

## COMPETING CLAIMS, POWER, STAKEHOLDERS AND MULTIPLE LAND USE ANALYSIS OF OLD OYO NATIONAL PARK, NIGERIA

<sup>1</sup>Oduntan, O. O. , <sup>2</sup>Akinyemi, A. F. and <sup>1</sup>Adebowale, T. K.

<sup>1</sup>Department of Forestry and Wildlife Management, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Wildlife and Ecotourism Management, University of Ibadan, Nigeria Corresponding Author:  
[oladapo.oduntan@yahoo.com](mailto:oladapo.oduntan@yahoo.com).

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### Abstract

*This paper evaluates multiple use characteristics of Old Oyo National Park by its neighbouring communities; conflict and expression of powers in the claims on Park resources by stakeholders. A two-step sampling techniques was used. The first step purposively selected two of the five ranges in the park, based on conflict prevalence in the study area. Secondly, the closest community within each range were identified and used for data collection. Primary data were used for the study. In-depth interviews of all household heads in the study areas were carried out using open-ended questionnaire. In-depth interview was also conducted to gather information from Park officials, Conservation Organization and other Government Agencies like the Local Government Council and Agricultural Development Program. The rating of multiple use benefits of the park was determined using Mantel table of multiple benefits, while Competing Claims Analysis Matrix was used for conflict analysis in the study areas.*

**Keywords:** *Wildlife Management, Conflict, Stakeholders Analysis, Crop Damage, Park Benefits.*

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### Introduction

National parks are cornerstone of conservation policies and provide multiple benefits for humankind (Balmford & Whitten 2003, Mulongoy & Gidda 2008, and Dudley *et al.*, 2010). The ecosystem services provided by forests includes provisioning, supporting, regulating, cultural, food, fresh water, fuel wood, fibre, nutrient cycling, soil formation, primary production, climate regulation, flood regulation, disease regulation, water purification, aesthetic, spiritual, educational and recreational (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005) In addition to their role in protecting natural and cultural heritage, Hamilton (2001) also stressed that Parks contribute economically to urban communities. However, there must be a balance between resource restriction and its usage if provisioning services are to be sustainably exploited by local communities bordering National Parks of today. Hence, the importance of local community participation for effective and sustainable wildlife conservation cannot be over emphasised. Although National Parks are refuges of tranquillity and peace, yet they are also places where conflict occurs. Human-wildlife conflict occurs especially when [growing human populations](#) overlap with established [wildlife territory](#), which has led to loss of resources or life to people and wild animals. Human-wildlife conflicts have been in existence for as long as human have existed and wild animals, since the time when they have share same landscapes and resources. The increase in conflict between human and wild animals has become particularly intense in recent times arising from

various reasons such as wild animal damages to agricultural crops, the increase of disease transmissions from wildlife populations to humans, livestock and other domestic animals, and vice versa, poverty, and so on to mention few (Groot-bruinderinck *et al.* 1994). In summary, causative factors of human-wildlife conflict ranges from wildlife population increase to habitat decrease as a result of human population increase. Despite the implementation of numerous control strategies, human - wild animal conflict continue to be a severe problem in many parts of the world (Sauer, 1984; Bryers, 1984). This paper evaluates multiple use characteristics of Old Oyo National Park by its neighbouring communities, as well as analyse the conflict and expression of powers in the claims on wild animals and plants resources by stakeholders.

### The Problem

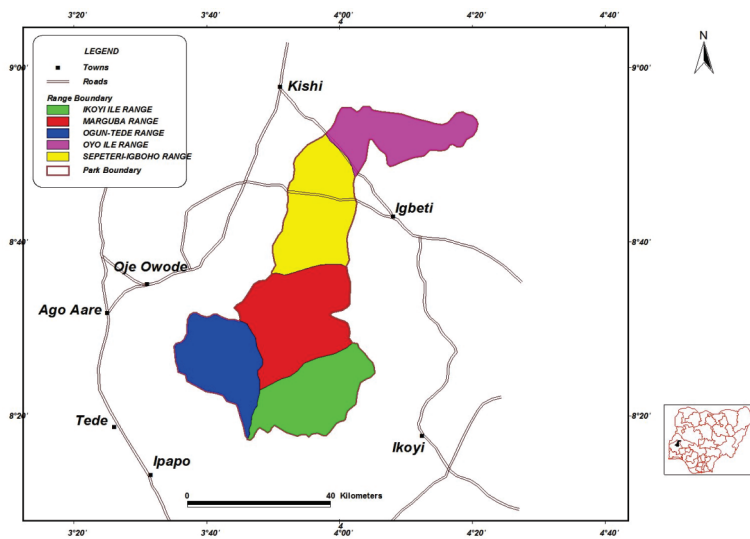
Whilst National Park areas provide important multiple benefit at global, national and local levels; there is increasing concern about the conflict often involving National Park resources and their neighbouring communities. Crop damage is the most prevalent form of human-wildlife conflict across the African continent. Human-wildlife conflict is intense where agriculture is important part of people's livelihood and income (Else, 1991). In these communities, competition between the locals and wild animals for the use of natural resource is particularly intense and direct, making wildlife and/or resident human populations very vulnerable.

