

## **Assessment of land resource use conflicts in the Rufiji river basin, Tanzania.**

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This study assessed the land resource use conflicts in the Rufiji river basin, Tanzania. Rufiji basin is endowed with fertile soils, water and pastures that attracted both farmers and pastoralists from different parts of Tanzania resulting in resource use conflicts in the basin. In addressing these conflicts both Qualitative and Quantitative methods of data collection were used, where a samples of 123 households were interviewed (farmers, pastoralists, gatherers and fishermen) who were randomly selected within the study area. Qualitative methods intended to investigate perceptions, feelings and descriptive spoken or written data in order to supplement statistical data. Likely, Quantitative methods aimed at getting the standardized inquiries or numerical data. Purposive sampling was used to select village land committee members, district land committee members and Rufiji Basin Water Board members. Primary data for the study were obtained through household questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussion, community resources mapping and field observations. Secondary data were also used to supplement and verify the information obtained from the field. Analysis and interpretation based on socio-economic characteristics of respondents revealed that, agriculture and pastoralism are the main activities in the study area. Where by 43% of the respondents were farmers, 34% were pastoralists, 15% were fishers and the rest were hunters. The findings based on remotely sensed data and household interviewed revealed that, the major cause of land resource use conflicts in the study area was land scarcity caused by high rate of immigrants, mainly pastoralists. For instance in 1991 pastoralist opened more grass land from the coverage of 10% to 28% in 2016. This has led to the scramble of land resource and shortage of water. As shown in the GIS analysis about 276 hectares of water were lost to other land uses between 1991 and 2016. Further more lack of proper land use plans and corruption in land allocation to community members has accelerated the rate of conflicts. Communities have developed mitigation measures and strategies such as proper land allocations, disputers resolution bodies, land registration and participatory approach in decision making. Therefore, in order to have safe community serious majors should be taken to control illegal immigrants by ensuring that there are no entries in the basin without written permission from District Council Authority. Likewise, disputers' bodies should involve more farmers and pastoralists who are mainly involved in land resources use conflicts. Last but not least, there is a need to form district tribunals in Rufiji district which will facilitate the management of land resource conflicts in the study area.