

Socioeconomic response patterns of farmers to climate change in Africa: Lessons from southeast Nigeria

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Abstract

The potential of African agriculture to support livelihoods for millions of people and employment for up to 60% labour has been heavily impeded by the growing threat of climate change. This challenge has left farmers to face the pressure to adjust the agricultural systems under widespread poverty, high population and low productivity resulting in low coping capabilities. Consequently, this study sought to examine the socioeconomic response patterns of farmers to climate change in Southeast Nigeria. Specifically, it assessed the level of awareness of climate change adaptation options among farmers; determined the rate of adoption of climate change adaptation measures and estimated socio-economic factors influencing their choice of the adaptation categories. With multistage sampling technique, 360 farmers were selected from three out of five states that make up the Southeast of Nigeria from whom data and information were elicited using pretested and structured questionnaire. Analysis of data was done using descriptive statistics, adoption formula and probit model. Results show that level of awareness of climate change adaptation measures and their adoption rate was low. The likelihood of adapting reactive options was influenced by predominantly by education, farm size and membership of cooperatives while the probability of choosing the anticipatory or proactive adaptation options was affected by extension contact. The need to sensitize and incentivize has become imperative if climate compatible development which involves food security paradigms is to be achieved.

Keywords: Climate change, Adaptation, Socioeconomics and Southeastern Nigeria

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