



A Sustainable Agriculture Practices Framework for Mitigating Soil Degradation Among South African Smallholders: A Legal and Societal Perspective

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Published: 01 August 2004 | **Received:** 27 March 2004 | **Accepted:** 22 June 2004

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18804456](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18804456)

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Abstract

Sustainable agriculture practices are crucial for mitigating soil degradation among smallholder farmers in South Africa, particularly in arid and semi-arid regions where soils are vulnerable to erosion and nutrient depletion. Theoretical synthesis and model development focusing on existing literature from agronomy, environmental science, and socio-legal studies. The theoretical framework underscores the importance of harmonizing legal frameworks with social dynamics to create an enabling environment for sustainable agriculture practices that protect soil health and enhance farmer livelihoods. Local governments should enact supportive legislation, while NGOs could facilitate community engagement and provide financial assistance. Farmer education programmes should emphasise both technical skills and policy advocacy.

Keywords: *African Geography, Soil Erosion, Sustainable Development, Legal Frameworks, Socio-Ecological Systems, Conservation Agriculture, Land Rights Analysis*

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