

## **Conflicts between Conservation and Community Livelihoods: Lessons from KwaNibela and iSimangaliso Wetland Park, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**

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**Abstract :** This chapter assesses the conflict arising from conservation between iSimangaliso Wetland Park and the community of KwaNibela, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. To achieve the aim of this study a qualitative research approach was adopted which included one-on-one in-depth interviews with fifty people from the community of KwaNibela who were randomly selected. In-depth interviews were further conducted with three officials from iSimangaliso Wetland Park who were purposely selected to understand their perceptions. The findings suggest that iSimangaliso Wetland Park conservation strategies have a negative impact on the socio-economic wellbeing of the people in KwaNibela due to limited access to natural resources and lack of economic opportunities. This has led to conflict between the stakeholders of iSimangaliso Wetland Park and the community. iSimangaliso Wetland Park generates income from tourists who visit the park, while the community of KwaNibela receives little to no benefits from both tourism and conservation. This has led to conflict since the community of KwaNibela feels that iSimangaliso is generating income from their traditional land and natural resources while they (the community) are left poverty-stricken. In order to achieve conservation that caters to the needs and livelihoods of local people, it is suggested that iSimangaliso Wetland Park includes the community of KwaNibela in their conservation efforts and creates economic opportunities for the same community through conservation and tourism.

**Keywords :** conservation, socio-economic development, protected areas, natural Resources

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