

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

CBRM Database

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Case Study Name:	Changes in resident attitudes towards tourism development and conservation in the Okavango Delta, Botswana		
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Region:	Africa - South of the Sahara		
Country:	Botswana		
Ecosystem Type:	Other (Oasis)		
Social Characteristics:	Other (Rural Community)		
Scale of Study:	Protected Area		
Resource Type:	Tourism/Ecotourism		
Type of Initiative:	Research-driven Project		
Community-Based Work:	Conservation, Development Planning		
Keywords:	Community-based natural resource management, Attitudes, Tourism development, Conservation		

Summary:

Negative attitudes of resident communities towards conservation are associated with resource decline in developing countries. In Botswana, Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) was adopted to address this challenge. CBNRM links rural development and conservation. However, the impact of CBNRM on changes of resident attitudes towards conservation and tourism is not adequately researched. This paper, therefore, assesses the impacts of CBNRM on resident attitudes towards tourism development and conservation in the Okavango Delta, Botswana. The study purposively sampled villages of Khwai, Mababe and Sankoyo. Household data using variables like: economic benefits from CBNRM; level of satisfaction with CBNRM; co-management of natural resources between resident communities and government agencies; and collective action was collected. This data was supplemented by secondary and ethnographic data. Using qualitative and quantitative analysis, results indicate changes in resident attitudes from being negative to positive towards tourism and conservation. These changes are triggered by economic benefits residents derived from CBNRM, co-management in resource management; and, collective action of communities in CBNRM development. Positive attitudes towards conservation and tourism are the first building blocks towards achieving conservation in nature-based tourism destinations. As a result, decision-makers should give priority to CBNRM and use it as a tool to achieve conservation and improved livelihoods in nature-based tourism destinations of developing countries.