

Assessing the Effectiveness of public policies in wetland management by the urban councils of Uganda: A case study of Kitubulu swamp, Entebbe Municipality

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Introduction

The Global Water Partnership in East Africa indicates that Uganda loses approximately 15% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) due to the destruction of its natural resources such as wetlands.

Wetlands destruction alone costs Uganda nearly 2 billion shillings annually and contamination of water sources which is partly caused by the reduced buffering capacity of open water bodies costs Uganda nearly 38 billion shillings annually (Kasoma, 2003)

About 10% of Uganda's total land area (205,000km²) is occupied by wetlands and was historically referred to as wastelands. This study was designed to assess the effectiveness of wetlands management policies by Uganda's urban councils and in particular Entebbe Municipal Council in the management of Kitubulu swamp.

Objectives

1. To identify the human activities that contributed to the degradation of Kitubulu swamp.
2. To find out how Kitubulu swamp was restored.
3. To find out how the kitubulu swamp was drained
4. To identify how the wetland building policies influenced wetland management measures in Entebbe Municipality.

Methodology

The study employed a single case study design and used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The target population of the study was 280 individuals out of whom a sample of 164 respondents was selected using purposive and random sampling techniques. Data were collected using the survey, observation, document review, Focused Group Discussions methods through document checklist, observation checklist, Focused Group Discussion guide, digital photo camera, and self-administered questionnaires—as data collection tools.

Key findings

The study found that destroyed the swamp through sand mining and papyrus harvesting. The residents of kitubulu also engaged in dumping rubbish and other toxic wastes, construction of temporary structures, grazing cattle, flower and tree- nursery beds and establishing car washing bays in and around the swamp.

The study found that there were policies for the proper management of wetlands and swamps in Entebbe Municipality,

but that there was little sensitisation of residents regarding the requirements of policies. The study further found that enforcement of the policies by Entebbe Municipal Council was inadequate.

Key recommendations

The Ministry of Water and Environment, in conjunction with all authorities under its docket such as the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and National Forestry Authority (NFA) should implement all the laws and policies guiding effective wetland management in Kitubulu and assess.

There should also be quarterly or annual evaluation on the performance of the operations aimed at protecting and promoting best practices of wetland management.

Key References

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