## Methodology

### Study Area

This study was conducted in Old Oyo National Park, Oyo State. The Park is located across northern Oyo State and Southern Kwara State of Nigeria. It is rich in plant and animal resources. The Park is easily accessible from Southern and Western Nigeria. The nearest cities and towns adjoining the Park include: Saki, Iseyin, Igboho, Sepeteri, Tede, and Igbeti which

have their own commercial and cultural attraction for tourism. The National park originated from two earlier native administrative forest reserves namely; Upper Ogun established in 1936 and Oyo-ile established in 1941. These were converted to Game Reserves in 1952, then combined and upgraded to the present status of a National Park in 1979. Old Oyo National Park is made up of 5 ranges which are: Oyo-ile, Sepeteri, Yemoso, Tede and Marguba ranges.



**Fig 1: Map of Old Oyo National Park Indicating the Ranges and Surrounding Communities**

**Sampling Procedure**

A two-step sampling technique was used for the study. The first step involves purposive selection of two of the five ranges in the park for the study, based on conflict prevalence in the study area. Subsequently, the closest community within each range were identified and used for data collection. The communities chosen were Oloka in Yemoso range and Ogundiran in Oyo-Ile range.

### Data Collection

Primary data were used for the study. In-depth interviews of all household heads in the study areas were carried out with the use of open-ended

questionnaire. Non-probability snowballing method was used in locating household heads where huts are scattered and hidden as well as during work hours. All interviews were conducted with translators fluent in their indigenous (Yoruba) language. An in-depth interview was also conducted to gather information from representatives of National Park officials, Conservation Organization officials and other Government agencies officials like the Local Government Council officials and Agricultural Development Program officials (Table 1).

**Table 1: Summary of Sampling Instruments and Procedure Used for Categories Respondents in the Study Areas**

Categories of Respondents/Stakeholders	Instrument(s) Used	Sampling Procedure & Size	Number of Respondents
Household heads (HHs)	Open-Ended Questionnaire & In-depth Interview	All HHs Snowballing (Non-probability)	112
National Park Officials	In-depth Interview	Representatives	3
Conservation Organization/NGO officials	In-depth Interview	Representatives	3
Government Agencies Officials	In-depth Interview	Representatives	3

**Data Analysis**

The rating of various benefits derived from the park was determined using Mantel (1965) table of multiple

benefits (Table 2). The conflict analysis was done using Competing Claims Analysis Matrix (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997). The power analysis and effect was conducted using picture interpretation

**Table 2: Multiple Benefits and Grades**

Benefit Grades	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	(Size Class)	Insignificant				
2	V	Significant				
3	IV	More significant				
4	III	Important				
5	II	Very important				
6	I	Indispensable				

Source: Mantel, 1965

1 = Insignificant 2 = Significant 3 = More significant 4 = Important 5 = Very Important 6 = Indispensable

**Results and Discussion**

**Multiple Benefits of Old Oyo National Park Resources to Neighbouring Communities**

The benefits identified include firewood, food, plants for medicine, recreation, timber, bush meat, and water. Table 3 shows the evaluation of combined benefits derived from the park. The results showed timber collection (37) and food (37) can be said to have combined indispensable dominance, yet food (10923) has the overall dominant usage in the areas.

This is in line with the findings of Foppes and Ketphanh, (2004) which states that leaves, fruits and vegetables collected in the forest provide many people with energy, vitamins and minerals. Wilkie and Carpenter, (1996) also stressed that bush meat provides from 30 to 80% of the daily protein requirements of rural communities bordering protected areas. In addition to these, many of the respondents argued that they have no other land for farming; hence the park land is important to their livelihood.

**Table 3: Evaluation of Multiple Benefits Derived from the Park by Villagers**

Benefits Grade	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1	3	0	0	1	3	3	1
2	2	0	2	3	3	4	1
3	0	0	1	1	2	0	0
4	1	4	2	22	35	42	5
5	21	23	27	37	21	14	27
6	<b>37*</b>	<b>37*</b>	32	0	0	1	30
Sum of (value) <sup>2</sup>	10440	<b>10923**</b>	9816	8803	7144	8083	9148

**Benefits Interpretation:**

- (1) - stands for Firewood collection
- (2)- for land (for Farming)
- (3)- for medicinal value
- (4)- for recreation
- (5)- for timber
- (6)- for bush meat
- (7)- for water

**Grades Interpretation:**

- 6 – Indispensable
- 5 – Very Important
- 4 – Important
- 3 – More Significant
- 2 – Significant
- 1 - Insignificant

**Analysis of Competing Claims on Old Oyo National Park Resources**

The analysis of the claims on Old Oyo National Park resources reveals stiff competition between farmers and wild animals in the park (Table 4). The farmers incur economic losses from crop damages by wild animals which results in loss of agricultural produce and subsequently starvation and poverty. Indigenous land occupants have not given up claims on right of occupancy. They were displaced from their lands to establish the protected areas several decades back. The study however reveals that they are seeking monetary compensation for crop damages to alleviate suffering through giving of grants to concerned farmers. Jackson and Wangchuk (2001) emphasised that farmers' inability to mitigate crop-raiding adequately and the absence of compensation schemes may lead to retaliatory killing of problem species.

