CONSERVATION PRACTICES, COMMUNITY BASED ECOTOURISM POTENTIALS AND CHALLENGES OF CHEBERA CHURCHURA NATIONAL PARK, ETHIOPIA

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Abstract
In the world of persistent poverty, increasing resource use and climate change, conservation challenges seem overwhelming. The main purpose of this study is to assess Chebera Churchura National park Community Based Ecotourism Potentials, conservation practices and challenges. In this paper we used empirical evidences collected from Chebera Churchura National park as case study. The potentials of the park for Community based ecotourism were assessed by modified Ecotourism Opportunity Spectrum model. Beyond its conservation objectives and potential for Ecotourism, its conservation practices were mired by human wild life conflict, insignificant contribution to livelihood diversification, growing interest of exploiting the minerals discovered, low current market potentials, and prioritizing wild life protection instead of the community. Indeed, the potential of the park should be utilized and promoted as a strategy to alleviate poverty, diversify livelihood and safeguard biodiversity.

Introduction

In the world of persistent poverty, increasing resource use and climate change, conservation challenges seem overwhelming (McShane *et al.*, 2011). Given differences among regions of the world, 60% of ecosystem services have been degraded worldwide born disproportionately by the poor affected by multiple drivers and pressures (Millinnium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). Habitat loss and degradation, overexploitation, alien invasive species, climate change and pollution

are the principal pressures on biodiversity (Agard *et al*.,2012) even though human-forced climate change aggravates biodiversity loss (Segan *et al.,* 2016). Despite ecosystem service degradation and biodiversity loss, around 13 % of land in developing countries is protected (UNEP-WCMC, 2011). The rapid growth for biodiversity conservation and welfare improvement (Naughton-treves, Holland and Brandon, 2005) constitutes a country's key policy strategy to conserve and govern biodiversity resources (Zimmerer *et al*., 2004) implying protected areas are the strategy to minimize habitat loss and lessen species extiction and reduction rates. Becoming a strong political objective worldwide, community based management of protected areas in many African countries resulted in mixed outcomes (Kaltenborn *et al.*, 2008) having strong implications on the livelihoods of communities relying on nature around protected areas.

Even though 15 % of Ethiopia's land is protected (Biodiversity Indicators Development National Task Force, 2010), most of these protected areas (PA's) do not have legal status and are inadequately protected (Ethiopian Institute of Biodiversity, 2014). This may be due to the disproportionate cost of life within or near PA's with increased crop raiding, livestock predation, and decreased access to natural resources (Adams and Hutton, 2012). However, PAs are an important place for safeguarding biodiversity (Costas *et al*., 2003). PAs are intended to preserve biodiversity by limiting human activities(Kramer et al., 1997; Terborgh, 2000) and promoting sustainable use strategies (Janzen, 1999; Wells and Brandon, 1992). However, recently, decentralization of natural resource management to empower the indigenous community and integrate local community's interest with the natural resource is vital in the era of depleting natural resources. Decentralized conservation sometimes fails because of central government's reluctance to decentralize resource or power and the marginalization of the local community from decision making by the elites (Lane, 2003; Larson & Soto, 2008). As a tool to protect biodiversity and an option for sustainable development Scheyvens (1999), Stronza and Gardillo, (2008) argue that Community Based Ecotourism (CBET) should contribute to environmental conservation, generate new source of income, and promote traditional culture and way of life. Moreover, the role of ecotourism in conservation process varies among countries and is subject to the influence of distance from markets, mode, accessibility and uniqueness of the area under question (Gössling, 1999).

Even though ecotourism is synergy to biodiversity conservation and community's interest while educating and entertaining the visitors, its development is at its infant stage in Ethiopia comparable to its global annual overall growth rate

of 4% to 30%. With the rapid annual average growth rate of Ethiopian tourism (12%), the visitation to some of the protected areas is limited and insignificant particularly when it comes to the newly established national parks due to nonexistent marketing, limited protected area network, and inappropriate facilities that suits the needs and wants of tourists. However, ecotourism development relies on the successful strategies to inform and educate both visitors and locals and to manage and control the areas efficiently and effectively (Gössling,1999).

