

Smallholder Farmers' Perceptions Towards Climate Change Interventions in Limpopo Province.

Nomcebo R Ubisi¹, Unathi Kolanisi^{1,2} and Obert Jiri^{1,3,*}

¹School of Agricultural, Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Private Bag X01, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg 3209, South Africa

²Consumer Science Department, Faculty of Science and Agriculture, University of Zululand, South Africa

³Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zimbabwe, P. O. Box MP167, Mt Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT

Climate change is rapidly emerging as a global critical development issue affecting many sectors in the world. The effects of climate change are already felt greatly by smallholder farmers in rural locations as they are experiencing crop failure, decline in yields, loss of assets and livelihood opportunities. The study investigated the perceptions towards climate change interventions, in Mopane and Vhembe districts, Limpopo province, South Africa. Hundred and fifty questionnaires were administered to smallholder farmers who were subsistence farmers, those who were selling the surplus; and those who were mainly selling referred to as '*food producers*'. Eight focus group discussions were conducted for further probing. Transect walks were done with a small group of farmers to triangulate the above mentioned tools. The study findings highlighted that crop production was regarded as a way of life especially amongst women farmers (64%). The effect of climate change among farmers have been experienced through decline of productivity compromising food security and livelihood options of farmer's as 73% depend on the income generated from sales of agricultural produce. About 67% of the farmers were not aware of climate change interventions and any climate change support systems. Consequently, 78% farmers relied more on their indigenous knowledge for adaptation to climate change and variability. Therefore, there is a need to consider integration of indigenous knowledge system-based climate change support and interventions with scientifically derived information to empower subsistence farmers with adequate adaptive capacity to better respond to climatic challenges.

Keywords: Smallholder Farmers, Food Security, Climate Change, Awareness, Intervention, Support systems

Author for correspondence: nomceboubisi@gmail.com