

# Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

## CBRM Database

<b>Date:</b>	<b>March 2012</b>	<b>Entry Number:</b>	<b>1231</b>
<b>Case Study Name:</b>	<b>Swidden Agriculture and Conservation in Eastern Madagascar: Stakeholder Perspectives and Cultural Belief Systems</b>		
<b>Author:</b>	Douglas William Hume		
<b>Document Type:</b>	Journal paper		
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<b>Region:</b>	Indian Ocean, east of Africa		
<b>Country:</b>	Madagascar		
<b>Ecosystem Type:</b>	Mountain ecosystems, highlands, rainforest , grassy plains, deciduous forest, desert		
<b>Social Characteristics:</b>	Disaster prone community (widespread erosion, cyclones, ), island		
<b>Scale of Study:</b>	national		
<b>Resource Type:</b>	Wood export; rice, coffee silk and palm oil production, fisheries, forestry, precious and semi-precious stones, minerals, oil, gas		
<b>Type of Initiative:</b>	Development project/GOV initiative, NGO		
<b>Community-Based Work:</b>	Agriculture, environmental health, resource management, biodiversity conservation		
<b>Keywords:</b>	Madagascar, tavy, agriculture, culture, policy, farmers, rice, swidden agriculture, cultural belief system		
<b>Summary:</b>	This paper describes and discusses several stakeholders' perspectives of agricultural change in eastern		

Madagascar. The historic and current government-sponsored attempts to facilitate the end of swidden agriculture in eastern Madagascar have largely failed due to particular cultural beliefs held by the rural farmers. The Malagasy government is implementing several agricultural and social policies designed to promote biodiversity conservation and increase crop yields to meet the increased needs of the rising human population. One key aspect of planned agricultural change ignored by the Malagasy government is the impact this change will have on the rural farmers' belief system connected with their traditional agriculture, tavy (swidden agriculture as termed and practised by the Malagasy). As the current plan of the Malagasy government stands, only the political, agricultural, ecological, and economic problems of the agricultural change are part of policymaking. In addition to perspectives from government-sponsored programmes, economic and cultural viewpoints from local rice sellers and rural farmers are presented.