Regardless of its potential for ecotourism development, Ethiopia's community based ecotourism establishment and its promotion is limited to few destinations and sometimes difficult to identify whether it is ecotourism destination or not. In some cases, it seems ecotourism by its establishment but conventional tourism (for instance, Hawassa Ecotourism project, Wenchi community Based Ecotourism). And it might be lacking knowledge and understanding of the concept of ecotourism (Ahmad, 2014). However, decentralized conservation proponents argue that it promotes inclusive and legitimate decision making system, creates accountability, minimizes costs, and diversifies local livelihoods (Agrawal & Gupta, 2005 ; Larson & Soto, 2008). Moreover, research shows that the empowerment of local communities dependent on nature in biodiversity conservation and the utilization of indigenous knowledge is more beneficiary in creating a sense of ownership and sustaining the nature.

In this study we use empirical evidences collected from Chebera Churchura National park as a case study. The park was established as national park in 2005 under the governance of South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional state (SNNPRS) primarily to safeguard the declining number of elephants. Before it got upgraded to national park, it was called a Kulo Konta open hunting area. So far, most research done on Chebera Churchura national park focused on abundance and diversity of avian fauna and human wild life conflict (Acha and Temesgen, 2015 ;Datiko and Bekele, 2013; Dereje, 2006). The paper at hand discusses conservation practices and challenges of the park from the views of participatory approach to biodiversity conservation. And it also discusses Community Based Ecotourism potential of the park. The paper argues that the consequences of exclusionary conservation approach with implication for the role of participatory approach for conservation in the area of people are dependent on nature.

Materials and Methods

Description of Study Area

Chebera Churchura National Park (CCNP) is located between Dawuro Zone and Konta Special district of SNNPRS about 300 and 580 Km south west of Hawassa and Addis Ababa respectively (Fig.1). The park covers 1,278 Km^2 of land and comprises of unique attractive mountains, closed forest, tall grassed savannah and thick wood land forest. The park provides a protected habitat to 37 larger mammals and 237 species of birds. Besides, White -cliff Chat, Wattled Ibis, Black - headed forest Oriole and Thick Billed Raven are endemic birds to Ethiopia found in CCNP (Timer, 2005; Weldeyohanes, 2006). On the other hand, the park provides a protected habitat to common mammals including African Elephant, Hippopotamus, Cape buffalo, Lion and Leopard with fascinating and highly rugged, undulating, rolling plains, hilly and mountainous land covered by vegetation throughout the year (Demeke and Afework, 2013).

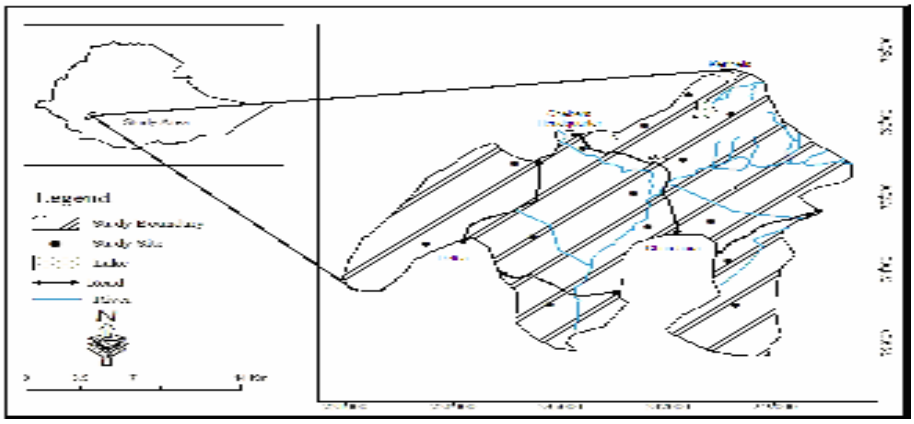

Figure 1. Map of Ethiopia indicating Chebera Churchura National Park

Source: Adapted from Timer cited in Demeke and Afework, 2013

Methods

CCNP conservation practices and challenges and park's potential for Community based ecotourism were examined. Given the purpose of the study, case study design was employed. It is the most flexible, allowing the researcher to retain

