

Human–wildlife tourism conflict: towards an inclusive wildlife resources utilisation approach in southern Africa

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Abstract

The study examines wildlife tourism and local community livelihoods conflict in three southern African countries. The study incorporates the concept of community inclusiveness to reinvigorate wildlife utilisation research through qualitative interpretive methodologies. Despite the wildlife tourism sector's multi-billion dollar status, local communities living adjacent to wildlife sanctuaries still suffer deprivation and significant need. Findings further suggested that local communities have been pushed to the periphery of the wildlife tourism value chain; and attempts to meaningfully benefit from wildlife tourism have been curtailed by a combination of institutional barriers and inflexible Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species' contemporary wildlife utilisation regime. Additionally, community voices on matters of wildlife tourism policy formulation and its inclusive use remain suppressed. It was concluded that contemporary wildlife tourism utilisation frameworks are not a shining example of community poverty alleviation strategies in the context of southern Africa; hence a root and branch shake up of the models is recommended.