

MEASURING THE LIVELIHOOD IMPACTS OF INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES IN EAST AFRICA

Locations	Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia
Dates	01/01/2014 - 31/12/2020

Summary

Although a lot is known about the biodiversity impacts of introduced species in East and southern Africa, very little is known about the livelihood impacts that they have on communities that depend on the goods and services provided by ecosystems. The aim of this project is to determine the negative socio-economic impacts of selected invasive alien plants on poor rural communities, especially farmers, in East and southern Africa.

The problem

Invasive alien plant species have a negative impact on biodiversity and the rural communities who depend on the natural resources around them for their survival.

Although a lot is known about the biodiversity impacts of these introduced species, little is known about the livelihood impacts that they have on communities that depend on the goods and services provided by ecosystems.

This lack of information on the cross-cutting impacts of invasive alien plants, especially on poor rural communities, means that many donors, development agencies and governments are less likely to initiate and support management activities.

What we are doing

The aim of this project is to determine the negative impacts of selected invasive alien plants on poor rural communities, especially farmers, in East and southern Africa.

So, the team will generate and share information on the socio-economic impacts of five selected invasive alien plants in Laikipia in Kenya, around Arusha in Tanzania, Eastern Uganda and northeastern Zambia.

This information will be used to determine the financial burden and others costs that invasive alien plants extol on poor rural communities.

Project activities:

- develop questionnaires to determine socio-economic impacts of *Tithonia diversifolia* in Zambia, *Parthenium hysterophorus* and *Chromoleana odorata* in Tanzania, *Lantana camara* in Uganda, and *Opuntia stricta* in Kenya
- interview 200 people in each area/ region affected by these invasive alien plants
- enter, collate and analyze responses
- make information available to donors, development agencies and governments

Results so far

Even though invasive alien plants have a significant impact on the goods and services provided by ecosystems and native biodiversity, there is very little understanding as to how the erosion of these natural resources impacts on poor rural communities.

The results of these surveys will inform all relevant stakeholders as to the wider and cross-cutting impacts of invasive alien plants and lead to significant changes in the support for projects which mitigate their impacts. The final research paper was published in 2020.

Donors

CABI Development Fund (CDF)

Partners

The Nature Conservancy (Tanzania), National Agricultural Research Organization (Uganda), Zambia Agriculture Research Institute

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