Abstract

The major threat facing conservation of wildlife within and outside protected areas presently is the continuous loss of wildlife corridors and dispersal areas. This is as a result of increase in human settlements and the introduction of land uses which conflict with conservation activities in areas that were once not settled or had minimal human population. This study sought to unveil how sound wildlife conservation and co-existence between humans and wildlife can be promoted with a view of making local communities conserve and benefit from wildlife resources in and out of protected areas. Key issues addressed in the study included resource use conflicts as well as problems that constrain effective community participation. Study findings indicated that wildlife corridors have been invaded by the local community due to population pressure and the search for alternative livelihoods thereby promoting conflicts. There is also minimal involvement of communities in the planning and management of Meru National park, dispersal areas and wildlife corridors. It was further established that lack of direct benefits from conservation hindered active community participation. The study has provided an integrated conservation model and use of zoning as a land use planning approaches to spatial conflict resolution. Intensifying environmental education and multiple resource use approaches such as ecotourism where communities can access the benefits for protecting wildlife and their habitats to meet their needs should also be enhanced.