



Participation of local communities in the protection and management strategies of wildlife in Queen Elizabeth National Park

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Keywords: Local Community, wildlife protection and management, National Park.


Introduction

Queen Elizabeth National Park (QENP) has immense natural resources including wetlands, aquatic and terrestrial birds that should be well protected and conserved to promote sustainable eco-tourism in Uganda. This research focused on the participation of local communities towards the protection and management strategies of wildlife in QENP.

Study objectives

1. To determine the wildlife protection strategies used by local communities at Queen Elizabeth National Park,

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2. to determine the wildlife management strategies used by local communities at Queen Elizabeth National Park,
 3. to investigate factors that affected effective wildlife protection and management strategies at Queen Elizabeth National Park,
 4. to identify strategies that could be suitable for the sustainable protection of wildlife in Queen Elizabeth National Park.


Methodology

This study used a cross-sectional survey design was combined with the qualitative approach. The sample size was 220 respondents selected using the simple random sampling technique to select respondents from among the members of local communities, and purposive sampling technique to choose key informants. The research methods include observation, interview method, and questionnaire.

Key findings

The study found that local populations participated in protection and management strategies including engaging in dialogues between park officials and the locals, participating in finding solutions to problematic animals, and to human-wildlife conflicts, as well as sharing part of the Park's revenue.

The study found that the factors that affected effective wildlife protection and management strategies were: lack of adequate compensation, failure to enforce Park



policies, and inadequate consultation with local communities.

The study identified the following strategies: addressing conservation challenges such as poaching, encroachment, and illegal grazing through; placing patrols in all protected areas, arresting people who encroach on the park's land without permission from the Uganda Wildlife Authority.

Key recommendations

The study recommended that the Uganda Wildlife Authority should provide substantive provisions which could be used to facilitate communities; that at a national level, community involvement in wildlife protection initiatives should be well provided for in wildlife protection initiatives; that the government should emphasize increased awareness and education on the importance of wildlife conservation to the community and the country.

Key references

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