the holistic characteristics of real-life events while investigating empirical events (Nelson and Martin, 2013). It is particularly appealing for applied disciplines since processes, problems, and/or programs can be studied to engender understanding that can improve practice (Ponelis, 2015). Case study can also be used in the detailed analysis of phenomenon from the intensive exploration of a single case with the assumption that the conduct of the study will be guided by what they see in the field (Becker ,1970; Zainal, 2007). As a result, before the empirical fieldwork was carried out, secondary data was reviewed. The field research was carried out between December 2015 and May 2016. Various tools were employed in several stages of data collection. Primarily, observation, key informant interview**,** Focused Group Discussion and field trip in and around the park were carried out.

We used findings obtained at this stage to develop semi-structured questionnaires. In the second stage of data collection, a random sample of 196 households form 11 villages were surveyed based on their proximity and interaction with Chebera Churchura National park through proportionate stratified sampling technique (Table 1). Besides, focused group discussions and interviews were held with 58 respondents including community leaders, experts, officials and guards of the park. Focused group discussions were held with 36 participants selected from each village based on their knowledge about the park and tourism. As a result, the villages were divided into 4 groups according to their proximity to one another with one group consisting of three villages. Each group consists of 12 participants. Furthermore, interview was held with 22 interviewees.

As a result, households were asked to rate their attitude towards conservation practices, their level and means of participation in conservation practices and tourism activities of the park on a five point likert-scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. They were also asked to describe and identify Challenges to the Park. Quantitative data were analyzed by the use of SPSS version 20. Besides, qualitative data were analyzed through transcription and text explanation based on the techniques of listening and transcription, reduction to units of relevant meaning and summarization.

The potential of CCNP for CBET was evaluated based on Ecotourism Opportunity Spectrum (ECOS) with modification by researchers by adapting from Boyd & Butler (1996). However, ECOS model was developed as a conceptual management approach for ecotourism destinations (Boyd & Butler, 1996). Despite differences in the usage of this model, the criterion used in the model can be used in community based ecotourism potential assessment. The potentials of the park was

assessed in terms of access, other resource related activities, attractions offered, existing infrastructures, social interaction, level of skill and knowledge, acceptance of visitor impacts, and acceptance for a management regime.

Table 1: *Sample size for house hold survey*

Villages	Population size of villages	Sample size	Location
Menta Guchile	5568	35	Tocha district
Chawuda	815	5	Esara district
Gudimu	3821	25	Esara district
Tulama	613	4	Esara district
Churchura	2253	14	Esara district
Ada Becho	1566	10	Esara district
Cheta	2365	15	Esara district
Nada	5887	37	Esara district
Seri Shewa	1194	8	Esara district
Delba	2964	19	Konta special district
Chebera	3695	24	Konta Special district
Total	30741	196	

Note: Key: 43 households were participant on the study from Konta Special District whereas the remaining households were from Esara district of Dawuro Administrative zone for household survey.

. **Results and Discussions**

Demographic Characteristics

Socio –demographically, the sample compromised the diverse sample with 78.6% male and 21.4% women. Approximately, more than half (52%) were adult (35-45 age group) followed by 25-35 age group (22.4%), 45-55 age groups (15.3%) and 18-25 age groups (10.2%). On the other hand, the respondent's livelihood option was Agriculture (84.7%), Trade (10.7%), tourism (1.5%), and salary (3.1%).

Potential of the Park for Community Based Ecotourism (CBET)

CCNP has a high potential of ecotourism products possessing high topographic variety, authentic (natural) leisure activities, diversified wild life, cultural and archaeological values, and unique beauty. However, the park lacks fundamental ecotourism facilities i.e. road, accommodation and others. There is also low supply of basics like food, medical treatment, clean water, communication and others that can support ecotourism development and create strong multiplier effect on the economy of the community.

