

**This is an electronic reprint of the original article.**

**This reprint *may differ* from the original in pagination and typographic detail.**

**Author(s):** Yvonne Kiki Nchanjia; Sabaheta Ramcilovic-Suominen; Eileen Bogweh Nchanji; William Armand Mala and Juha Kotilainen

**Title:** Tackling Conflicts, Supporting Livelihoods: Convivial Conservation in the Campo Ma'an National Park

**Year:** 2023

**Version:** Publisher's version

**Copyright:** The author(s) 2023

**Rights:** CC BY 4.0

**Rights url:** <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

**Please cite the original version:**

Yvonne Kiki Nchanjia; Sabaheta Ramcilovic-Suominen; Eileen Bogweh Nchanji; William Armand Mala and Juha Kotilainen, 2023. Tackling Conflicts, Supporting Livelihoods: Convivial Conservation in the Campo Ma'an National Park. 12(1), 61-72. [https://doi.org/10.4103/cs.cs\\_30\\_22](https://doi.org/10.4103/cs.cs_30_22)

All material supplied via *Jukuri* is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights. Duplication or sale, in electronic or print form, of any part of the repository collections is prohibited. Making electronic or print copies of the material is permitted only for your own personal use or for educational purposes. For other purposes, this article may be used in accordance with the publisher's terms. There may be differences between this version and the publisher's version. You are advised to cite the publisher's version.

# Tackling Conflicts, Supporting Livelihoods: Convivial Conservation in the Campo Ma'an National Park

Yvonne Kiki Nchanji<sup>a,#</sup>, Sabaheta Ramcilovic-Suominen<sup>b</sup>, Eileen Bogweh Nchanji<sup>c</sup>, William Armand Mala<sup>d</sup>, Juha Kotilainen<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Geographical and Historical Studies, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

<sup>b</sup>Natural Resources Institute, Turku, Finland

<sup>c</sup>International Center for Tropical Agriculture Nairobi, Kenya

<sup>d</sup>Department of Plant Biology, University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon

<sup>#</sup>Corresponding author E-mail: [yvonne.nchanji@uef.fi](mailto:yvonne.nchanji@uef.fi)

## Abstract

While most of the literature on park management and nature conservation has focused on the negative implications for local people's livelihoods, fewer studies have empirically analysed local people's strategies in responding to these policies and renegotiating their position to continue their traditional livelihoods using their traditional knowledge and legal systems. This study contributes to the current literature on nature conservation by focusing on the impacts of nationally and internationally driven nature conservation policies on indigenous people and local communities (IPLCs) and collective strategies and responses to such policies and initiatives to continue their livelihood and cultural practices. We employ a qualitative research approach, using the convivial conservation theoretical lens to analyse the data collected. We conclude that conservation policies have worsened existing livelihoods and constrained the improvement of indigenous people's livelihoods and local communities. Yet, IPLCs have devised coping mechanisms to deal with the negative effects of these conservation interventions, which include resistance to some conservation policies, agricultural intensification, and involvement in commercial activities. We argue that the convivial conservation approach may offer viable solutions to existing conflicts by promoting human and non-human coexistence, based on indigenous and local people's knowledge and practices.

**Keywords:** Conservation Policies, National Park Management, Indigenous and Local People's Experiences and Livelihoods, Coping Strategies, Convivial Conservation.

## INTRODUCTION

The African continent is home to 25 per cent of the world's remaining rainforests (World Bank African Region 2017). Forests in the sub-Saharan region cover a surface area of

582 million hectares (Katerere et al. 2009). These forests harbour diverse plant and animal species supporting healthy and resilient ecosystems such as watersheds and biological diversity, which are crucial in providing food and medicines for their inhabitants (Duguma et al. 2019). More than 70 per cent of the population of the sub-Saharan region depends on forests for their subsistence, livelihoods, and income (World Bank African Region 2017). In Cameroon, forests make up around 22 million hectares, representing 46 per cent of the total land area. Forty-eight per cent of these forest areas has been classified as protected areas (FAO 2007). A growing number of development projects such as large-scale agricultural expansion, mining, infrastructure (roads, hydro energy, etc.), logging, urbanisation, and the exploitation of oil and gas

Access this article online	
Quick Response Code: 	Website: <a href="http://www.conservationandsociety.org.in">www.conservationandsociety.org.in</a>
	DOI: 10.4103/cs.cs_30_22

resources have placed more pressure on forests (Tchatchou et al. 2015), greatly affecting the livelihoods of those depending on forest resources for their everyday needs (Siewe et al. 2017).

Diverse approaches to forest and nature conservation have been adopted to curb the harmful effects of activities that contribute to deforestation and forest degradation, from traditional conservation policies that enforce strict regulations and laws to people-oriented policies (Jeanrenaud 1999; Mabele et al. 2022). Nature conservation arose during the European colonial project, which conserved nature for purposes such as hunting in colonised Africa and other parts of the world (Prendergast and Adams 2003). While nature conservation continued as a colonial legacy in the newly established African states, it re-emerged as an important international policy in the twentieth century, especially after the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD 1992) in 1993. One hundred and sixty-eight UN member states signed the CBD to reduce biodiversity loss (CBD 1992). Many countries have since almost doubled their protected areas to meet the treaty's goals and targets (Conniff 2018). Cameroon assigned 30 per cent of its national territory to protected areas by 2020, of which 23 per cent has been achieved (MINEPDED-6NR 2019).

Various conservation movements propose bold and ambitious principles for the future direction of conservation (Büscher and Fletcher 2020). Two opposing propositions especially are covered in the nature conservation literature—one promoting 'new' conservation methods (i.e. less emphasis on wilderness and pristine nature conservation and more embeddedness of the human component and development aspect of nature conservation), and the other calling for a return to protected area expansion and enforcement (the 'neo-protectionist' approach) (Soulé 2013; Holmes et al. 2017; Dudley and Stolton 2020). Several studies have critiqued these proposals for inadequately addressing the fundamental issues of past and present conservation approaches by insufficiently protecting the rights of indigenous people and local communities (IPLCs) and reinforcing the colonial conservation logic and domination of western scientific knowledge and state-led top-down approaches (Krauss 2022; Massarella et al. 2022).

More recently, convivial conservation has been proposed as a radical alternative to these conservation approaches (Büscher and Fletcher 2019, 2020). Convivial conservation calls for a shift from the mainstream conservation approach, which focuses on protected areas, to prioritising integrated spaces for human and non-human coexistence. In the convivial conservation approach, nature is not 'saved' from humans; they are part of the environment, depend on it, and contribute to it by engaging in agreeable mutual relations with the rest of nature. It proposes an alternative financial arrangement that addresses the root causes and injustices associated with market-driven financial support in traditional conservation policies. This in turn allows equal redistribution of existing wealth and resources (Büscher and Fletcher 2020). It also proposes a shift from an externally driven and technocratic management structure to more democratic and locally designed and owned governing arrangements (Büscher and Fletcher 2019, 2020;

Toncheva and Fletcher 2021; Toncheva et al. 2021).

Our research's focus on convivial conservation responds to the adverse effects protected areas for biodiversity conservation and various sustainable forest management schemes (Chazdon 2019; Demissie et al. 2019) have on IPLCs and their livelihoods in Cameroon (Tchindjang et al. 2005) and elsewhere (WWF 2018; Büscher and Fletcher 2019). We conduct our study in the Campo Ma'an National Park (CMNP) in Cameroon, created in 2000 under Decree 2000/004/PM as part of an environmental compensation scheme for the negative impacts on the environment and biodiversity of the Chad–Cameroon Oil Pipeline Project. According to the World Bank, which financed and supported the project, the Oil Pipeline Project will help alleviate poverty and improve the local population's livelihood (Ndumbe 2002). The World Bank's indigenous peoples (IP) policy requires that IPs do not suffer adverse effects during the development process of the projects it finances, and that they receive culturally compatible social and economic benefits. IPs are also expected to participate in the Development Plan (World Bank Operational Directive 4.20 2003). According to the World Bank's policies and principles, the indigenous Bagyeli peoples living in and around the CMNP should participate in its development plans and gain socioeconomic benefits from its operation. Instead, they have been excluded from baseline consultations (Nelson and Tchoumba 2004) and subsequent interventions.

