



Community-Based Conservation Programmes' Impact on Wildlife Tourism Revenue in Zimbabwe's Mana Pools National Park: A Two-Year Field Experiment

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Abstract

Community-based conservation programmes (CBCPs) have gained prominence as a means to promote sustainable development in wildlife-rich regions like Zimbabwe's Mana Pools National Park, where tourism is an essential economic driver. A qualitative approach was employed, involving semi-structured interviews with park visitors, local residents, and stakeholders such as tour operators and conservation managers. Data collection also included observations at key tourism sites. During the study period, there was a notable increase in visitor numbers by 20% compared to pre-CBCP levels. Visitors spent an average of £50 more per day on guided tours following CCBP implementation, with a significant proportion indicating higher satisfaction with wildlife encounters and conservation efforts. The findings suggest that CBCPs can effectively enhance tourism revenue in Mana Pools National Park by aligning economic incentives with environmental stewardship goals. These results contribute to understanding the nuanced impacts of community-led initiatives on eco-tourism sustainability. Further research should explore long-term effects and potential scalability of these programmes across other wildlife-rich areas, while also considering broader socio-economic implications for local communities. Community-based conservation, wildlife tourism revenue, Mana Pools National Park, qualitative study

Keywords: *African Geography, Conservation Economics, Qualitative Research, Anthropology of Tourism, Livelihoods Development, Sustainability Metrics, Community Engagement*

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