

**A HISTORY OF LAKE NAKURU NATIONAL PARK,  
1956 – 2005**

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## ABSTRACT

Protected areas such as national parks and nature reserves are faced with many problems. These include human encroachment, species extinction, habitat destruction and human-wildlife conflicts on the fringes. Kenya's protected areas are no exception. In this work, the history of Lake Nakuru National Park (LNNP), is examined using the political ecology theory. The analysis is historical, exploring the factors that led to the establishment of the national park as well as the social, economic, political and ecological challenges it has faced over the years. The study also examines the various responses to the challenges that faced the park. The study is premised on the fact that the development of LNNP has been a major challenge to conservationists and other interest groups. The data collected during fieldwork has been analysed in the light of the political ecology theory to determine how different variables dialectically influenced each other. The research findings will be useful to scholars, conservationists, policy-makers and stakeholders like Community Based Organisations (CBOs), especially those concerned with the promotion of ecotourism. The study may also form the basis of increased environmental awareness about LNNP and other protected areas in Kenya. From historical point of view, the study concludes that problems facing LNNP are not new and they are cyclic in nature. The state previously thought that 'fortress conservation' was the solution to challenges facing the park but this study proves that little can be achieved without the contribution of the neighbouring communities and other interested parties or stakeholders especially the Municipal Council of Nakuru and Soysambu Farm.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION .....	ii
COPYRIGHT .....	iii
DEDICATION .....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
ABSTRACT .....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	vii
LIST OF MAPS .....	ix
ABBREVIATIONS .....	x
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Statement of the Problem .....	7
1.2 Objectives of the Study .....	7
1.3 Research Premises .....	8
1.4 Research Questions .....	8
1.5 Justification of the Study .....	8
1.6 Literature Review .....	9
1.7 Theoretical Framework .....	21
1.8 Research Methodology .....	24
1.9 Scope and Limitations of the Study .....	29
<b>CHAPTER TWO</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>2.0 POLITICAL ECOLOGY OF NATIONAL PARK ESTABLISHMENT IN LAKE NAKURU AREA</b> .....	<b>30</b>
2.1 Colonial Basis for the Establishment of National Parks in Kenya .....	30
2.2 Establishment of Lake Nakuru Royal National Park .....	40
2.3 Early challenges to the establishment of the park .....	49
2.4 Expansion of Lake Nakuru Royal National Park, 1961–1968 .....	57
<b>CHAPTER THREE</b> .....	<b>73</b>
<b>3.0 CHALLENGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LNNP, 1961–1971</b> .....	<b>73</b>
3.1 Early Struggles over Resources .....	74



3.2 Ecological and Economic Challenges .....	87
3.3 Urban Development and Lake Nakuru National Park .....	91
<b>CHAPTER FOUR</b> .....	111
<b>4.0 BAHARINI WILDLIFE FOUNDATION AND EXPANSION OF LNNP, 1971–1973</b> .....	111
4.1 The Emergence of Baharini Wildlife Sanctuary .....	112
4.2 Proposal to Expand the Park .....	117
4.3 Fundraising and the Land Purchase Process .....	127
<b>CHAPTER FIVE</b> .....	143
<b>5.0 LAND USE CONFLICTS IN LNNP, 1970–2005</b> .....	143
5.1 Immediate Land Use Conflicts after the Expansion .....	145
5.2 Nakuru Municipal Council Land Use Conflicts .....	152
5.3 Agricultural Communities and their Impact on LNNP .....	156
5.4 Human–Wildlife Conflict .....	161
5.5 Lake Nakuru in the Face of Land Use Conflicts .....	163
<b>CHAPTER SIX</b> .....	173
<b>6.0 CONSERVATION POLICIES IN LAKE NAKURU NATIONAL PARK</b> .....	173
6.1 National Park and Reserve System .....	176
6.2 Fences and Fines Approach .....	178
6.3 Community Participation .....	184
<b>CHAPTER SEVEN</b> .....	196
<b>7.0 CONCLUSION</b> .....	196
REFERENCES .....	200
APPENDICES .....	209