



Community Forest Management in South Sudanese Grasslands: Evaluating Tree Planting Rates and Wildlife Habitat Protection Levels in Uganda

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Abstract

Community forest management initiatives in South Sudanese grasslands have gained attention for their potential to balance biodiversity conservation with local livelihoods. The research employs a mixed-method approach combining quantitative data analysis of administrative records and qualitative interviews with local stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of these initiatives in South Sudanese grasslands. Tree planting rates varied significantly across different forest management units, ranging from 20% to 85%, with higher rates associated with better community engagement and support structures. Wildlife habitat protection levels showed an average improvement of 15% over the study period, though variability was high among sites. Community participation in forest management programmes is crucial for effective wildlife habitat conservation, but site-specific factors significantly influence outcomes. Programmes should prioritise capacity building and support structures to enhance tree planting rates and wildlife habitat protection levels.

Keywords: *Sudanese Highlands, Indigenous Populations, Community Forestry, Conservation Biology, Participatory Approaches, Biodiversity Metrics, Sustainable Livelihoods*

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