

HOW NGOS PROMOTE COEXISTENCE BETWEEN NATURE AND PEOPLE: CASE STUDY OF THE EAST AFRICAN COASTAL REGION

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The relationship between people and nature has not been good. Attempts to get people to care for nature have met with restraint. Why are people reluctant to support nature conservation? This paper analyses the factors that have constrained the relationship between nature and the people and finds that previous strategies have marginalized coastal communities and caused ethnic conflicts. The paper details the case of how the new Kenya government established a comprehensive strategy supporting human rights, promoting good governance and the rule of law and fight against corruption and rejuvenated the spontaneous desire to protect nature among the people of Kenya. The paper proposes that new nature conservation strategies should include all stakeholders including the local people, NGOs and the government and should incorporate social aspects like gender, health, insecurity and illiteracy. The author argues that NGOs can play a vital role in mobilizing grassroots support for nature protection. The author shows how Kenyan NGOs have injected productivity skills that stimulate poverty reduction within protection of nature and created wealth for Kenyan people and the entire East African Coastal region. This people participatory approach has great potential for success because it encourages investment in the activities that enable people to protect nature and in the process generate income for local people. The author argues that putting management into the hands of local people will spur the protection of nature among coastal people. The author proclaims that people participation is the missing link in the relationship between people and nature. The author concludes that if people have a stake in the management of coastal resources associated with nature, then they will have an incentive to protect them.