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Ecology and Development Series No. 82

**Nitrogen management in an irrigated cotton-based system under conservation agriculture on salt-affected lands of Uzbekistan**

Inefficiency of agricultural management and severe land degradation (salinization) are threatening the sustainability of cotton-based agricultural systems in the irrigated drylands of Uzbekistan. Conservation agriculture practices, i.e., permanently raised beds, residue retention, and proper crop rotation together with optimum nitrogen management, can help to counterbalance these threats. Compared to conventional tillage, bed planting has similar yields but with a higher nitrogen use efficiency, which helps to reduce nitrogen losses. Crop-water productivity is also higher, and thus less irrigation water is required. Coupled with residue retention, bed planting reduces the rate of soil salinity increase. The adoption of conservation agriculture can therefore increase agricultural efficiency and sustainability.