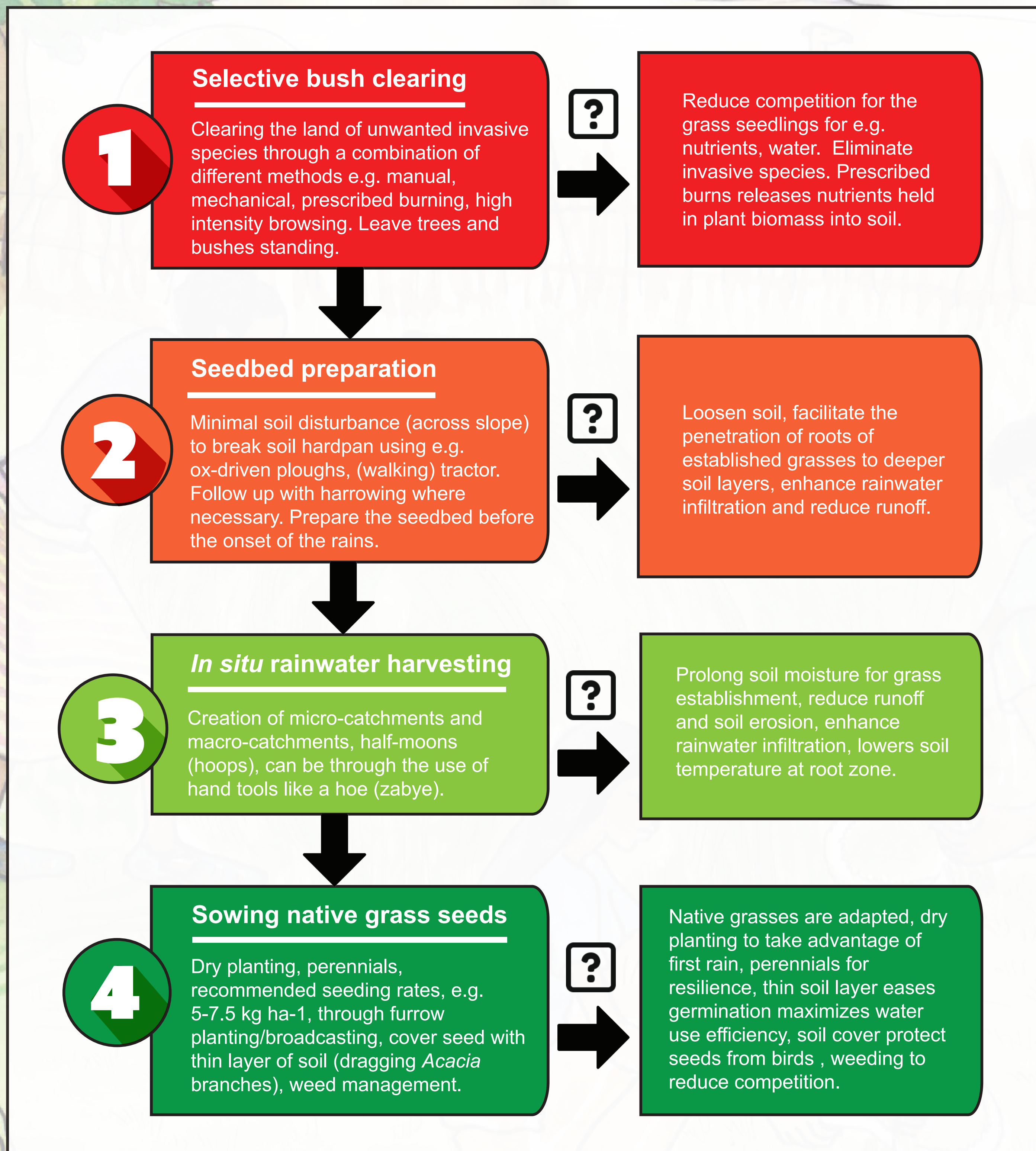


How to establish native grasses for fodder and seed production



FODDER PRODUCTION

Harvest of biomass yields, 2-3 cuts before maturity per growing season (cut and carry), baling and storage. Livestock feed. Surplus hay can be sold and thus source of income. Biomass yields of up to 5000 kg ha⁻¹ annually.

NATIVE GRASS SEED PRODUCTION

Harvest of mature grass seeds (e.g. hand stripping or cutting with stalk) and store dried seeds (2-3 days) in dry place in e.g. gunnysack. Seed stock for next sowing season. Surplus seed harvested can also be sold and thus source of income. Seed up to 300 kg ha⁻¹ annually.

Points of attention:

- ✓ The grass seeds should be planted very shallow or not covered at all. No more than 2 cm of soil to cover the seeds. Otherwise the grass seeds will not germinate. Use manure before planting and harrow this into the soil. Also apply manure after harvesting.
- ✓ The best planting season for grasses near the early rains. This will ensure that the young established grasses have a short period of drought before the summer rains. 2 seasons will provide a good basis for the grasses to establish well, after that they are more hardy to survive long periods of drought.
- ✓ Harvesting:
 - o For fodder harvesting and hay preparation the grass is harvested at a younger stage, before it turns yellow or before flowering stage.
 - o For collecting seeds: it takes about 3 months between planting of the grasses and for them to reach maturity for collecting seeds.