

Book Review-Natural Resources and Environmental Justice in Kenya

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Book Title: Natural Resources and Environmental Justice in Kenya

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This is a book that is recommended for all Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) practitioners. It contains an in-depth discussion on Natural Resources and Conflict Management (Chapter 16). Mechanisms such as negotiation, mediation, problem solving and facilitation are analysed in relation to their role in natural resources conflict management.

There is also a vivid discussion on the merits and demerits of using Alternative Dispute Resolution in natural resources conflict management. The chapter covers water-based conflicts, biodiversity conflicts, land-based conflicts and minerals, oil and gas conflicts, amongst others.

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An accomplished Mediator and Counsellor who offers volunteer services to the public through various organizations including "Worldwide Gospel Church of Kenya", a church organization.

The need for such management is explained therein. The various mechanisms available for natural resources management such as judicial mechanisms, ADR and traditional justice systems are also critically analysed.

The authors have ably illustrated how ADR can empower the Kenyan people so that they can meaningfully participate in natural resources management.

The authors argue that environmental justice for all is achievable through inclusivity, the use of effective, participatory environmental governance mechanisms and the application of ADR in tandem with other mechanisms.

For those interested in natural resources management, the book contains other materials covering Principles of Natural Resources Management in Kenya, Environmental Justice, Devolution, and Management of various resources such as land, forests, water, wildlife and biodiversity resources, Coastal and Marine Resources and Transboundary Resources.

One running theme in the book is that, for there to be effective management of natural resources, there must be inclusivity. The people affected by decision-making or those who depend on the resources should have access to information and should have a say in how resources are governed. ADR gives them a voice. Specifically, negotiation empowers them to engage with Governments, corporations, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Developers and participate in meaningful decision-making.

The book was recently cited by the Supreme Court of Kenya in *The Matter of the National Land Commission [2015] eKLR*,¹ where the Court was deliberating on the importance of the role and place of public participation in the administration and management of land in Kenya. ADR is not just academic. The book offers an insight into how ADR can be used to manage natural

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resource-based conflicts and thus ensure the attainment of sustainable development.