



Agroforestry Practices and Forest Cover Dynamics Among Smallholder Farmers in Eastern DRC: A Decadal Analysis

Balthazar Tshisekedi¹

¹ Department of Research, National Pedagogical University (UPN)

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Correspondence: btshisekedi@outlook.com

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Author notes

Balthazar Tshisekedi is affiliated with Department of Research, National Pedagogical University (UPN) and focuses on Business research in Africa.

Abstract

Agroforestry practices are increasingly recognised as a sustainable land use strategy for smallholder farmers in developing countries, particularly in regions facing deforestation and climate change challenges. The study employed qualitative methods including semi-structured interviews and participatory workshops to understand farmer perceptions and practices. Spatial data on forest cover changes was derived from satellite imagery analysis. A significant proportion (45%) of farmers adopted agroforestry practices, with notable increases in tree species diversity observed over the decade. These changes were most pronounced in areas close to villages. Agroforestry has played a crucial role in maintaining forest cover among smallholder farmers in Eastern DRC, contributing to biodiversity and climate resilience. Government support for agroforestry extension programmes should focus on enhancing farmer knowledge of sustainable land management practices and providing access to financial resources. Agroforestry, Smallholder Farmers, Forest Cover Dynamics, Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

Keywords: *Geographic, Agroforestry, Sustainability, Smallholder, Forest Dynamics, Community-based, Participatory Mapping*

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