According to Owono (2001), the indigenous Bagyeli people's living conditions worsened after the park's creation. Neba et al. (2009: 142) reiterate this in concluding that "it turns out the park and its people were the compensation, not necessarily the beneficiaries of the compensation," implying that the Chad–Cameroon Oil Pipeline Project benefited the multinational oil companies and government, with few benefits for IPLCs. The park's creation led inter alia to numerous conflicts between the park authorities and IPLCs (Tiani et al. 2010).

Cameroon's government introduced ecotourism as an alternative livelihood activity to rectify the conflicting goals between conservation and livelihoods in protected areas (Pyhälä et al. 2016; Sama and Molua 2019) while ensuring natural resource protection. However, most communities living in, and around protected areas are not involved in the design and planning of ecotourism activities (Harilal and Tichaawa 2018). Moreover, income generated from ecotourism activities has been inadequate as an alternative source of livelihood (Harilal and Tichaawa 2018). A growing body of literature (see Section 4.2) proposes convivial conservation practices as an alternative that is expected to reduce livelihood challenges, increase the participation and engagement of IPLCs, and reduce human-wildlife conflicts.

Inspired by the convivial conservation approach, this paper goes beyond outlining the negative impacts of the current nature conservation policies' to assessing coping strategies and responses of IPLCs to such policies and initiatives. We aim to answer three main research questions: 1) What are the lived

experiences of the IPLCs, as a result of forest management approaches a decade after the park's creation? 2) What are the impacts of nature conservation and park management policies on livelihoods? 3) What strategies have indigenous and local people developed to cope with these policies within their socioeconomic and political space?

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

We adopt the convivial conservation approach as a theoretical framework to examine how indigenous and local people in forest communities around the CMNP experience and negotiate everyday practices through various social interactions and relations, and how they develop coping mechanisms to sustain their livelihoods amidst the uncertainties arising from existing conservation policies and forest management practices.

Convivial conservation has its origins in Ivan Illich's *Tools for Conviviality* (Illich 1973). Büscher and Fletcher (2019, 2020) build on Ivan Illich's radical ideas about conviviality, hoping to advance the Anthropocene conservation debate by enabling a transition to postcapitalist conservation (Büscher and Fletcher 2020). This is an alternative to the neo-protectionist conservation approach, which states that the only way to save nature is to separate humans from non-human nature. The convivial conservation approach critiques nature protection that takes place through state-based protected areas and regulations (Soulé 2013) with little consideration for the resulting detriment to the human population relying on the forest (Büscher and Fletcher 2019). This strict biodiversity protection approach, often known as 'fortress conservation' (Robbins 2007), has frequently led to the displacement of vast numbers of IPLCs from forest areas that are now protected (Brockington and Schmidt-Soltan 2004).

The idea of 'pristine' nature and the requirement to protect it from humans has failed: species diversity continues to decline and livelihoods of IPLCs are worsening, with no alternatives to traditional livelihoods available. However, the drawbacks of nature conservation mean arrangements like coexistence and cohabitation are increasingly seen as viable alternatives to fortress conservation toward addressing the shortcomings of the technocratic and historical attempts to conserve biodiversity (Boonman-Berson et al. 2016; Büscher and Fletcher 2020).

Convivial conservation has five key principles (Büscher and Fletcher 2019, 2020). First, it calls for a shift from protected areas as the main form of conservation governance, the goal of which is to protect nature from humans, to prioritising integrated spaces that promote nature for, to, and by humans. Second, it proposes a discursive shift from the need to 'save' non-human nature from humans to recognising and celebrating human and non-human nature as an overarching whole. Third, it encourages long-term engagement with nature rather than short-term touristic wildlife voyeurism in protected areas. Fourth, it proposes a shift from the 'spectacle of nature' to a focus on interactions with everyday nature. Fifth, it proposes a shift from privatised expert technocracy to a

common democratic engagement that prioritises governance by indigenous and community groups. These five principles can be interpreted in three practical measures as follows: 1) integrated landscapes in which humans and non-human species can coexist; 2) more inclusive democratic forms of conservation decision-making that challenge elite technocratic management and the egalitarian distribution of economic resources; 3) financial arrangements, based on care rather than competition, which seek not to commodify conserved resources but to redistribute existing wealth and resources more equally (Büscher and Fletcher 2020; Massarella et al. 2022). Büscher and Fletcher argue that adherence to the above principles can create spaces for the coexistence of human and non-human species while addressing the socioeconomic and political factors shaping their interactions.

A growing body of research indicates that coexistence is possible and can reduce livelihood challenges and human-nature conflicts (Frank 2016; Toncheva and Fletcher 2021; Toncheva et al. 2021). Examples of coexistence range from mutual tolerance (Woodroffe et al. 2005) and peaceful cohabitation (Hinchliffe 2007) to active co-adaptation (Boonman-Berson et al. 2016; Carter and Linnell 2016) and conflict negotiation (Yurco et al. 2017). Frank (2016) describes the interface of conservation practice and local populations as moving beyond mitigation to coexistence, where "coexistence takes place when the interests of humans and wildlife are both satisfied, or when a compromise is negotiated to allow the existence of both humans and wildlife together" (Frank 2016: 739). Toncheva and Fletcher (2021) further look at the inherent power dynamics and economic interests that inform the processes of moving beyond conflict to coexistence.

A study by Toncheva and Fletcher (2021) addresses the question of transforming human-wildlife conflicts to coexistence through two cases in Bulgaria. The first case examines the coexistence of humans and bears, whereas the second examines conflicts resulting from their cohabitation; these two cases are also referred to as the landscape of tolerance and the landscape of fear, respectively. In the landscape of tolerance, local ecological knowledge of bear behaviour and traditional folklore promote a positive image of bears as symbols of fertility and power. The abundance of food supplies in the surrounding forests also reduces bears' interference in human livelihood activities. Furthermore, local people (hunters) are considered managers of bears. Circumstances in the other landscapes that inhibited human-bear cohabitation were a lack of tolerance by conservation experts and some local people of bears; a lack of participation by local people in policymaking regarding bears; financial losses due to crop and livestock damage by bears coupled with an insufficient state response.

Furthermore, convivial conservation criticises the use of market-based instruments, which are designed by and mainly benefit global and nation-state conservation actors (Matulis and Moyer 2017; Büscher and Fletcher 2020). To address the need to finance conservation, Büscher and Fletcher (2019, 2020) make several proposals for dealing with the issue of

uneven wealth and resource distribution. One such proposal was advocating for engaged visitations instead of ‘touristic voyeurism’. In addition, they propose an alternative finance mechanism called the conservation basic income (CBI). This funding scheme serves and promotes alternative livelihoods and local income to community members living in and around biodiversity-rich areas.

Although received enthusiastically by scholars, convivial conservation has also been critiqued by some who highlight the need to address some practical issues and gaps (Ampumuza 2022; Bocci 2022; van Bommel and Boonman-Berson 2022; Kiwango and Mabele 2022; Mabele et al. 2022). They point out that if conservation policy and science are to be genuinely transformative, convivial conservation should be explicit and proactive in addressing injustices grounded in scientific knowledge from the Global North (Ampumuza 2022). Second, convivial conservation’s emphasis on inclusiveness and participatory engagement has been criticised for the overrepresented involvement of people from international organisations in conservation initiatives. There is a call for a sharper focus on promoting locally derived initiatives based on local practices, knowledge, and legal systems (Bocci 2022).

