

ASSESSMENT OF RANGELANDS DEGRADATION, ITS CAUSES AND IMPACTS ON HUMAN LIVELIHOODS: A CASE STUDY MBEERE SOUTH MAKIMA WARD

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ABSTRACT

Rangelands are areas in which the indigenous vegetation is predominantly grasses, grass-like plants, shrubs and arranged as a natural ecosystem. Rangelands degradation means the reduction in the rank and status of general plants and animals composition, energy flow and biomass of a particular ecosystem. Rangeland degradation is a major challenge in Kenya. Pastoralists utilizing degraded rangelands suffer from poverty and food insecurity. The aim of this study, therefore, was to investigate the effects of rangeland degradation in Mbeere South Sub-County, Embu County. The objective of the study was to identify the main indicators of land degradation in the area, assess the causes and impacts of land degradation on rangelands and also assess the potential methods for rangeland restoration. The study adopted the survey research design. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select respondents from the target population. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews. A target population of 30 households was interviewed and data analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS. The study provides crucial information on causes of rangelands degradation and contributes to the existing body of knowledge. The findings can be used by the local community and policymakers to address the challenge of rangeland degradation.