

Challenges facing tree planting initiatives in environmental conservation in Tanzania: a case study of African black wood conservation project, Kilimanjaro region

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This study explored the challenges faced by African Blackwood tree planting initiative in conserving the environment and being able to overcome the problem. Specifically, the study identified the existing Blackwood tree planting initiatives in environmental conservation in the study area, evaluated the contribution of the Blackwood tree planting initiatives in environmental conservation in the study area as well as examined the challenges facing Blackwood tree planting initiatives in the study area. The case study was based on African Blackwood Conservation Project at Mijongweni village in Moshi Rural, in Kilimanjaro Region, whereby the study focused on the challenges facing Blackwood tree planting initiatives in the same region. The study sample comprised of 35 key informants. Of whom, 4 of them were Directors/Head of Department, 15 were staff members, whereas 16 comprised of the villagers surrounding the project. Method of collecting data primarily used oral-verbal/written stimuli and replies to oral-verbal/written responses as well as in secondary data various sources were visited. These visited sources involved desk research and documentary review of reports and journal articles. Information from the qualitative analysis was analyzed by using content analysis while their presentations were based on simple tabulations, narrations and few figures. The study results reveal that there exist a number of challenges for **Mpingo** tree planting initiatives in Tanzania. Some of the challenges were the weak linkage between ABCP and other economic and social issues in Tanzania; difficulties in availability of adequate information for **Mpingo** practice; inefficient administration system for ABCP; little public awareness on ABCP; existence of poor infrastructure in the country; and the shortage of funds for ABCP especially to running the project. The study suggests some ways to improve the **Mpingo** tree planting initiatives in Tanzania. These include inter alia the need to harmonize information, education and awareness to various institution regardless of what they are doing since no life without sustainable environment; improvement of ABCP in support of various researchers; more public education campaigns on **Mpingo** tree to majority of Tanzanian population; and provision of proper

trainings, attractive remunerations and incentives to the management of school as well as students and other institutions dealing with environmental conservation in the country. Therefore, there is need for Tanzania Government through Vice President Office – Division of Environment and National Environmental Management Council to strengthen its link with ABCP in order to curb all the pitfalls that ABCP currently faces.