

UNDERLYING THREATS ON FOREST RESERVES IN TABORA REGION, WESTERN TANZANIA. THE CASE OF IGOMBE RIVER AND SIMBO FORESTRY RESERVES.

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Abstract

Underlying Threats on Forest Reserves in Tabora Region, Western Tanzania: The Case of Igomb River and Simbo Forestry Reserves. This study has examined the driving forces behind forest encroachment in Tabora region, Tanzania. The study focused on two Forest Reserves (FRs), namely Igombe River and Simbo. While both FRs are undergoing degradation, the later FR is more severely encroached upon than the later. The information gathered covered both socio economic and biophysical aspects. The study observed that the major reasons contributing to forestry degradation through encroachment were mainly three: (i) socio-economic factors including migration, scarcity of arable land, fuel wood extraction for tobacco drying, livestock keeping and charcoal and timber business (ii) policy related factors such as unclear and conflicting laws on natural resource utilisation and (iii) biophysical factors such as soil fertility gradients within or near forestry reserves, vegetation types and distribution and micro climatic variations.

Key words: Encroachment, forestry, livestock keeping, tobacco farming, Tabora, Tanzania.