2. From time uncertainties to climate-smart agriculture in the Sudano-Sahelian zone of Cameroon

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In the Sudano-Sahelian zone of Cameroon, the acceleration of drying of landscape has created uncertainty of agricultural practices too related to natural data. The cropping season depends on the climate which is subject to increasingly strong intra annual variability. Farmers’ over-reliance on climate results in two major consequences for regional agriculture: replanting in a context of fragility of the seed sector and lower production levels. Public action regarding climate change (erratic rainfall, floods, drought, high temperatures), in the Sudano-Sahelian zone is mainly focused on the preservation of fragile areas (protected areas, reforestation, reducing pressure on the firewood through the promotion of improved stoves). This action is largely supported by international cooperation, and is not compatible with public policies (agriculture, food, land). Also farmers’ adaptation strategies to climate change are disconnected from the objectives of innovation and research policies (agricultural intensification, agroecology). The proposed reflection raises the question of the relationship between public policy and farmers’ strategies to strengthen the adoption of climate-smart practices that reduce uncertainties. This communication summarizes the results of twenty years of direct observation and field surveys of farmers’ perceptions of climate change and environmental degradation. It aims to assess the strategies that farmers have adopted to cope with the new climate and to suggest recommendations for more climatologically smart agricultural practices.