The Selous-Niassa Transfrontier Conservation Area and Tourism: Evolution, Benefits and Challenges

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Abstract

The chapter demonstrates how transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs) favor international tourism but also how its effectiveness in promoting local development has remained a subject of critical debate. The chapter contributes to this debate with specific focus on the process that creates TFCAs and how that process generates conditions for economic empowerment or disempowerment. The experience of the Selous-Niassa TFCA is used to examine how evolution and promotion of tourism has differentiated impacts on different actors. Most of the communities on the edges of TFCAs are struggling with the loss of basic rights to land, which is their main source of livelihoods. Tourism as an economic activity has mainly remained in few powerful hands as benefits are hampered by the capital tendency of the industry for which TFCAs are not immune. Conclusively, transfrontier conservation may be a flagship project for the southern African region, but mainly for what conservation is called to serve: nature protection.

Keywords

Community-based conservation, Selous-Niassa wildlife corridor, Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA), Tanzania, Mozambique, Wildlife management areas.