Mabele et al. (2022) further highlight the need to devolve decision-making power to local people. They also fundamentally question the promotion of conservation areas to derive the radical and equitable alternatives to which convivial conservation aspires. Finally, in advocating ‘engaged visitation’ instead of ‘touristic voyeurism’, Kiwango and Mabele (2022) question the former’s applicability in Global South countries that rely on international tourism revenues. In addition, regarding the CBI scheme, they warn of unintended injustices that may arise. Ampumuza (2022) reiterates the risks

of further marginalising IPLCs with convivial conservation’s focus on engaging communities as recipients and actors rather than giving them the platform for alternative bottom-up schemes for conservation to emerge.

Convivial conservation may be unclear on the ‘how’, ‘who’, and ‘what’ of promoted areas concerning financing details, suggesting the need for the concept’s further development. Nonetheless, we engage with the ideas of the convivial conservation approach to examine whether and how it can lead to conflict resolution and alternative ways of supporting livelihoods and resilience in the case of the CMNP.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

The study was conducted in forest communities around the CMNP, situated at latitude 2° 21’ 0” N and longitude 9° 59’ 0” E in the southwestern part of the Republic of Cameroon. The CMNP shares boundaries with the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. Its surface area is 264,064 ha, and it is an integral part of the Technical Operational Unit (TOU) established in 1999. The TOU comprises the CMNP, forest management units (FMUs) for timber production, agro-industrial plantations, and a multiple-use agroforestry area devoted mainly to human activities.

While more than 150 communities surround the Campo Ma’an area, three communities (Nazareth, Mintom Centre, and Campo Beach) were chosen for this study as seen in Figure 1. Community selection for data collection was based on ethnicity and the main livelihood activity. The first community, Nazareth, comprises the indigenous Bagyeli people, who were initially hunters with a semi-nomadic lifestyle. The two other

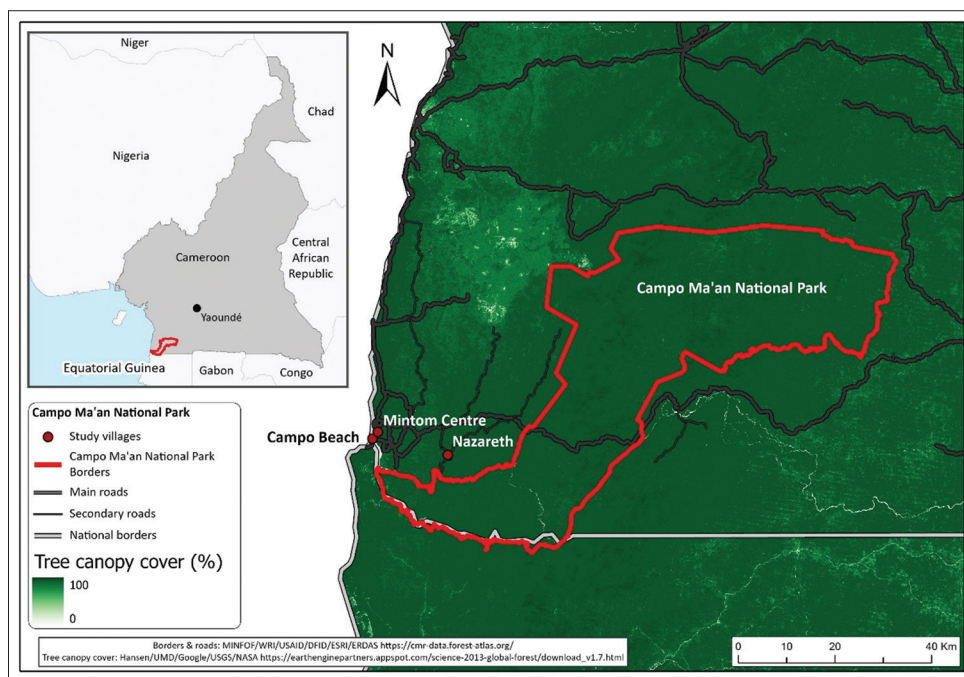


Figure 1  
Map of CMNP showing the study villages (Noora Rämö, 2018)

communities are non-indigenous people of Bantu origin. They differed in that one had a farming culture (Mintom Centre), and the other a fishing culture (Campo Beach).

Data were collected from primary and secondary data sources. The primary data sources included in-person key informant (KI) interviews with IPLCs who lived in the area before and after the park's creation and forest authorities who had implemented various forest management policies over the years. We remark here that focus group discussions (FGDs) bring together a homogeneous group of individuals from the community to discuss their personal experiences, beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes through moderated interaction. In this case, we were interested in how the IPLCs interacted with other stakeholders and negotiated access and use of forest resources before and after the park's creation. Such discussions were also used to validate responses from other methods (Nyumba et al. 2018). Meanwhile, semi-structured household interviews enable researchers to consider traditional and local knowledge, as well as people's experiences and contexts, in facing challenges within this space (Bryman and Burgess 1995). These methods resemble those of Häggström (2019) and Frechette et al. (2020), who examined lived experiences as a methodology and a way to express self in and through the forest, respectively. Based on qualitative research, the snowball sampling technique was used, in which existing subjects provided referrals to recruit future subjects for the research study (Naderifar et al. 2017).

Secondary data were obtained from archival sources. We obtained archival data from the Environment and Forestry Ministries in Yaoundé and the national park archives and electronic databases. Archival data were used to triangulate information from the primary database (Ventresca and Mohr 2017). Secondary data complemented primary data, which provided a better understanding of forest resource access and use by the IPLCs, forest resource management and its impact on livelihood, and peoples' experiences of park management and their ability to cope with changes affecting their livelihood activities. Participants in all communities and institutions were informed about the study's aim, and consent was sought before any interviews or discussions occurred.

Primary data were collected from 22 KI interviews, 12 FGDs, and 30 open-ended household interviews. KIs were selected using the snowball technique. Of the 22 KI interviews conducted, 15 KIs were from the communities, 5 KIs were government officials, and 2 KIs were World Wildlife Fund (WWF) staff. The five KIs from each community were selected based on their knowledge of the park's creation and forest management processes. The KIs were mainly chiefs and the elderly in the communities. Our interest was in understanding the community's experience of resource allocation, use, management, and livelihood options before and after the park's creation. The five government officials were selected and interviewed to understand how the park was managed, and whether communities benefited from the development and management projects carried out in the park. We also conducted two KI interviews with individuals

working with the WWF—a non-governmental organisation—to understand their views on and involvement in park management and its impacts on the community's livelihood.

Four FGDs were held in each community. Group discussions generally involved 8 people, disaggregated by sex and age ( $\leq 35$  years and  $>35$  years). Two FGDs were made up of only females and the other two of only males. There were no mixed groups. Separating FGDs by sex and age helped create an enabling environment for self-expression and prevented the different groups from influencing each other's answers, especially the voices of women and girls. Most importantly, it allowed an intersectional insight into the roles of men and women in using forest resources, and whether they were involved in the management and decision-making processes that affected their livelihoods. It also gave us an insight into the coping strategies developed by the local population to sustain their livelihood.

At the household level, open-ended questions were asked of household heads. Ten households were purposively sampled in each community. The prevalent patriarchal culture meant men were spokesmen for female-headed households and thus represented them. The questions for the household head revolved around household access to and the use of resources in the community, forest resource management, how it affected households' livelihoods, and the coping mechanism households developed to sustain their livelihood. A total of 30 households was interviewed.

