

A Social Perspective on On-Farm Tree Functions, Drivers of Deforestation and Land Degradation: Togolese Farmers Perceptions

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Courtesy : Hamza Moluh, 2022, Tchamba, Togo

Introduction

- Agriculture plays a vital role in the conservation of natural resources and cultural landscapes through its connection to soil.
- Forest and land degradation are growing challenges, mainly due to current agricultural practices, and a fast-growing population.
- The present study reveals a social perspective on on-farm tree functions.
- Perceptions of on-farm tree functions could play an important role in shaping the decision-making process for the entire agroecosystem.

Objective

Investigating farmers' perceptions of the importance of on-farm tree function, drivers and effects of deforestation and land degradation in the Central region of Togo.

Methodology

- Case study based approach: Tchamba prefecture
- Household survey with the heads of the household (n=494)
- Focus group discussions(n=8)
- Descriptive statistics using Excel and content analysis



Figure 1: Interview with one of the heads of household in Alibi 1
Courtesy Hamza Moluh Njoya, 2022, Alibi1,Togo

Table: Farmers' socio-economic characteristics

Variables	Category			
Age (average)	42			
Gender (percentage)	Men (393)	80	Female (101)	20
Household size (average)	7 persons			
Cultivation area (average)	3,5 ha			

Results

- Tchamba Prefecture's agroforestry practices and tree species used:
 - Agroforestry is practiced by 80% of farmers
 - The most common type of tree utilised in AFS is Anacardium
- Agroforestry tree species and their purposes of use by farmers:
 - Cashew dominates
 - Cashew is mainly grown to improve farmers' income
- Farmers perception on on-farm tree functions:
 - Income improvement, medicine, food security, fuelwood, soil protection and soil fertility restoration.

Agroforestry tree species and their purposes of use

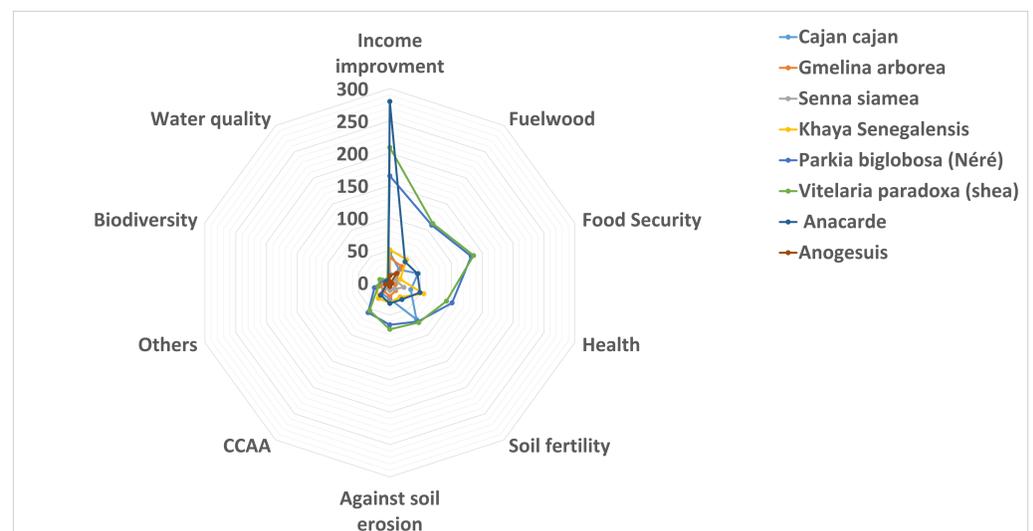


Figure 2 : Agroforestry tree species with their purpose of use.

Farmer perception of Deforestation and Land Degradation

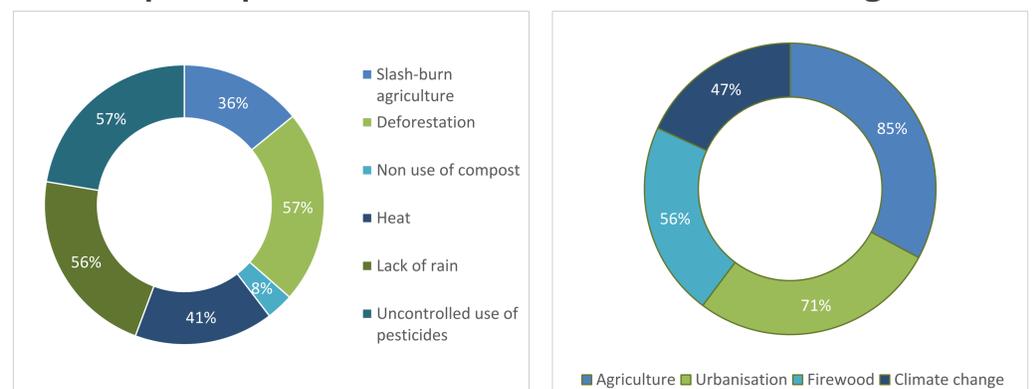


Figure 3: Farmer perceptions of land degradation (n=494) Figure 4: Farmer perceptions of deforestation (n=494)

Farmers perception on on-farm tree functions

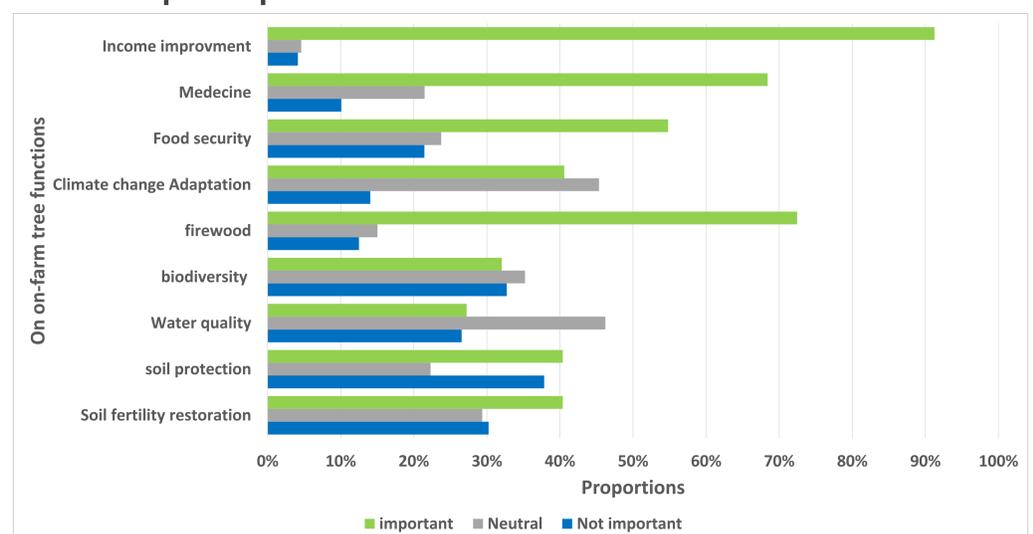


Figure 5 : Perception of farmers on on-farm tree functions (n=494).

Conclusion and outlook

- Strengthening the importance of the "income improvement" function in farmers' minds can stimulate the plantation of trees.
- Investigating farmers' perceptions can significantly contribute to a bottom-up approach to sustainable forest landscape management.