Furthermore, the type of management developed for the long term protection of the park was an early fortress approach. However, there was a little attempt to involve the local community in the management process with a full empowerment of the locals only in a single village (Seri Shewa Village). Despite its naturalness, environmental education and interpretation were nonexistent. There were no sign post, guides and other environmental education tools for conservation purposes. For many reasons the traditional life style and natural resources in the area were also significant. Wildlife safari, wild coffee tourism, trekking, wild life watching, forest exploration, nature photography, and conservation mountaineering are among the potential ecotourism products of the park despite its underutilization.

As a means to conserve biodiversity, national parks are the best places to establish community based ecotourism for conservation purpose while diversifying local livelihoods. As a result, ecotourism has a comparative advantage to become a driver for rural development if developed in non-industrialized and peripheral areas (Boo, 1990; Sebahat and Aciksoz ,2010) . But, ecotourism development in peripheral areas needs extra support (Che ,2006). Extra support is very important where there is no potential ecotourism market. It is also important because there are no facilities and marketing activities to enhance the role of ecotourism in sustaining community's benefits and biodiversity conservation.

Table 2**:** *Ecotourism potential evaluation result of CCNP using Ecotourism Opportunity spectrum model*

		Evaluation Criteria	**Weights**				
			1	2	3	4	5
1.	Ecotourism attractions and products	Landscape characteristics (Topographic attractiveness and diversity , ecosystem uniqueness)	✓ ✓ ✓				
		Naturalness of leisure activities	✓				
		Wild life variety	✓				
		Cultural and archaeological values and indicators	✓				
		Unique beauty	✓				
2.	Availability of tourism infrastructure	Fundamental ecotourism facilities (accommodation, and others)					✓
		Availability of basic supplies (food, clean water, medical facilities and others)					
		Accessibility					

3.	Type of management developed for long term protection of the park	Community participation in the management					
		Environmental education and interpretation					
		Human resources (guides, etc.)					
4.	Social interaction	Hospitality of the community	✓				
		Interaction with the community					
5.	Relationship of ecotourism to other resources	Agriculture					✓
		Trade					✓
6.	Rarity	Unique or special resources both cultural and natural resources					

Note: 1: Excellent 2: Very Good 3: Good 4: Fair 5: Very poor

Source: Own survey

Even though eco tourists do not demand sophisticated facilities, it is better to position, promote and develop unique features of a particular destination in the way that suits eco tourists.

Challenges to Conservation Practices of the park

Human-wildlife conflict. In order to assess the causes of human wild life conflict (HWC) in CCNP, survey was carried out. As a result, the main causes of human wild life conflict in CCNP were Crop raiding (M=4.85: Std. =.56) and competition for game and/or resources (M=4.2959: Std. =1.12), followed by

killings of human beings (M=3.7500: Std. =1.64),), livestock depredations (3.3878: Std. = 1.29), and lack of access to conservation related benefits (M=2.9439:Std. = 1.55) (Table 3). Muruthi (2005) also explained that crop and livestock predation is a primary driver of human-wildlife conflict as a problem that threatens the coexistence of people and wildlife globally. Nowadays, Human–wildlife conflict is one of the most critical threats facing many wildlife (Dickman, 2010). Human-wildlife conflict has exerted considerable impact on the attitude of the community towards biodiversity. Moreover, the direction and magnitude of protected areas' effects both on local communities and on the environment are uncertain (Corral *et al.*, 2016). As a result, Focused Group Discussion with the community shows HWC in CCNP changed the attitude of the community towards CCNP.

For instance, African Buffalo was considered as the main threat to human life and crop around CCNP (Table 4). It makes children and women not to go out of their home by sleeping in their garden. This is similar to an experience an elder man reported saying: "a buffalo detached from its group/heard is sleeping in my garden and my neighbors were killed by its attack. This made us feel that except the wildlife, our needs and concerns are irrelevant in the park." Moreover, human–wildlife conflicts are often manifestations of underlying human–human conflicts, such as between authorities and local people, or between people of different cultural backgrounds (Dickman, 2010). The damages caused by wildlife have affected the day to day activities of people and there has been a query regarding the humanitarian value and wildlife welfare (Rakshya, 2016).

