

INCENTIVES FOR ENHANCED COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION IN AMBOSELI, KENYA

MICHAEL LIMO KIPKEU, SAMSON W. MWANGI & JAMES NJOGU

Department of Peace, Security and Social Studies, Egerton University, Nakuru, Kenya

ABSTRACT

The paper focused on the incentives for enhanced community participation and securing more space for wildlife conservation in Amboseli ecosystem. The threats against wildlife in Amboseli ecosystem continue to escalate due to an increase in habitat fragmentation, change in land use and human population pressure outside the park. Loss of wildlife habitat outside the park should be halted to ensure that there is viability and large abundance and diversity of species. The real threat to wildlife conservation in the ecosystem is not the commercial poaching, but wildlife's inability to compete economically with alternative land use. Wildlife numbers in Amboseli ecosystem have increased and the region has become nationally important from a wildlife perspective.

However, the communities living around Amboseli national park have little economic or social interest in wildlife because of the centralized management and financial benefits directed to the state. In the absence of a supportive legal-institutional environment for private or community conservation initiatives, the current situation cannot be considered secure because the benefits are not sufficiently linked to wildlife. If wildlife resource is to survive outside ANP, local communities must be able to profit from it and have a much greater say in management decisions.

KEYWORDS: Community- Based Conservation, Wildlife Benefits, Social Interest and Competition with Other Land Uses