supported by **KRES services** built on weather, soil and crop signals and other relevant data and indicators. The **land suitability service** is one of the developed services focused on providing planting options and field management advice to farmers for the next cropping season.

Methodology

State-of-the-art satellite-based data products and machine learning observations (Simons et al. 2020; Funk et al., 2015; Hengl et al., 2014, 2017) were used in a crop growth model to develop a service on land suitability in Angola. Spatial data on rainfall, air temperature, crop evapotranspiration, soils, vegetation and terrain slopes was obtained at 100-meter resolution to drive the crop growth model. The model includes crop suitability thresholds to achieve potential crop yields. The output of the model are weighted land suitability maps for selected crops (e.g. maize, potato, beans, sorghum, millet) and corresponding cropping seasons (e.g. October-December, March-June, November-April).

Results

The land suitability service is provided through a Telegram application. For a selected location, the farmer receives a **message on planting options for the next cropping season**. The planting options are classified in three suitability levels: i) **Very suitable** ii) **Suitable** iii) **Not ideal**. "Very suitable" (*Muito apropriado*) means that the land limitations are low, thus little field interventions are necessary to achieve potential crop yields. "Suitable" (*Adequado*) means that the land limitations are moderate, thus normal field interventions are necessary to achieve potential crop yields. "Not ideal" (*Não ideal*) means that land limitations are considerable, thus major field interventions are necessary to achieve potential crop yields. In this case, a **field management advice** is provided on how to tackle land limitations. For example, using a crop variety which is resistant to extreme temperatures, irrigate, dig drains, and/or using fertilizers. The suitability message for location Malengue, Bie shows "Not ideal" for potato in cropping season October-December, but it includes a field management advice if the farmer still wants/needs to grow this crop.



Message to the farmer

