

The Wildlife Resource as an Enabler in Ensuring Food Security in Kenya

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Abstract

Wildlife is Kenya's foremost natural resource. Its values to the country are varied and include both material and non-material attributes. Whereas potential for consumptive use of the wildlife resource as a source of food exists, and whereas established advantages of wildlife over domestic animals as a meat source for Kenyans are known, exploitation of wildlife for meat remains largely a virgin aspect of its management in the country. The Government's pronouncement of ensuring national food security as one of its "Big Four" agenda calls for deliberate efforts to consider potential sources of human nutrition including wildlife. Granted that Kenya's wildlife is a common property resource, there is need to provoke all stake holders into a national conversation over this matter. This paper examines the potential of wildlife as a source of meat for human consumption in Kenya and discusses the legal, operational and societal considerations of this form of wildlife utilization in the country. Further, it is a methodological contribution to applied wildlife management in Kenya by interrogating the relevance and applicability of the conventional Wildlife Attitudes and Values Scale (WAVS) as an empirical tool and conceptual aid in wildlife management research in the country.

Keywords: *Kenya, Wildlife, Meat Source, Food Security, Common Property*