Data were collected using an audio recorder with the respondents' consent. Fieldnotes and recorded interviews were later translated from French to English, and transcriptions were made using the f4 software package. The data transcribed were coded according to identified themes. The coded themes were used to better understand the livelihood activities of local and indigenous people—their access to and use of forest resources and their perception and experience of park management.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the following sections, Section 4.1 provides a historical overview of how policies and laws from the colonial era have shaped the current landscape and social realities in the CMNP. In 4.2, we focus on the effects of the conservation policies on the livelihoods of IPLCs, highlighting the coping mechanisms the communities use. We also explore the applicability of convivial conservation principles in the case of the CMNP to create better conservation and livelihood outcomes.

### CMNP as a Tool for Reproduction of Neo-colonial Conservation Policies

The indigenous people of the Bagyeli ethnicity and the non-indigenous people (Bantu ethnicity) are referred to as 'indigenous and local peoples' (IPLCs) in this study. The indigenous people (including the Bagyeli indigenous people) were the first occupants of the Central African rainforest (Thorbecke 1913; Bianchi 2004). Other ethnic groups such as the Bantu later migrated across Africa and established their

territories in forestry zones (Oyono 2005). After colonisation, first by the Germans and later by the French and British colonial powers, the colonisers became the legal owners of forests and land. Consequently, the IPLCs were denied their rights, including those of access, use, management, and decision-making (Diaw and Njomkap 1998).

This change resulted in disputes and conflicts, which continue today—more than 60 years after independence (Oyono 2005). After independence, the state of Cameroon adopted the land governance style of the colonial occupier, by taking control and ownership of all lands in the Ordinance, including: (i) n°74/1 of 6 July 1974 (RoC 1974: 4), (ii) Forestry Ordinance and Legislation of 1973 and 1981 (Ordinance n°73/18 of 22 May 1973, and Law n°81/13 of 27 November 1981). This legislation marginalised local and indigenous communities and enacted forest appropriation by the state (Olinga 2001). We infer that a fortress conservation approach was adopted, banning all human activity within protected areas. This resulted in the IPLCs losing control, management, and user rights of forest resources, enforcing the existing exploitative relationship imposed by the European colonial powers.

The various conservation policies enforced so far are as follows: the 1994 Forestry Law (RoC 1994) enacted to ensure the sustainable management and use of resources in the various ecosystems. This law established two forest categories: permanent and non-permanent forest estates. Although the 1994 forestry law recognises customary rights over land, trees, and forests, these rights are limited to usufruct rights exclusively for domestic use (Art. 8). Article 26 of the same law further states that these rights can be restricted or extinguished with or without compensation, depending on the forest category (RoC 1994). However, the law does not outline any comprehensive legal procedure for their application (Forest Legality 2013). It is implemented as deemed fit by the executing body—usually government authorities—for their interest. This exemplifies the degree of vertical power relations (Ramcilovic-Suominen and Kotilainen 2020; Nchanji et al. 2021), characterised by top-down state-centred management policies and practices, one stakeholder—the government authorities—has over another—the indigenous and local people—in the forest management process. Yet, it demonstrates the central characteristic of capitalism, in which powerful stakeholders control conservation policies for personal interest.

There is no straightforward procedure in the 1994 Forestry Law on institutionalising customary law. As such, its interpretation by the various forest management stakeholders differs in different situations, resulting in disputes (Forest Legality 2013). For example, there is no clear indication of the exact quantity of forest resources to be harvested for domestic consumption, so forest officials individually reshape these forest laws to meet their interests.

The results from all 96 respondents in all the FGDs and 30 of the 30 household interviews in all three villages revealed that communities' access to harvest resources had been restricted, meaning the quantity of resources harvested failed to meet domestic demand, negatively affecting people's

livelihoods. This is a top-down management approach, in which the people's voice is absent, and there is no continuous involvement of local people within initiatives building on local knowledge, as Bocci (2022) notes. The practices above further reinforce a hegemonic conservation worldview that originates in colonial times and is supported by neo-protectionists (Büscher and Fletcher 2020; Massarella et al. 2022).

In addition to the above State Forestry Legislation, at the CMNP level, the legislative framework elaborates a management plan that is renewable every five years (PNCM 2014). The management plan includes resource management objectives for recreation, tourism, and conservation, favouring the new conservation movement that promotes a market-based natural capital biodiversity approach (Büscher et al. 2012). This is consistent with the tourism funding conservation model in eastern and southern Africa (Lindsey et al. 2007). As proposed by the new conservationists, this conservation approach is a way of subjecting biodiversity to mainstream economic valuation as a solution to the environmental crisis (Kareiva et al. 2011, 2012). To address the tourism funding conservation model, the convivial conservation approach proposes a long-term engaged visitation instead of touristic voyeurism. However, as Kiwango and Mabele (2022) argue, such a proposal of engaged visitation can only be applied in the Global North, as countries in the Global South, like Tanzania and Kenya, heavily rely on international tourism revenues.

The 1994 forestry law failed to recognise indigenous rights; as such, another official document—a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF) and the indigenous Bagyeli people in Campo Ma'an—was drawn. The memorandum aimed to exercise indigenous people's user rights in the CMNP and its peripheral zones through participative management as part of the implementation of its management plan (MINFOF 2015). The MoU is expected to provide indigenous people with access to natural resources in the park under the control of the conservation authorities.

The fact that indigenous people's access or rights over resources continue to be controlled by the conservation authorities reveals unequal power relations in which both national and international conservation authorities and policy actors shape the regulation to manage resources for conservation purposes. By doing so, they define access and control over resources, often in their interests (Oyono 2006). Yet local people's interests, especially of marginalised indigenous and ethnic minority groups, remain excluded from decision-making regarding forest resource management, leading to their limited access to resources. This exclusion is also exacerbated by unfair rules and social-exploitative patron-client relationships (Daur et al. 2016). For example, governmental actors and private entities, often external to the sites, influence new management structures and arrangements that affect local politics, decision-making methods, and the very lives of local actors and vulnerable social groups (McDermott et al. 2019; Ramcilovic-Suominen and Kotilainen 2020).

### **How Convivial Conservation Can Inform the Current Conservation Practice and Possibly Transform Conservation Conflicts**

Postcolonial conservation policy interventions put in place by the government have constrained IPLCs from benefiting from forest resources. Studies have shown that before CMNP's creation, people's main livelihood activities were hunting, farming, fishing, and collecting non-timber forest products (Ashley et al. 2006). The Bantu people (Batanga, Mabea, and Yassa) closer to the coastal region were primarily fishermen, while those farther from the coast (Bulu, Mvae, Ntumu) were primarily agriculturists, as is the case with our study's two Bantu communities. The Mintom Centre community were traditionally farmers, while the Campo Beach community were fishermen. Meanwhile, Bagyeli's indigenous people (the Nazareth community) were primarily hunter-gatherers living a semi-nomadic lifestyle.

Results from 30 household interviews and 96 respondents in FGDs showed that the livelihoods of indigenous and local communities were continually diminishing as conservation regulations were imposed daily on them. The indigenous Bagyeli people have not only lost the legal right to their forests but their culture and identity, as they are expected to adopt a sedentary agrarian lifestyle. This neo-protectionist approach to conservation can increase the communities' socioeconomic problems by not addressing poverty and inequality in forest communities. Using the results from the household surveys, KI interviews, and FGDs, we present and discuss lived experiences concerning the IPLCs' adopted coping mechanisms. We also discuss a potential shift to rethinking landscapes where the ideas the convivial conservation approach suggests could provide an insight into the study area's local conservation realities.

