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"Management of land use systems for enhanced food security: conflicts, controversies and resolutions"

An Overview of Arable Land Tenure Systems and Environmental Sustainability in Oyo State of Nigeria

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Abstract

The accessibility of most agricultural lands especially in the southwestern part of the country depends largely on land tenure system and the extent of competition by non-agricultural land uses. Land tenure systems influence the use to which land is put for economic and social development. Land tenure is a mix or bundle of entitlements (rights and duties) concerning the use of land resources. The study analysed the effects of arable land tenure and use on sustainability of the environment in Oyo State of Nigeria. Multistage sampling technique was adopted to select 200 respondents for the study with the aid of a structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. It was found that land acquisition was predominantly (47.5 %) through inheritance. The result of environmental sustainability index (ESI) showed an average score of 19.67 and only farmers from 15 local government areas in the study area had values above the average. Furthermore, the result of the analysis of variance showed a significant difference ($F = 26.55$; $p < 0.01$) in the ESI among the 15 local government areas. A positive coefficient of education of household heads (0.50), farming experience (0.05), extension contact (0.11), crop diversification (0.34), irrigation use (2.89), land tenure security (0.82), tree planting (2.13) and quantity of fertiliser used (0.65) implied increase in environmental sustainability with increase in these variables. However, population density (-0.29) reduced environmental sustainability. It was concluded that land tenure security impacted substantially on the increase in environmental sustainability and that land use, coupled with management practices is key instrument for achieving environmental security. It was recommended that, Government should establish a more effective and efficient arable land title registration system that would enhance individual tenure security to the arable land.

Keywords: Environment, farm inputs, land tenure, land use, Nigeria

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