Effective incentives for CSA adoption

Background
There is a large and growing literature on the potential use of policy instruments for stimulating the adoption of Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices. Moreover, there is an increasing demand for better understanding the possibilities to support CSA adoption through socio-economic policies and incentives.

Objective
The objective of this work was to review and understand how an array of potential policy instruments can serve as mechanisms for enhancing adoption and upscaling the array of potential CSA practices.

Intervention strategies
The effectiveness of certain policy instruments are ascertained by means of a (matrix) heat map, capturing CSA practices (rows) and policy instruments (columns). Six key CSA practices were identified, namely water management, soil & nutrient management, crop tolerance to stress, agroforestry & intercropping, crop rotation & mixed systems, and pest & disease management. Also six key policy instruments were identified, namely market prices, taxes & subsidies, land rights, rural finance, training & information, and certification & labelling.

Results
- Price policies and factor market access programs are generally effective for CSA adoption.
- The working sphere of training and certification programs is fairly limited (most effects are found in the area of soil fertility management).
- Programs of land titling and rural finance do benefit from combinations with farmer training and organization.
- Limited evidence is available on possible incentives to support better pest and disease management.

Discussion
- Available studies have a narrow focus on the functional properties of policy instruments, disregarding indirect effects through income enhancement and food security.
- Also most studies look at an isolated combination of a specific policy instrument and CSA practice, thereby ignoring substitution, complementary or conditional effects between policy measures and CSA practices.

Conclusions
We advocate for more integrated approaches that also consider the indirect effects of policy instruments on CSA adoption an upscaling.

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