Wildlife Management Areas in Tanzania: A Study of Opportunities and Challenges

By

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Abstract

In 2003 Tanzania established 16 pilot Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), with the aim of enhancing conservation and poverty alleviation through sustainable utilization of natural resources. This study examines the opportunities and challenges of this policy initiative with reference to the proposed WMAs. Data were collected mainly through consultation with government officials, local authorities, communities and investors. Semi-structured questionnaires and checklist were used to gather information. Findings show that WMAs have potential for poverty alleviation and sustainable conservation. However, the prolonged, time-consuming and costly establishment process, inequitable benefits, lack of entrepreneurial skills and poor governance are some of the serious challenges constraining WMAs. Also, areas with a large wildlife population are reluctant to form WMAs, and the increased wildlife population escalates human-wildlife conflicts.

Keywords

Wildlife management areas, poverty alleviation, opportunities, challenges, Africa, Tanzania.