West African Farmer Perspectives on Soil Management Practices with Carbon Sequestration Potential. (S03neely153057-Oral)

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Abstract:

This paper presents results from a NASA-funded project that assesses the carbon sequestration potential of land use technologies in West Africa (Mali). The study identifies conditions for and constraints to their adoption at aggregate scale and institutional mechanisms to support their dissemination. The findings draw from interviews with farmers in three sites that differ in terms of agro-ecological conditions, history of adoption, and extension frameworks. Access to draught animals and equipment is found to be a key factor defining feasibility, but technology adoption is also hindered by labor constraints and by the limited availability of technical support. Organizational capacity and literacy rates are important enabling conditions, which are themselves influenced by the profitability of agriculture. The current crisis of cotton production and disengagement of the state from rural services present formidable challenges to efforts to promote carbon-sequestring land management practices. But concomitant processes of democratization and decentralization also open up opportunities for improved land use decisions and natural resource management at an aggregate scale.

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