

**Human-Wildlife interaction and its implications to livelihoods
and conservation in Wami-Mbiki wildlife management**

Aloyce Mkindwa

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An assessment of human-wildlife interaction and its implications to livelihoods and conservation was carried out at Wami-Mbiki wildlife Management Area (WMA). A cross-sectional research design involving purposive and simple random sampling was used in selecting villages and households respectively. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIs), field observations and household interviews were used for data collection. Secondary data for this study was obtained through reviewing literature from various sources. Analysis of satellite images was conducted to determine the trend in land use and cover changes in the study area. Findings from the study show that establishment of Wami-Mbiki WMA has had both positive and negative implications to livelihoods and conservation. A few respondents reported positive monetary and non-monetary effects such as employment and villagers enjoying wildlife resources. This study indicates that most respondents perceived their encounters with wildlife mostly negative/destructive to humans. Eighty two percent (82%) of the interviewed respondents reported crop damage by wildlife from WMA. The findings further revealed increased human footprints in the WMA. The remote sensed data indicated that, 29% of the Pagale and Gwami forest reserves were lost between the year 2000 and 2010. The observed land-use/cover change poses a serious threat to conservation of Wami-Mbiki WMA. For the best performance of the Wami-Mbiki WMA, a number of recommendations are proposed including the need for increasing awareness campaigns both for increased good governance and improved local community support thus to encourage positive stakeholder involvement and management of the Wami-Mbiki WMA.