

The Soil Fertility Status of Coffee Growing Areas in Tanzania

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SUMMARY

The objective of this work was to review critically the relationship between soil fertility status and coffee productivity in the Tanzanian coffee growing areas. An inventory of soil-related information for the coffee areas in the country was made by TaCRI through consultancy from Sokoine University of Agriculture. The collected information was assessed against some established standards to give a picture of the fertility status. Total N was optimal, but its forms and dynamics make it the most limiting in the soils. Other nutrients were around optimal except P, which was on a low side. In the absence of recent soil fertility data, the low productivity (as low as 200 g/tree/year in small holder farms) was attributed to low soil fertility, as most smallholders are unable and/or reluctant to invest in soil fertility management. An overview of the causes, effects and TaCRI's efforts through integrated soil fertility management to improve coffee productivity are discussed.

Key words: coffee, fertility, ISFM, productivity, soils, TaCRI, Tanzania