Traditional Agricultural Practices and Climate Smart Agriculture: Building upon the Knowledge and Experiences of Farmers; The Case of the Kintampo North District of Ghana

Abstract

In recent times, the World Bank in collaboration with National agencies has developed Climate Smart Investment Plans (CSAIP) for countries in Africa. In Ghana, the CSAIP is built on national policies and plans that demonstrate Ghana's commitment to dealing with climate change in agriculture, such as the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) and the National Climate Smart Agriculture Food and Security Action Plan (NCSAFSAP). The CSAIP aims to produce evidence of the climate-smart agriculture (CSA) technologies that have proved to be most suitable for increasing productivity and enhancing the agricultural system's resilience and environmental sustainability under a changing climate. A general characteristic of these documents is an assumption that local knowledge is less helpful and that farmers are part of the problem. Taking the Ghanaian case study of Kintampo North District, this paper argues that the planning process, specifically the identification of interventions, is based on a limited understanding of the knowledge and practices of smallholder farmers. The paper further argues that if CSAIP fails to recognize the positive aspects of current local soil and tree management practices, it will miss an essential opportunity to build on existing know-how. This paper aims to shed light on the regenerative farming techniques of farmers, using ethnographic studies and field observations of the soil and tree management practices of smallholder farmers in three selected communities, in the Kintampo North District of the Bono East Region of Ghana.

Keywords: Climate Smart Agriculture; Technologies; Smallholder farmers