#### *Managing human-wildlife conflicts*

The integrated landscape operationalised in the Campo Ma'an area made provision for a multi-use agroforestry area for human activities like agriculture. The majority of respondents during FGDs and interviewees complained that the portions of land cultivated were usually raided by wildlife from the park and their crops were destroyed with no compensation for damage. This statement from a household head in Mintom Centre supports this claim:

“When we plant our crops, wildlife from the park enters our farms when the crops have started growing and destroy everything. Not even the farm gardens close to the house are free from animal destruction. The animals aren't afraid. Yet we're told not to kill them. We've complained to the park authorities, but they do nothing to stop this. Are animals more important than human survival? Because these crops they occasionally destroy are for our survival.”

When asked what the park authorities were doing to resolve this, a government official KI said, “The 1994 forestry law is unclear on specific actions if animals destroy crops on farmland.”

However, section 82 of the 94/01 Forestry law states, “In cases where animals constitute a danger or cause damage to persons and property, the service in charge of wildlife may undertake to hunt them down under conditions laid down by order of the ministry in charge of wildlife.”

Further, section 83 of the same law states, “No person may be charged with breach of hunting regulations as concerns protected animals if his act was dictated by the urgent need to defend himself, his livestock, or crop.”

The 94/01 law is reiterated in section 13 of Decree 95/466 (RoC 1995). By inference from the above statement, the study deduced that the park authorities seemed to prioritise the protection of wildlife to the detriment of the livelihood of the IPLCs, thereby re-enforcing unequal power relations between the actors as laws were interpreted according to their own interests. Respondents in the Mintom Centre community referred to wildlife as ‘children of the government’, unlike them. The above quotation is reflected in the research by DeVore et al. (2019) on squatters on Bahia's southern coast, where one said they “protect jaguars but don't protect small farmers.”

The financial loss from wildlife crop damage without repercussions fuels IPLCs' negative image of wildlife and the government officials who protect it. Toncheva and Fletcher (2021) describe the same situation, in which the respondents accuse the government of an insufficient response to the damage bears cause to livestock, crops, and beehives. In the case of bears in Bulgaria, the compensation provided by the government did not meet the value of the damage. A compensation policy regarding wildlife damage on property and farmland in Cameroon should be developed in collaboration with IPLCs to avoid shortcomings, following the lessons learnt from the Bulgarian case (Toncheva and Fletcher 2021), cognisant of the specific sociocultural and economic context.

The proposed CBI as an alternative source of income for IPLCs is expected to equitably meet the basic needs of every individual in the community without conditionality, increasing their willingness to tolerate crop damage and provide them with resources like electric fences to protect their crops and reduce conflicts with wildlife. This will also create a space for respondents and forest conservators to discuss how to tackle further issues resulting from human-wildlife conflict and conservation.

While many scholars support the CBI alternative, they also caution that it could result in an excessive monetary valuation of wildlife, thereby contributing to further injustice (Ampumuza 2022; Kiwango and Mabele 2022). Hence, while alternative finance mechanisms can be transformative, both the political and economic contexts and local power relations need first to be addressed and even transformed for this to work.

#### *Power struggles and alternative income sources*

Non-timber forest product (NTFP) collection in the park is limited to domestic use, and NTFP commercialisation is prohibited by law. NTFP sales are possible only after obtaining



a sales permit from Yaoundé, which is a complicated and lengthy procedure for the locals (Ashley et al. 2006). The research participants did not understand why they needed a permit to sell NTFPs like *Irvingia gabonensis* (bush mango), which had always been at their disposal, especially when the NTFPs were collected from farmland and not the national park. The research participants were dissatisfied with the conservation policy, stressing that their loss of forest resource user rights contributed to hardship in their families.

Moreover, the lack of precision in regulations governing domesticated or wild NTFPs reveals that conservation policies inadequately address the socioeconomic issues arising from their implementation. Instead, it supports capitalist conservation by empowering the park authorities to provide and control exploitation permits. This can be redressed if people participate in making decisions regarding NTFP use and permits. Bocci (2022) advocates not only meaningful participation but the IPLCs' direct and continuous involvement for sustainable, just, and transformative participation. To cope with limited access to NTFP, which, if sold, would contribute positively to their livelihoods, the IPLCs seek alternative income sources. Using their traditional knowledge, indigenous people trade tree bark, leaves, and herbs of medicinal value within communities and with people from neighbouring towns.

Hunting as a livelihood activity for the indigenous Bagyeli and Bantu people after the park's creation is prohibited by law (Forestry Law 94/01, section 80). However, all the respondents divulged that 'bushmeat' was sold in local markets. This claim was corroborated by a KI from the Mintom Centre community. He said:

"When we set traps around our farms and catch the animals that destroy our crops, the forest guards seize the game, saying it is illegal to kill 'bushmeat'. So, if I kill an animal behind my house, is it in the park? The most annoying thing is after this bushmeat has been seized the next minute you'll see traders selling cooked bushmeat at the market square. I'd like to know if those selling cooked bushmeat are allowed to hunt and sell it, or if the bushmeat being seized from us is being sold to them to cook and sell."

The enforcement of the law regarding the sale of forest products is therefore inconsistent and favours those who sell bushmeat at local markets. As Ashley and Mbile (2005) put it, "rural economies are caught between framework legislation that lacks implementing guidelines or directives and enforcement officials whose informal interpretation and selective application of the law carry the deciding weight." This directly attracts the park authorities' capitalist interest. They disregard environmental justice, which favours IPLCs. As Duffy et al. (2016) suggest, hunting needs to be viewed more broadly, with conservationists examining what constitutes illegal hunting, what prompts people to hunt illegally, and how to address hunting instead of viewing it as a matter of legality or illegality. They suggest hunting needs to be understood from historical, social, and political contexts, as outlined by MacKenzie (1988).

The results from the 30 household interviews and 96 respondents in the FGDs show that fewer people are currently involved in hunting for fear of being caught and penalised. However, to cope with hardship, some households admitted to resisting government rules by camping and hunting at night in the forest. This claim is supported by a household head, who said:

"We camp and hunt at night in the forest as a strategy to hide the number of game animals from the conservation authorities, who seize the game if there are more than three animals – the number permitted for home consumption. This is because we aren't permitted to hunt as a livelihood activity."

From the park authority's perspective hunting is in this sense considered illegal and 'negative', because it goes against the regulations for the protected area. However, from some respondents' perspective, hunting is in this instance an act of survival because the activity generates more income than other livelihood activities. This finding corroborates Gandiwa (2011) and Nlom (2021), whose findings showed that local people received substantial income from illegal hunting and its trade.

In line with lessons learnt from the community hunting zone in the Lobeke National Park, which belongs to the Tri-National Sangha transboundary conservation complex in the north-western Congo Basin (Usongo and Nzoo 2008) in southeast Cameroon, our study proposes the creation of community hunting zones as one of the co-management options that would favour the real significance of IPLCs in sustainable hunting in the CMNP. This case is a learning laboratory, in which communities have been able to negotiate an allocation of community hunting areas within the park's space with co-management arrangements. Nevertheless, the challenge of examining the cost-benefit ratio of the Zone d'Intérêt Cynégétique à Gestion Communautaire (ZICGC) for communities remains.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER) introduced the Agricultural Investment and Market Development Project (PIDMA) as an alternative to hunting in 2017. It sought to train communities to ensure engagement in the forest and agricultural value chain in pursuit of a sustainable livelihood. Improved maize seedlings were made available to communities, and women's groups were trained in improved NTFP processing. However, these measures lasted less than a year, as the project, funding, and support ended abruptly in 2018.

