

Eco-Survivalism and Nomadic Pastoralism: An Exploratory Study on the Dialectics of Herder-Farmer Conflict in Nigeria

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Abstract : The threat of Fulani herder militancy in Nigeria has led to a volatile security situation characterized by communal strife, arms proliferation, rural banditry, and insurgency. The exigency of this situation resonates in the eco-survivalist theory of farmer-herder conflict which holds that the herder deems the farmers' unwarranted incursions into his grazing terrain as an effrontery that must be reprimanded and a call to war. In spite of the rising incidence of Fulani militancy in Nigeria, only little is known concerning the phenomenon. The bulk of prevailing ideas on the subject has been largely and unnecessarily journalistic and anecdotal, lacking in intellectual depth, fecundity and rigour. The issue has remained scarcely documented by way of organized research. There is therefore a need for a systematic investigation that would leverage scholarly and policy insights on the subject which is the purpose of this study. The study will therefore, seek to examine the nexus between nomadic pastoralism and the incidence of herder-farmer conflicts in Nigeria with particular reference to the central region of the country. By means of qualitative descriptive analysis predicated on the theory of eco-violence, the paper explores the contemporary historical and structural drivers of this conflict, its relationship with the dynamics of climate change in Nigeria and its implication of human security in Nigeria. The paper also proffers theoretical and policy recommendations to mitigate the on-going conflict.

Keywords : eco-survivalism, conflict, pastoralism, nomads

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