**Table 4: Competing Claims Analysis Matrix**

Stake holders	What do they claim?	What are the interests behind the claim? (what do they want to get out of it)	Current benefits?	Current costs?
Villagers	Wild Animal Damages	Compensation	None	Food Insecurity / Poverty
Conservation Organization / NGO	Wildlife Population Decline / Habitat Destruction	Conservation of Biodiversity	International support	Loss of Biodiversity
OONP Management	Intolerable Killing of Wild Animals by Locals	Free range and access to land for Wildlife	Weak Legislative Support	Decline in Wild animal Population / Habitat destruction
Government Officials	Need for Food Security / Poverty Alleviation	Local Support / Personal Interest	Vote / Local Acceptance	-

**Analysis of Stakeholders' Powers in Old Oyo National Park**

The large black circle in Figure 1 represents OONP management and buffer zones, while the blue circles surrounding it represent the stakeholders and their relationship with the conflict. The farmers and wild animals' presence overlap on the National park buffer zones, with opposing and equally overlapping interest bringing about competition. Farmers cultivated on Park areas while wild animals encroached on such farms, feeding on cultivated crops thereby dashing their expected harvest quantity and quality, causing the farmers great economic losses. Some of the farmers however confessed to frustration that led some to setting traps and killing the wild animals as means of control. Little wonder the park officials are on the side of the wild animals since their purpose is to protect their interest. Although Non-Governmental

Agencies (NGO) such as AP Leventis and Nigeria Conservation Foundation are equally on the side of the Wildlife species, they are farther away because they are not directly involved in decision making on outcomes and management of the conflicts.

The size of the triangle represents the size of authority that each stakeholder wields over one another and the land resources in the areas. Investigations reveal local council officials exercised greater authority/control than the park officials on management issues that involves wildlife-crop damage and conflict because of the support of state and federal government officials they enjoined for political gains. The wild animals enjoyed greater power of support with park guards and conservation NGOs when compared with farmers. The farmers have the smallest authority because there is little or nothing they can do about the damage issue.

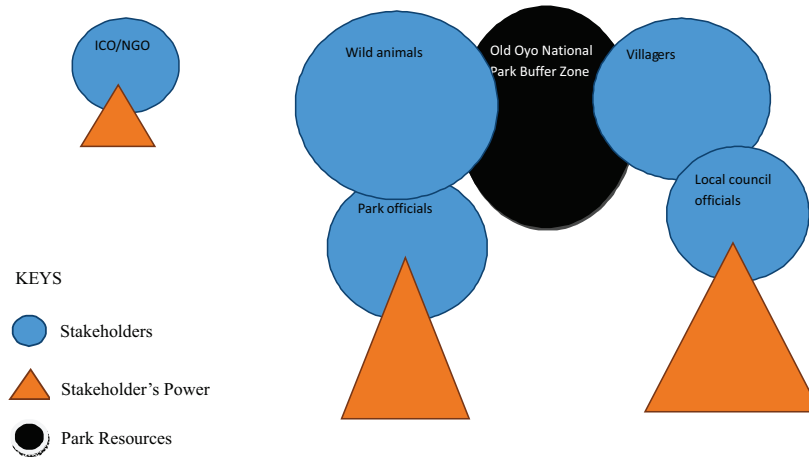


Figure 2: Stakeholders and Power Analysis of Old Oyo National Park and its Regional Influence Communities

## Conclusion

Land is the dominant benefit of the people in the study area which has been considered a local environmental issue. Conflicting interest, Park management and Local government council impedes strong policies that will protect wildlife in the study area. Powers / interest of the Local government councils oppose that of the Park guards / managers. Local communities have been evicted or displaced from their lands to establish protected areas. Under such circumstances, traditional rights over wildlife resources are lost and become an issue of contention to the local community. Reducing conflict between wildlife and people is essential and it is likely to improve both food security by reducing wildlife's impact on crops and livestock and biodiversity conservation by modifying the negative attitudes that many communities have towards wildlife.

## Recommendation

The following recommendations were made, based on the findings of this study: Compensation should be available to the affected resident. Compensation scheme range from displacement of local communities to crop damage by wildlife and changes in land tenure should be put in place. This involves giving out grants to farmers, licenses' to exploit natural resources or regulated harvesting. The compensation schemes can reduce the killing of problem species. The affected dwellers are also advised to relocate away from those areas to safer areas for their sustainable livelihood. Park boundaries should be clearly demarcated to guard against the unusual excuses of park encroachment for no clear-cut boundary demarcation. The local resident should be involved in the management of the protected area.

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