In collaboration with WWF, the conservation authorities are developing the Kudu-Zambo gorilla habituation project, which exudes ecotourism potential and is seen as an alternative source of income for IPLCs. The project employs fewer than ten men as casual community workers to work as forest guides and trackers because of their knowledge and mastery of the forest in the national park area. During FGDs, all 96 respondents said this was another way to enrich the government, not them. This is in line with the argument that ecotourism is one of the new market-based instruments intended to merge environmental

conservation and economic development (Büscher and Fletcher 2020). Intergovernmental financial institutions have widely adopted this neoliberal approach to conservation with the aid of international conservation organisations like the WWF (as at our study site), which only creates more challenges for locals (Igoe and Brockington 2007; Büscher et al. 2012). This perceived ‘win-win’ situation never includes IPLCs, who are often not part of the business venture or earn little or nothing from it. A sustained engagement with IPLCs is necessary to ensure they benefit from initiatives in the long term.

#### *Rethinking conservation landscapes*

In Cameroon, the landscape concept was put into use as a TOU in 1999 for the enhancement of integrated landscape management within and outside protected areas (Chia and Sufo 2016). The Campo Ma’an TOU comprises the national park, FMUs, a state maritime estate, and a multi-use zone (ibid. 2016). The multiple-use agroforestry area was zoned for human activities like agriculture. However, the IPLCs complained that the land the park authorities allocated for farming activities outside the national park’s boundaries was noticeably small. As such, the crop yield cannot meet people’s food demand and income needs; indigenous and local people therefore seek more land for survival. This demand is consistent with redistributive land reform policies that foster human wellbeing (DeVore et al. 2019). It also ties in with the convivial approach that advocates the equitable distribution of existing resources and wealth (Büscher and Fletcher 2020). Locals are coping with limited land by engaging in agricultural intensification activities like fertiliser use. The results from all 96 respondents in the FGDs, 30 household interviews, and 15 KI interviews revealed some villagers were intensifying their agricultural activity by applying fertilisers on their farmland for a higher crop yield. However, this practice remains marginal because of IPLCs’ negative perceptions of agricultural products resulting from fertiliser use.

The findings concerning how agricultural practices are managed in the Campo Ma’an landscape are consistent with the fortress conservation movement, which prioritises the needs of non-human nature in forest resource management instead of promoting both the needs of non-human nature and the livelihoods of the human population relying on forest resources for survival. It challenges the idea that conservation is about saving non-human nature alone, emphasising the promotion of nature for, to, and by humans (Büscher and Fletcher 2020). To move towards a landscape of coexistence, the equitable redistribution of resources such as land that benefits nature and local people, who all depend on forest resources for their survival, will be necessary. One such proposal is the redistribution of land, so the IPLC has enough for farming without biodiversity losses. This is the reappropriation of physical space for collective use—what Shaw and Waterstone (2019) call the pursuit of geographic justice. This concept ties nicely with the convivial conservation approach of redistributive wealth and resources. It is associated with questions of ‘how’ this should be done,

‘who’ should be involved, and ‘what’ proportion should be controlled by whom.

To create a landscape of coexistence, a local initiative that can act as an alternative economic source for IPLCs will be necessary. This will require brainstorming among IPLCs and the submission of a proposal to the park conservator. If the development of a local initiative is impossible, an unconventional compensation mechanism that is not market-based can be adopted that reflects on the shortcoming of conventional compensation schemes—complex procedures, inadequate valuation of crop damage, and limited information, as explained by Toncheva and Fletcher (2021). This can be a short-term strategy for coexistence while the state and all other stakeholders brainstorm long-term solutions.

## **CONCLUSION**

The state and international conservation agency-driven management of the CMNP represents a twofold threat to the livelihoods of IPLCs and their sustainability owing to the park’s poor contribution to forest communities’ economic development. This maintains a cycle of tension and generates a poverty trap for IPLCs. Convivial conservation is considered an approach that can inform conservation policies and possibly provide solutions and address these conservation conflicts.

We draw on the existing literature on convivial conservation to draw examples and lessons learnt that could be adapted in the CMNP in Cameroon. Our analysis echoes other studies (Toncheva and Fletcher 2021; Toncheva et al. 2021) that show a shared landscape can be developed through integrated conservation spaces based on local traditional knowledge, management, and conservation practices humans derive from living in nature and coexisting with wildlife. This is enabled by IPLCs’ increased involvement in park development plans and activities instead of the superficial involvement in which the state-level authorities control the process, with little or no participation and decision-making power entrusted to local communities (Büscher and Fletcher 2020). Although democratic participation has been re-emphasised as an enabler for community-based conservation (Zheng et al. 2021), the IPLCs in our study area were informed of policies but uninvolved in their design or implementation. This in turn created despair and anger among local communities, as well as a lack of trust in the state authorities and conservation agencies.

The IPLCs criticised the Kudu-Zambo gorilla habituation project, developed by the state authorities and WWF as an alternative income source, for its insufficient benefits: job opportunities were limited to forest guides. We considered lessons learnt from various cases like community hunting grounds in the Lobeke National Park for our case. We found that community hunting grounds and agricultural and value addition projects co-designed with IPLCs could be sustainable.

The strength of convivial conservation lies in its focus on locally embedded problems and solutions based on traditional knowledge, its promotion of democratic participation and devolution of decision-making power to IPLCs,

and its shift from market-based instruments. Our paper restates both the importance of engaging with traditional knowledge and practices in policies, regulations, and formal management practices and the need to acknowledge and balance the livelihood needs of local communities in relation to conservation goals that are too often designed purely at an international level. Ultimately, this endeavour could also lead to better outcomes for the goals of conservation.

Moreover, drawing on examples and lessons learnt from the existing literature that could be adapted in the CMNP in Cameroon, mechanisms of convivial conservation such as CBI could be helpful to serve both as an alternative income source for IPLCs and as a compensation scheme for IPLCs for the destruction of farm products and other wildlife damage. Secondly, convivial conservation provides valuable insights in relation to human-wildlife conflicts/coexistence in that it proposes a shared landscape based on traditional knowledge, local management, and conservation practices that humans derive from living in nature and coexisting with wildlife.

#### Author contribution statement

\*Yvonne Kiki Nchanji: conceptualisation, methodology, data collection, data analysis, drafting of manuscript, writing-reviewing and editing, critical revision of manuscript, final approval of the version to be published.

\*Sabaheta Ramcilovic-Suominen: academic supervisor, conceptualisation, methodology, reviewing and editing, critical revision of manuscript, resources, final approval of the version to be published.

\*Nchanji Eileen Bogweh: co-author, methodology, reviewing and editing, critical revision of manuscript, resources, final approval of the version to be published.

\*William Armand Mala: co-author, reviewing and editing, critical revision of manuscript, resources, final approval of the version to be published.

\*Juha Kotilainen: academic supervisor, methodology, reviewing and editing, critical revision of manuscript, resources, final approval of the version to be published.

#### Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful for all helpful comments provided by the anonymous referees and the editor. Sabaheta Ramcilovic-Suominen gratefully acknowledges the Academy of Finland Research Fellowship Grant (no. 332353) which enabled her to provide contribute to this paper. We also express our thanks to the mapmaker, Noora Rämö. Lastly, we acknowledge the support of all respondents who in one way or the other made this work a success.

#### Declaration of competing/conflicting interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

#### Financial disclosures

Sabaheta Ramcilovic-Suominen gratefully acknowledges the Academy of Finland Research Fellowship Grant (no. 332353) which enabled her to provide contribute to this paper.

