**Farmer-herder relations in Ghana: Interplay of environmental of environmental change, conflict, cooperation and social networks**

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Abstract

Relations between farmers and herders in West Africa have been a subject of scholarship particularly in the midst of the climate and environmental change deliberations around the world. Farmers and Fulani herders have long history of conflict, resource sharing and cooperation. These relations are built and enhanced by many processes, history and factors including the building of strong social networks. Besides, these forms of relations - conflict, resource sharing and cooperation, are connected and tend to influence each other. In Ghana, conflict remains one form of social expression that has characterized relations between farmers and Fulani herders. These conflicts are ‘reported’ to have increased between farmers and Fulani herders in many parts of Ghana. These reports are widely carried out in the media. In the midst of conflicts between farmers and Fulani herders are also debates of the influence of scarce resources/environmental changes in these conflicts. Interestingly, despite the conflict relations, there are cooperation and resource sharing between these two groups in many parts of Ghana. This study aims at examining how conflict, environmental change, cooperation and social networks shape and influence relations between farmers and Fulani herders in Ghana. The study adopts a qualitative approach in data collection through extended and ethnographic case studies, comparative case studies, interviewing, FGDs and oral histories. This study was conducted in Agogo (in southern Ghana) and Gushiegu (in northern Ghana). Respondents for the primary data comprised farmers, Fulani herders, cattle owners, inhabitants of the communities, chiefs and opinion leaders/elder, meteorological officials and government officials.