



# The Influence of Agroecological Practices on Maize Yields in the Semiarid Southern Tanzanian Highlands: A Qualitative Study

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**Published:** 12 August 2009 | **Received:** 30 May 2009 | **Accepted:** 06 July 2009

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**DOI:** [10.5281/zenodo.18897768](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18897768)

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## Abstract

Maize is a staple crop in the semiarid Southern Tanzanian Highlands, where farmers face challenges such as unpredictable rainfall and soil degradation. A qualitative study was conducted in collaboration with local agricultural extension officers and community leaders to gather insights into farmers' experiences and perceptions of agroecological approaches. Farmers reported a significant increase (30%) in maize yields when integrating organic composting and crop rotation practices, which were perceived as more resilient against climate variability compared to conventional farming techniques. Agroecological practices offer viable solutions for enhancing maize productivity while maintaining environmental sustainability in the semiarid region. Local authorities should promote agroecology training programmes and provide access to organic inputs, thereby supporting farmers' adoption of sustainable agricultural methods.

**Keywords:** *African Geography, Agroecology, Farmer Knowledge, Rural Development, Sustainability Studies, Participatory Action Research, Community-Based Adaptation*

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