#### Research Ethics Approval

This research was conducted in alignment with the ethical guidelines of the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (TENK). Permission for conducting the research was sought and granted by the specific regional and divisional governments in our study areas in Cameroon. Respondents in all communities and institutions were informed about the aim of the study, and consent was sought before any interviews or discussions took place. During the research process, respondents were assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of the survey. Data collected and analysed were anonymised to ensure participant confidentiality.

#### REFERENCES

- Ampumuza, C. 2022. Living with gorillas? Lessons from Batwa-Gorillas' convivial relations at Bwindi Forest, Uganda. *Conservation and Society* 20(2): 69–78.
- Ashley, R. and P. Mbile. 2005. The policy terrain in protected area landscapes: How laws and institutions affect conservation, livelihoods, and agroforestry in the landscapes surrounding Campo Ma'an National Park and the Dja Biosphere Reserve, Cameroon. *Agroforestry in Landscape Mosaics Working Paper Series*. World Agroforestry Centre, Tropical Resources Institute of Yale University, and The University of Georgia.
- Ashley, R., D. Russell, and B. Swallow. 2006. The policy terrain in protected area landscapes: challenges for agroforestry in integrated landscape conservation. *Biodiversity and Conservation* 15(2): 663–689.
- Bocci, P. 2022. 'Rooting,' for change: the role of culture beyond resilience and adaptation. *Conservation and Society* 20(2): 103–112.
- Boonman-Berson, S., E. Turnhout, and M. Carolan. 2016. Common sensing: human-black bear cohabitation practices in Colorado. *Geoforum* 74: 192–201.
- Brockington, D. and K. Schmidt-Soltau. 2004. The social and environmental impacts of wilderness and development. *Oryx* 38(2):140–142.
- Büscher, B. and R. Fletcher. 2019. Towards convivial conservation. *Conservation and Society* 17(3): 283–296.
- Büscher, B. and R. Fletcher. 2020. *The conservation revolution: radical ideas for saving nature beyond the Anthropocene*. London: Verso Books.
- Büscher, B., S. Sullivan, K. Neves, et al. 2012. Towards a synthesised critique of neoliberal biodiversity conservation. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 23(2): 4–30.
- Bryman, A. and R. Burgess. 1995. Reflections on qualitative data analysis. In: *Analysing qualitative data* (eds. Bryman, A. and R. Burgess). London: Routledge.
- Carter, N.H. and J.D. Linnell. 2016. Co-adaptation is key to coexisting with large carnivores. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution* 31(8): 575–578.
- Chazdon, R.L. 2019. Towards more effective integration of tropical forest restoration and conservation. *Biotropica* 51(4): 463–472.
- Chia, E.L. and R.K. Sufo. 2016. A situational analysis of Cameroon's Technical Operation Units (TOUs) in the context of the landscape approach: critical issues and perspectives. *Environment, Development and Sustainability* 18: 951–964.
- Conniff, R. 2018. Selling the Protected Area Myth. *The New York Times*, 9.

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/09/opinion/protected-area-myth.html>. Accessed on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023.
- Convention on Biological Diversity. 1992. Text of the convention. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf>. Accessed on April 26, 2022.
- Daur, N., Y.O. Adam, and J. Pretzsch. 2016. A historical political ecology of forest access and use in Sudan: implications for sustainable rural livelihoods. *Land Use Policy* 58: 95–101.
- Demissie, F., K. Yeshitela, M. Rouleau, et al. 2019. Socioeconomic importance of forest resources and their conservation measures in Ethiopia: the case of area closure in South Gonder of Ethiopia. *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment* 191(7): 437.
- DeVore, J., E. Hirsch, and S. Paulson. 2019. Conserver la nature humaine et non humaine : un curieux cas de conservation conviviale au Brésil. *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 43(3): 31–58.
- Diaw, M.C. and J.C.S. Njomkap. 1998. La terre et le droit: une anthropologie institutionnelle de la tenure foncière au Sud Cameroun. INADES-Formation, Yaoundé Cameroun.
- Dudley, N. and S. Stolton. 2020. *Leaving space for nature: the critical role of area-based Conservation*. Abingdon & New York: Routledge.
- Duffy, R., F.A. St John, B. Büscher, et al. 2016. Toward a new understanding of the links between poverty and illegal wildlife hunting. *Conservation Biology* 30(1): 14–22.
- Duguma, L.A., J. Atela, P. Minang, et al. 2019. Deforestation and forest degradation as an environmental behavior: unpacking realities shaping community actions. *Land* 8(2): 26.
- Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. 2007. State of the World's Forest. FAO Report. Rome, Italy
- Forest Legality. 2013. Risk tool: Cameroon. <https://forestlegality.org/risk-tool/country/cameroon>. Accessed on May 13, 2022.
- Frank, B. 2016. Human–wildlife conflicts and the need to include tolerance and coexistence: an introductory comment. *Society and Natural Resources* 29: 738–743.
- Frechette, J., V. Bitzas, M. Aubry, et al. 2020. Capturing lived experience: methodological considerations for interpretive phenomenological inquiry. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 19: 1609406920907254.
- Gandiwa, E. 2011. Preliminary assessment of illegal hunting by communities adjacent to the Northern Gonarezhou National Park, Zimbabwe. *Tropical Conservation Science* 4(4): 445–467.
- Häggström, M. 2019. Lived experiences of being-in-the-forest as experiential sharing with the more-than-human world. *Environmental Education Research* 25(9): 1334–1346.
- Harilal, V. and T.M. Tichaawa. 2018. Ecotourism and alternative livelihood strategies in Cameroon's Protected Areas. *Euro Economica* 2(37): 133–148.
- Hinchliffe, S. 2007. *Geographies of Nature: societies, environment, ecologies*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Holmes, G., C. Sandbrook, and J.A. Fisher. 2017. Understanding conservationists' perspectives on the new-conservation debate. *Conservation Biology* 31(2): 353–363.
- Illich, I. 1973. *Tools for conviviality*. London: Marion Boyars
- Igoe, J. and D. Brockington. 2007. Neoliberal conservation: a brief introduction. *Conservation and Society* 5(4): 432–449.
- Jeanrenaud, S. 1999. People-oriented conservation: progress to date. In: *Partnerships for protection: new strategies for planning and management for protected areas* (eds. Stolton, S. and N. Dudley). P. 126. Earthscan, London.
- Katerere, Y., P.A. Minang, and H. Vanhanen. 2009. Making sub-Saharan African forests work for people and nature: policy approaches in a changing global environment. Nairobi, Kenya: World Agroforestry Centre.
- Kiwango, W.A. and M.B. Mabele. 2022. Why the convivial conservation vision needs complementing to be a viable alternative for conservation in the Global South. *Conservation and Society* 20(2): 179–189.
- Lindsey, P.A., P.A. Roulet, and S.S. Romanach. 2007. Economic and conservation significance of the trophy hunting industry in sub-Saharan Africa. *Biological Conservation* 134(4): 455–469.
- Mabele, M.B., J.E. Krauss, and W. Kiwango. 2022. Going back to the roots: Ubuntu and just conservation in southern Africa. *Conservation and Society* 20(2): 92–102.
- MacKenzie, J.M. 1988. *Empire of nature: hunting conservation and British Imperialism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Matulis, B.S. and J.R. Moyer. 2017. Beyond inclusive conservation: the value of pluralism, the need for agonism, and the case for social instrumentalism. *Conservation Letters* 10(3): 279–287.
- Massarella, K., J.E. Krauss, W. Kiwango, et al. 2022. Exploring convivial conservation in theory and practice. *Conservation and Society* 20(2): 59–68.
- McDermott, C., E. Acheampong, S. Arora-Jonsson, et al. 2019. Chapter 16 SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – A Political Ecology Perspective. In: *Sustainable development goals: their impacts on forests and people* (eds. Katila, P. C. Pierce Colfer, W. De Jong, et al.) pp. 510–540. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- MINEPDED. 2019. Sixth national report for the convention on biological diversity. <https://chm.cbd.int/database/record?documentID=238964>. Accessed January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023.
- MINFOF. 2015. Memorandum d'entente entre la ministere des forets et de la faune et les communautés autochtones Bagyeli de la zone de L'UTO Campo Ma'an. Unpublished document. Pp. 6.
- Naderifar, M., H. Goli, and F. Ghaljaie. 2017. Snowball sampling: A purposeful method of sampling in qualitative research. *Strides in Development of Medical Education* 14(3): e67670.
- Nchanji, Y.K., S. Ramcilovic-Suominen, and J. Kotilainen. 2021. Power imbalances, social inequalities and gender roles as barriers to true participation in national park management: the case of Korup National Park, Cameroon. *Forest Policy and Economics* 130: 102527. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forpol.2021.102527>
- Ndumbe, J.A. 2002. The Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline—hope for poverty reduction? *Mediterranean Quarterly* 13(4): 74–87.
- Neba, G.A., J. Nguiebouri, A.M. Tiani, et al. 2009. Changing management direction in Campo-Ma'an. In: *In search of common ground: adaptive collaborative management in Cameroon* (eds. Diaw, M.C., R. Prabhu, and T. Aseh). Pp. 139–156. Bogor, Indonesia: Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR).
- Nelson, J. and B. Tchoumba. 2004. Pipelines, parks, and people: Bagyeli document land use near Campo Ma'an National Park. *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 28(1).
- Nlom, J.H. 2021. A bio-economic analysis of conflicts between illegal hunting and wildlife management in Cameroon: The case of Campo-Ma'an National Park. *Journal for Nature Conservation* 61: 126003.
- Nyumba, T., K. Wilson, C. Derrick, et al. 2018. The use of focus group discussion methodology: insights from two decades of application in conservation. *Methods in Ecology and Evolution* 9(1): 20–32.
- Olinga, J.J. 2001. Synthèse des Outils Légaux Relatifs à la Gestion des Forêts au Cameroun. Unpublished consultancy report, CIFOR, Yaoundé.
- Owono, J.C. 2001. Case Study 8 Cameroon - Campo Ma'an. The Extent of Bagyeli Pygmy Involvement in the Development and Management Plan of the Campo Ma'an UTO. Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas in Africa. <http://www.forestpeoples.org/sites/default/files/publication/2010/08/camerooncampomaaneng.pdf>. Accessed on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- Oyono, P.R. 2005. The foundations of the conflict de langage over land and forests in southern Cameroon. *African Study Monographs* 26(3): 115–144.
- Oyono, P.R. 2006. Local players, representations and “politics” of eco-power in rural Cameroon since 1994. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 27(2): 163–185.

