

# **Evaluation of the Role of Small-Scale Farmers in Soil and Water Conservation Management in the Context of Climate Change**

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## **Abstract**

The global land resource is increasingly under pressure due to both anthropogenic and natural factors such as unsustainable land management practices and climate change, respectively. Land degradation and climate change are among the major global threats to the resilience of agro-ecosystems and stability of food production systems. Small-scale resource-constrained farmers, who account for the majority of farmers across the world, are the hardest hit due to the scale of their operations, operating environment, and circumstances. Despite these global challenges, small-scale farmers have continued to adjust their farming systems to withstand the vagaries of climate change, while at the same time aiming to achieve land degradation neutrality. This chapter sought to evaluate the role played by small-scale farmers in soil and water conservation management in attempt to address land degradation and climate change. Further, the chapter investigated key characteristics and circumstances of small-scale farmers as well as their constraints, strengths, and opportunities. The chapter argues that farmers' indigenous knowledge system has been and continues to be a key strength and offers an opportunity for which more specialized scientific and agricultural extension support can build upon in developing lasting solutions to

climate change and soil and water conservation management.