Table 3 **:** *The Mean Score of Causes to Human Wild Life Conflic*

Causes of human wild life conflict	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Lack of access to conservation-related benefits	196	2.9439	1.54983
Competition for game and/or resources	196	4.2959	1.12052
Human death and injury	196	3.7500	1.64356
livestock depredation	196	3.3878	1.29006
Crop raiding /damage	196	4.8520	.55797

Note: **M= Mean; StD= Standard Deviation**

Source: Survey, 2016

Indeed, the community is developing negative attitudes towards the conservation practices of the park. Conflicts between humans and wildlife increase with the expansion and growth of human populations, farming frontiers, and housing (Naughton-Treves et al. 2003; Thouless & Sakwa 1995; Torres et al. 1999). Competitions have also been stiffened as a result of close relationship between human being and wildlife due to the sharing of resources like space, habitats, and food for a long time. The study of Datiko and Bekele (2013) on CCNP also confirmed that community had developed negative attitude towards animals leading to change in public attitude from supporting conservation efforts to considering wild animals as a threat to their life. Peoples' attitudes towards wildlife are complex with social factors as diverse as religious affiliation, ethnicity and cultural beliefs all shaping conflict intensity (Dickman, 2010). This also implies human wildlife conflict not only affects the relationship between human being and wildlife but also erodes the relationship among park authorities, conservation organizations and the community. In Ethiopian legal context also, there is no compensation scheme and policy for human injury and death by wildlife and vice versa. Financial incentives (compensation, insurance, revenue sharing or others) are nonexistent.

Table 4: *Summary of interview and FGD on reasons of people's conflict with wild lives*

No.	Wildlife name	Reason for conflict with human being
1.	African Buffalo	Crop raiding and invasion of human being
2.	Elephant	Crop raiding and invasion of human being
3.	Lion	Invasion of human being and livestock
4.	Vervet Monkey	Crop raiding /damage, sometimes threats to sheep
5	Anubis Baboon	Crop raiding /damage
6	Hippo	Crop raiding /damage
7.	Wild Pig	Crop raiding /damage

The rate of killings of wildlife was decreasing though illegal hunting and poaching is still a challenge. In the year 2013, 12 elephants were killed by illegal hunters whereas in 2014, 9 elephants (25% decrease) were hunted followed by 6 elephants killing in the year 2015 (33% decrease). Along with commercially initiated illegal hunting and habitat destruction, today, human-wildlife conflict ranks as the main threat to conservation challenging different stake holders (Kangwana, 1993, Treves & Karanth, 2003) .

According to the interview with the official of the park, the engagement of individual businessmen in illegal hunting took different forms. And individual's engagement in illegal hunting ranges from being a sponsor for hunters either in kind or in cash to creating a collaborator scout. On the other hand, illegal hunting of buffalo increased from the year 2012 to 2014 but declined in 2015 (fig.2). The main reason for the killing of buffalos was the community's cultural affiliation towards its meat during the celebration of Epiphany. But nowadays, the number of buffalo is growing at an increasing rate with around 3000 Buffalo's recorded in the park.