- PNCM. 2014. Plan d'Aménagement du Parc National de Campo-Ma'an et de sa Zone Périphérique. Technical Report.
- Prendergast, D.K. and W.M. Adams. 2003. Colonial wildlife conservation and the origins of the Society for the Preservation of the Wild Fauna of the Empire (1903–1914). *Oryx* 37(2): 251–260.
- Pyhälä, A., A. Osuna Orozco, and S. Counsell. 2016. Protected areas in the Congo Basin: failing both people and biodiversity? London: *Rainforest Foundation-UK*. Ramcilovic-Suominen, S. and J. Kotilainen. 2020. Power relations in community resilience and politics of shifting cultivation in Laos. *Forest Policy and Economics* 115: 102159. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forpol.2020.102159>
- Republic of Cameroon (RoC). 1994. Loi n°94 du 20 Janvier 1994 Portant Régime des Forêts, de la Faune et de la Pêche. Les Editions de l'Imprimerie Nationale, Yaoundé.
- Republic of Cameroon (RoC). 1974. Régime foncier et domaniale: ordonnances no 74-1, 74-2 et 74-3 du 6 Juillet 1974. Les Editions de l'Imprimerie Nationale, Yaoundé.
- République du Cameroun (RoC). 1995. Décret N° 95-466-PM du 20 juillet 1995 fixant les modalités d'application du régime de la faune. République du Cameroun, Yaoundé, Cameroun.
- Robbins, P (ed.). 2007. Fortress conservation. In: *Encyclopedia of environment and society*. P. 705. SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412953924.n432>.
- Sama, G.L. and E.L. Molua. 2019. Determinants of ecotourism trade in Cameroon. *Natural Resources* 10(6): 202–217.
- Siewe, S., J.M. Vadjunec, and B. Caniglia. 2017. The politics of land use in the Korup National Park. *Land* 6(1): 7.
- Soulé, M. 2013. The new conservation. *Conservation Biology* 27: 895–897.
- Tehatchou, B., D.J. Sonwa, S. Ifo, et al. 2015. Déforestation et dégradation des forêts dans le Bassin du Congo: État des lieux, causes actuelles et perspectives. Papier occasionnel 120. Bogor, Indonésie: CIFOR. [https://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf\\_files/OccPapers/OP-120.pdf](https://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf_files/OccPapers/OP-120.pdf). Accessed on April 26, 2022.
- Tchindjang, M., C.R. Banga, A. Nankam, et al. 2005. Mapping of protected areas evolution in Cameroon from the beginning to 2000: lessons to learn and perspectives. In: *Proceedings of the 22nd International Cartographic Conference*. Pp. 9–16.
- Tiani, A.M., G. Akwah, and J. Nguiebouri. 2010. Women in Campo-Ma'an National Park: uncertainties and adaptations in Cameroon. In: *The equitable forest*. Pp. 147–165. Routledge.
- Toncheva, S. and R. Fletcher. 2021. Knowing bears: an ethnographic study of knowledge and agency in human–bear cohabitation. *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 5(2): 1–23.
- Toncheva, S., R. Fletcher, and E. Turnhout. 2021. Convivial conservation from the bottom-up: human–bear cohabitation in the Rodopi mountains of Bulgaria. *Conservation and Society* 20(2): 124–135.
- Usongo, L. and Z. Nzooh. 2008. Case Study 2: Protected areas land use planning: lessons learned from the Lobéké National Park. [https://carpe.umd.edu/sites/default/files/documents/lessons\\_learned/lessons\\_learned\\_chapter2\\_case\\_study2.pdf](https://carpe.umd.edu/sites/default/files/documents/lessons_learned/lessons_learned_chapter2_case_study2.pdf). Accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022.
- van Bommel, S. and S. Boonman-Berson. 2022. Transforming convivial conservation: towards more-than-human participation in research. *Conservation and Society* 20(2): 136–145.
- Ventresca, M.J. and J.W. Mohr. 2017. Archival research methods. *The Blackwell companion to organizations*. (ed. Baum, J.A.) pp. 805–828. Blackwell Publishers.
- World Bank African Region. 2017. Forest, Trees and Woodlands in Africa: An Action Plan for World Bank Engagements. Report 73026.
- World Bank Group. 2003. Implementation of Operational Directive 4.20 on indigenous peoples: an evaluation of the results, World Bank Group. <https://policycommons.net/artifacts/1442995/implementation-of-operational-directive-420-on-indigenous-peoples/2074170/>. Accessed on January 23, 2022. CID: 20.500.12592/d8cb0g.
- World Wildlife Fund. 2018. Living Planet report 2018: aiming higher. (eds. Grooten, M. and R.E.A. Almond). WWF, Gland, Switzerland.
- Zheng, B., M. Li, B. Yu, et al. 2021. The future of community-based ecotourism (CBET) in China's protected areas: A consistent optimal scenario for multiple stakeholders. *Forests* 12(12): 1753.