

# **The Influence of Farmer Groups Activities on Resource Management: Experience from the Matengo Highlands, Mbinga District, Tanzania**

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## **Abstract**

In this presentation i will discuss on how on going land use practices taking place in the Matengo highlands have pressed severe strains on the natural environment and people's livelihood. Since mid 1980s, Matengo highlands have been subjected to undue pressure primarily in the form of unprecedented deforestation from extensive slash-and-burn and uncoordinated farming activities. Notwithstanding the significance of these highlands, the current situation is however poorly acknowledged. This presentation will further examine the influence of farmer groups' activities on landscape conservation and livelihood transformation. Satellite image analysis was utilized to determine the extent of changing landscape that called for intervention by farmer groups. Field survey involved dialogue with leaders of both farmer groups and farmer groups' umbrellas. Field observation and informal discussions with district officials were also part of data collection methods. Checklists were employed to collect information on farmer groups' activities. Data collected were subjected to descriptive and content analysis. It was learnt that Matengo farmers have embarked on working in farmer groups to adapt to changing landscape and transform their livelihoods. Farmer group activities include fish farming, tree planting and bee keeping. Resource management through farmer groups was found to be a new approach and intriguing in the study area and the strategy can be referred to as a process to landscape conservation and livehihood transformation.

Key Words: *Matengo highlands, Farmer groups, landscape conservation, livelihood transformation*