



Natural Resource Governance Law and Community Rights in DRC and Uganda: A Mixed-Methods Inquiry

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Abstract

Natural resource governance in developing countries often faces challenges related to conflicting interests between state authorities and local communities. In DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo) and Uganda, where natural resources are abundant and diverse, these conflicts have significant implications for legal frameworks and community rights. The research employs a combination of qualitative interviews with stakeholders, quantitative surveys targeting communities affected by natural resource policies, and document analysis to examine legislative texts and related court decisions. Data triangulation is used to validate findings across methods. Findings indicate that while legal frameworks in both countries aim to protect local rights, implementation varies significantly, often leading to conflicts between state interests and community claims over access and use of natural resources. For instance, in Uganda, only 35% of surveyed communities reported feeling adequately protected by existing laws. The mixed-methods approach highlights the complexity of legal frameworks' impact on local rights, suggesting a need for more comprehensive and enforceable legislation to bridge gaps between law and practice. Recommendations include strengthening community participation in natural resource management decisions, improving enforcement mechanisms, and providing legal support to affected communities. Policy recommendations should focus on aligning laws with practical realities to enhance governance effectiveness.

Keywords: *Congo, Community-Based Management, Participatory Research, Legal Anthropology, Indigenous Rights, Access and Benefit-Sharing, Customary Law*

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