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“Management of land use systems for enhanced food security:
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Use and Management of Ado-Odo Wetlands, Ogun State, Nigeria for Agricultural Production

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Abstract

The wetlands of Ado-Odo area of Ogun State, southwest Nigeria contain critical ecosystems that have been a life-line in agriculture-dependent economies. Available evidence, however, shows that they are grossly underutilised, compared with their potential for agricultural production and the socio-economic benefits that could be derived from them.

This study examined how the Ado-Odo wetlands are being used and identified their natural and anthropogenic limitations. Primary data were gathered through direct measurement, personal interviews and questionnaire design and administration. Issues of interest were size of area cultivated, crop type and yield, and economic returns from agricultural and other activities undertaken on the wetlands as well as challenges encountered by wetland users.

Crops cultivated were vegetables, maize, rice, sugarcane, plantain and banana. Period of cultivation varied from 3 to 9 months annually on areas that varied from 3 to 5 ha. Seasonal economic returns were between N80, 000 and N100, 000 per farmer depending on the crop cultivated. Fishing and craft-making yielded N65, 000 to N182, 000 and N61, 000 to N87, 000 respectively.

Challenges to more beneficial use of the wetlands included fragmented farm holdings, low application of adaptable technology to wetland cultivation, lack of appropriate policy and guidelines from government, and absence of incentives such as farming inputs at subsidised rate.

The study suggested measures to turn the situation around. These measures include putting relevant guidelines in place, provision of infrastructure such as roads and storage facilities, undertaking focused study to further identify issues that can engender sustainable wetland use and on-the-farm training of primary users of the Ado-Odo wetlands, i.e., farmers, fishermen and craftsmen.

Keywords: Adaptable technology, infrastructural development, capacity building, sustainable wetland management