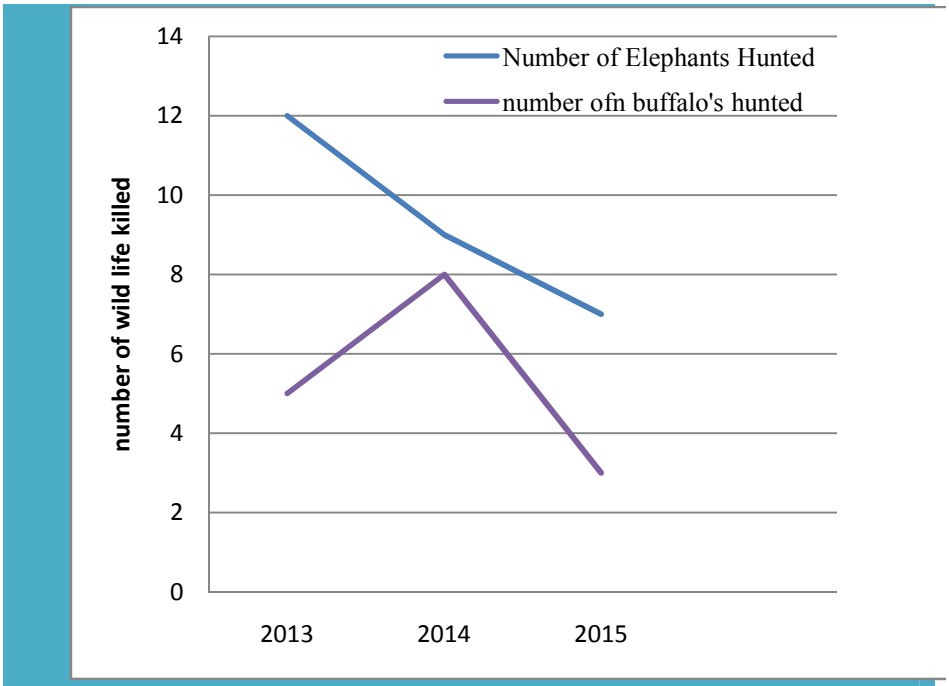

Figure 2: Number of Elephants hunted during the year 2013-2015

Source: Survey, 2015

Poor market and product development. Among many tour operators in Ethiopia (estimated to more than 300) that promote their general tour itinerary, only 5% (15 tour operators) were promoting Chebera Churchura National Park and its products to the potential customers on their web till August, 2016. The park's promotion in line with protected area network was very poor. It was also not branded.

Systematic conservation planning can integrate both biodiversity and ecosystem services as conservation targets, and addresses the challenge to operate ecosystem services (Remme and Schröter, 2016). However, the park was characterized by weak marketing and promotion, product development, and stake holder's engagement to gain economic benefits for conservation and livelihood diversification. As a result, the actual number of domestic tourists visiting CCNP is small when compared with the trend of the country's tourism development (Table 5). Currently the number of domestic tourists visiting the park is decreasing. On the other hand, the number of international tourists visiting CCNP was also insignificantly increasing in the last four years (from 2011-2015 i.e. missing in 2011 and before, but decreased in the year 2015) (table 5). Tourism businesses can contribute to biodiversity conservation through establishment of commercial operation directly linked to conservation or by developing tourism products that are specifically designed to support conservation (UNWTO, 2010). But, CCNP is not self sufficient and tourism is not contributing much to the conservation and livelihood diversification of the community even though UNWTO (2010) argued that income from tourism is a vital source of fund for conservation.

Table 5: *Trend of tourist flows to CCNP*

Year	Number of domestic tourists visiting	Percentage increase or decrease (domestic tourists)	Number of International tourists visiting	Percentage increase or decrease (international tourists)
2011	14	-	0	0
2012	17	54.5	12	-
2013	60	252.9	26	116.67
2014	112	86.67	90	246.15
2015	138	23.2	60	-33.33

Source: Survey, 2015

Besides such arguments, PA's have an obligation and potential to promote sustainable rural development through recreation and tourism (Jarvis, 2000) where financial incentives can stimulate local people to participate in biodiversity conservation (Kumar *et al.*, 2017). Despite the decreasing number of international tourists, the income gained from tourists visiting CCNP was increasing by small amount implying that local community is not substantially benefiting from tourism.

However, the park officials claimed that Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority gives emphasis for the well known conservation efforts and parks but not for the newly established parks. Despite such claims, successful conservation initiatives require collaboration between stakeholders. Compared to the park's contribution to biodiversity conservation, (62%) of the participants believed that the park will help them in sustaining their lives while 38% of them did not. Despite such beliefs, 88.8% of the households did not gain economic benefits from the conservation practices and tourism activities of the CCNP except scouts who are employed by the park. They did not benefit from employment opportunity (89.3%), supply of different products to tourists (96.5%) and other services like rent of pack animals, tent and other equipments to tourists (97.4%). Contrarily, in the protected area where tourism is less developed and nature conservation strategies are more successful, they are less influenced by tourism (Zurc, 2010). Furthermore, Ly and Xiao (2016) argued that balancing recreation, conservation and economy makes protected area management difficult.

