

Impacts of MPA on Coastal Communities, Resource Use Behaviour: Case of Mafia Island Marine Park, Tanzania

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Abstract

Despite various studies on biological importance of Marine Protected Areas (MPA), a model used in fisheries management to minimise negative human impacts on the marine environment, less is known on how it relates with communities that depend on the utilisation of fisheries resources. Through field survey, this study has investigated impacts of Mafia Island Marine Park (MIMP) on resource use behaviour of coastal communities to ascertain impacts of MPA management model. The study survey requested the information sources about community member's dependency on fisheries resources, their attitudes and perceptions towards the marine park and the management rules. Several resource-use restrictions including fishing and coral mining are introduced by the park, though the communities depend highly on the fisheries resources. Effects of the park vary with villages. The park is acknowledged for stopping dynamite fishing. An increasing trend of fish landings following park establishment is observed. Though communities support the park, there are concerns about alternatives to livelihood sources. A highly fisheries resource-dependent community strongly supports conservation but without alternative livelihood sources verifies difficulties in complying with the management regulations. Regardless of management regulations, community, dependency on fisheries resource influences their compliance to regulations, reflecting resource use behavioural change. MIMP has influence on resource use behaviour of Mafia coastal communities. Alternatives to livelihood sources, awareness and community involvement are important factors in instigating changes in resource use behaviour. Inclusion of community, dependency on fisheries resource and its solutions is essential in planning and preparations for the