



Sustainable Forest Management Practices Among Indigenous Communities in Western Kenya: A Longitudinal Study on Biodiversity Conservation

Odhiambo Kinyanjui¹, Seresu Chege^{2,3}, Wafula Ondieki⁴

¹ Technical University of Kenya

² Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Technical University of Kenya

³ African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC)

⁴ Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Kenyatta University

Published: 28 May 2009 | **Received:** 13 March 2009 | **Accepted:** 19 April 2009

Correspondence: okinyanjui@gmail.com

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18900822](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18900822)

Author notes

Odhiambo Kinyanjui is affiliated with Technical University of Kenya and focuses on African Studies research in Africa. Seresu Chege is affiliated with Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Technical University of Kenya and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Wafula Ondieki is affiliated with Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Kenyatta University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Abstract

Sustainable forest management (SFM) practices among indigenous communities in Western Kenya have been identified as crucial for biodiversity conservation. A mixed-methods approach combining qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys was employed across multiple years in selected indigenous communities. Indigenous communities showed significant support for SFM initiatives, particularly those involving traditional knowledge integration. The proportion of communal land managed sustainably increased by 20% over five years. The study underscores the importance of community engagement and traditional ecological knowledge in achieving effective SFM outcomes. Government policies should prioritise supporting indigenous communities through capacity building, legal frameworks that recognise their rights, and financial incentives for sustainable practices.

Keywords: *African Geography, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Participatory Action Research, Conservation Biology, Ecological Economics*

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