According to the focus group discussion and interview with local community, integration of agriculture with ecotourism/tourism resources of the park is weak. They are not supplying anything from their agricultural products to the sector due to the weak development of tourism in the area. Despite such difficulties, they are protected not to use resources of the park. As a result, park must be considered as an additional and substantial constraints for people securing their livelihood (Vedeld *et al.*, 2012). But, incentives to local people in the form of cash and/or materials is an important factor in strengthening the interrelationships between biodiversity and livelihood (Nyaupane, 2011). This shows that when people live using the resources in the park, there should be an alternative livelihood option like tourism which can support their life and replace their traditional agriculture.

Community participation and its governance. People nearby protected areas expect PA's contribution to their social and economic wellbeing (Ezebilo and Mattsson, 2010). However, conservation won't be sustainable without development of nearby communities (Chaminuka, Groeneveld & Ierland, 2012). PA's contribution to the community, realistically, does not solve all the socio-economic problems, but their involvement in management, planning and monitoring may increase their support (Ezebilo and Mattsson, 2010). Despite few attempts to allow community participation in CCNP, we found community participation was limited to implementation of what was designed and developed by officials. However, participatory development involves local people in development processes

(Eversole, 2003). As a result, participation in planning is indispensable to ensure that benefits reach residents (Simmons, 1994). Contrary to this, the community nearby Chebera Churchura National Park was not fully participant at different levels of protected area management and conservation practices. But, participation of the poor in development offers more voice and choice (Cornwall, 2006). In the case of CCNP, the majority of the communities were participant at implementation level (66.3%) followed by decision making (11.7%) with variations among villages. However, the participation at planning (4.1%), development (3.6 %.), evaluation (4.5%) and monitoring (9.7%) is insignificant (almost nonexistent). This shows they may not get an opportunity to incorporate their social, economic and cultural affairs and interest in conservation process of the park.

According to UNEP (2010) estimates, 60% of the world's land surface is now managed in some way for human use. Effective biodiversity conservation may occur when there is an understanding of the socio- cultural and political context of local communities (Brandful, Black & Thwaites, 2015). Large numbers of people living in and around protected areas are highly dependent on the natural resources. However, simply excluding them from the area management has always inevitably resulted in conflicts (Liu, Ouyang & Miao, 2010).

Furthermore, environmental policies aimed at the conservation of protected areas are significantly influenced by social factors. And this reveals the importance of investigating local knowledge and perceptions during their planning and implementation (Dimitrakopoulos *et al.*, 2010). Consequently, it is easier to enforce development projects than law since the first has a flavor of doing something for them while the second means acting against local people (Fischer, 2008). Many of the services provided by common pool resources and its multiple actors competing for use leads to resource degradation and management conflicts (Hardin, 1968). The integration of community with the conservation practices and utilization of cultural capital with indigenous knowledge was not fully recognized and implemented by the park. On the other hand, denial of local people's right upon PA creation and unwillingness to involve them were the reasons for the failure of community based conservation initiatives (Knudsen 1999). But allowing indigenous people solely govern the buffer zone invites problems also (Shafer, 2015).

Community participation and empowerment of CCNP was different among villages. Where the local community was fully empowered, participant, and decision maker in every aspect of the conservation efforts of the park in Seri Shewa

Village, there are accepted strict rules and regulation that govern their interaction with the park (Table 7).

Yet how a conservation project is designed and structured can negatively impact people's access to resources, privilege one group of people over another, or protect some species at a cost to others (Robinson, 2011). Involving local communities in management through village associations as a channel for biodiversity conservation can sustain protected areas sustainability (Vodouhê *et al.*, 2010) where negotiation and exchange of information helps to reduce the number of people who do not support conservation

Social arrangements that produce responsibility for coercion are also vital (Hardin, 1968). Increased levels of participation and deliberation where participants come together to learn about the different values and interests involved and to voice their concerns is also valuable in creating trust, reducing conflict, and improving the quality of protection (Bergseng and Vatn, 2009). As a result, trust, reciprocity, and communication are the three key building blocks of collective action (Ostrom, 1998). In line with this, there is no scout assigned for the Seri Shewa village as a result of strict rules and regulations by the community. They believed that they are the sole owners and protectors of the park. But the remaining communities from other villages were not organized.

