

Determinants of Attitudes and Perceptions on Resource Use and Management of Marsabit National Reserve, Kenya**Mohamed G. Shibia***Department of Natural Resources Management, Kenya Agricultural Research Institute National Arid lands Research Centre, P.O. Box 147, Marsabit, Kenya**Telephone: 254 69 2040, 254 722916149, Fax: 254 69 2220**E-mail: schibier@yahoo.com, mohamedshibia@gmail.com***KEYWORDS** Attitude. Perceptions. Wildlife Damages. Benefits

ABSTRACT The establishment of protected areas had negative consequences on local communities. The shift in conservation resulted in restriction of access to resources, disruption of local culture and economies by tourists, increased predation on crops and livestock and displacement of inhabitants. A survey was undertaken to determine relationship between respondent's socio-economic characteristics and their attitudes and perceptions towards protected area conservation, determine the effect of wildlife benefits and their associated cost on attitudes and perceptions and determine if respondent attitudes and perceptions was affected by proximity of their residence to Marsabit National Reserve. One hundred eighty-seven households were selected through stratified random sampling and surveyed using questionnaire composed of both open and closed ended questions. Information acquired was triangulated through informal interviews, field observations and focused group discussions. Cross-tabulation using Pearson Chi-square test controlled for selected variables were used to determine differences between independent variables and attitudes. The sex and conservation awareness do not affect respondent attitudes while age, level of education, economic activities, wildlife benefits accrued and damages, restricted use of wildlife resources and distance from the reserve significantly affected the attitudes. In addition, age significantly affected the perceptions of the benefits accrued from the reserve while wildlife damage significantly related to economic activities. It is recommended to consider level of education, economic activities, and age of respondents and increase wildlife benefits to foster community based wildlife management.