



Adaptive Management Strategies in Zimbabwean Bush Encroachment Affected Cattle Herds: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

Bush encroachment in Zimbabwean cattle herds has led to significant challenges for pastoralists and local authorities. Understanding adaptive management strategies is crucial for sustainable land use and livestock productivity. A comparative study approach was employed using semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, satellite imagery analysis, and field observations to assess the impact of these strategies on herds' productivity and land use patterns. Pastoralists demonstrated higher engagement in adaptive management practices compared to government agencies. This resulted in a 30% increase in herd productivity and a reduction of bush encroachment by 25% within their managed areas. The study highlights the importance of involving local communities as active participants in conservation efforts, which can lead to more effective outcomes than top-down approaches alone. Stakeholders should be encouraged to collaborate and share knowledge on adaptive management practices to maximise benefits for both herds and land.

Keywords: *Geographical Indicators, Bush Encroachment, Adaptive Management, Livestock Production Systems, Resource Governance, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Community-Based Conservation*

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