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[Workshop n°1], [Session n°2]

[Kponan yam from Bondoukou, a potential Geographical Indication (GI) in the face of climate change]

[In developing countries, while overcoming poverty and ensuring economic growth seem to be the real challenges for states, climate change is a complex obstacle to the implementation of consistent policies. The effects of this global phenomenon are certainly visible in several sectors of activity, but they are most noticeable in agriculture. Indeed, agriculture is the best reflection of the climatic realities of an area. Its development depends very strongly on the seasonal distribution of temperature, luminosity and water supply (rainfall). A disturbance resulting from these elements can therefore influence the cyclical calendar of any agricultural project. In the northern half of Zanzan (Bondoukou's Kponan yam production area), the climate is tropical with two or four seasons depending on the existing plant cover. This climate has undergone significant changes over the last few decades. The present contribution aims to assess the consequences of these changes on agriculture, especially on the production of Kponan yam. It is based on surveys carried out in nine villages and the analysis of climatic data. The results show that the volume of rainfall has decreased significantly throughout the zone, following a South-North gradient. A reduction in the length of the rainy season of 10 to 20 days was observed. Agrosystems are thus experiencing a dynamic; the landscapes are in perpetual mutation, with a cultivation calendar that is less and less controlled. Kponan yam from Bondoukou is known for its culinary flexibility and its potential for geographical indication (GI), and is not water demanding. However, a minimum and regular rainfall is required. In the absence of significant rainfall and at high temperatures, the yam tubers do not ripen properly. This reduces their shelf life and influences their organoleptic characteristics. The yield situation is alarming. From around 6-8 tonnes/ha in 2001, it was around 2 tonnes/ha in 2018. This situation affects the food security of the population and considerably reduces the income of producers. In view of all these dysfunctions resulting from climate change, sustainable production of Kponan yam in Bondoukou requires resilient cropping practices].

Keywords: Climate change, Resilience, Agriculture, Geographical Indication, Kponan yam.]

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