Table 6: Seri Shewa Village Conservation practices

- ✓ Identity card is issued for member of units organized
- ✓ Each unit has its own unit leader based on trust
- ✓ The unit leader should communicate with the village's leaders for harvest
- ✓ The local expert for harvest should also notify to the village officials when there is a need for harvest
- ✓ The members of the units should not be allowed to enter park without permission
- ✓ The Id card of the member of the unit, local expert, and leader should have the official stamp of the village and photograph of the holder of the Id card
- ✓ If a member enters into the park without the permission of the unit leader and village, he/she will be fined
- ✓ If a unit leader also allows an illegal person to enter the park, the leader will also be fined
- ✓ Bringing people from another village and allowing them to enter the park is forbidden for unit leaders and members.
- ✓ Finally, if somebody enters the park without permission and consent of the leader and village, he /she is responsible to pay five hundred Ethiopian birr (birr 500) enforced by senior elders in the village.
- ✓ There are 65 units (each 5 members) i.e. 325 individuals are using beekeeping as a livelihood option.

Note: Summary of minute of Seri Shewa village, 2016

On the other hand, the interview with Dawuro Zone park development experts who had some sort of experiences with the park starting from its establishment indicated that forests were owned by individuals, particularly by traditional religious leaders, before the establishment of the park. And forests were considered as sacred places where spiritual activities were under taken, where marriages take place, and where traditional judiciary practice. It also served as a canopy for people and different commercial plant species like coffee and others that were collected from the park. It is also a place where they collect traditional medicine. Additionally, the kosha (halla) is the place where they meet, give gifts and communicate with god. They place each and every gift with or without presence of the one who mediates with their god. Nowadays, such kinds of social practices deteriorated as a new religion was introduced. This implies their

conservation efforts are based on meaningful recognition for traditional rights and locally contextualized participation. .

Conclusion

Over the course of 2015 and 2016, communities from different villages of the park come together to share their views, experiences, and attitudes towards the conservation practices and their level of participation on conservation efforts of CCNP. They explained their concerns towards the role of CCNP conservation practices and ecotourism in their daily life. In survey, focused group discussion, and interview they have a positive attitude towards the park. Despite such positive attitude, they are developing a negative attitude towards the park due to human wildlife conflict and absence of compensation scheme and mechanism for the injuries of HWC. Furthermore, their participation level except at implementation level is low but complete empowerment was discovered in Seri Shewa Village. Both negative and positive views of the community on conservation approach and efforts of the park have a potential of strengthening or weakening community participation, relationship between wild life and community, and even the relationship between community and park officials.

Participatory conservation enables the conservation objectives to be successful and also avoids the dependency of conservation goals on funds from tourism and outside. Conservation practices influenced by tourism are not that much a success since they will collapse during the decline or collapse of tourism. But organizing community with their consensus, resources available, and with the understanding of the socio-economic and cultural affiliation the community developed with biodiversity is important. In the area where tourism role is insignificant in the community's livelihood like Seri Shewa Village of CCNP, the implication of this study is that willingly allowing and empowering the community with resources available within the park in sustainable usage sustains conservation effort in developing the country.

The empirical analysis shows even if the number of tourists visiting the park is increasing with small amount, its contribution to community's livelihood and biodiversity conservation is not sufficient. CCNP has a potential to develop community based ecotourism with the support of resources available, hospitality of the community, and naturalness of the leisure activities that suits eco tourists. However, the necessary facilities that support community based ecotourism were missed. Despite such potentials, the marketing and product development activities of the park were very weak. As a result, the study shows that participatory

conservation with limited dependency on tourism better sustains biodiversity and benefits the community.

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