

Impact of non-livelihood-based land management on land resources: The case of upland watersheds in Uporoto Mountains, South West Tanzania

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Abstract

Various land management strategies are used to prevent land degradation and keep land productive. Often land management strategies applied in certain areas focus on the context of the physical environment but are incompatible with the social environment where they are applied. As a result, such strategies are ignored by land users and land degradation becomes difficult to control. This study observes the impacts of land management in the upland watersheds of the Uporoto Mountains in South West Tanzania. In spite of various land management practices used in the area, 38% of the studied area experienced soil fertility loss, 30% gully erosion, 23% soil loss, 6% biodiversity loss and drying up of river sources. Land management methods that were accepted and adopted were those contributing to immediate livelihood needs. These methods did not control land resource degradation, but increased crop output per unit of land and required little labour. Effective methods of controlling land degradation were abandoned or ignored because they did not satisfy immediate livelihood needs. This paper concludes that Integrating poor people's needs would transform non-livelihood-based land management methods to livelihood-based ones. Different ways of transforming these land management methods are presented and discussed.

Keywords:

Land management;

Livelihood;

Mountain watersheds;

Land degradation;

Land use