Global Scientific JOURNALS

GSJ: Volume 9, Issue 10, October 2021, Online: ISSN 2320-9186

www.globalscientificjournal.com

Conservation challenges of Gamataja Community forest, in Goba district, Bale zone, Oromia regional state, southeast of Ethiopia

Author:- Ahmed Abdela[1] and Tigist Tolera[2]

1. Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute Goba Biodiversity Center
2. Madda walabu University collage of Natural and Computational Sciences

ABSTRACT

Conservation challenges of Gamataja Community forest was studied in Goba district, southeast of Ethiopia. The community forest is owned by three villages namely Gamma, Shifario and Lashkona which are collectively named as Itiusura kebele, which was purposefully selected due to the presence of high conservation challenges. The conservation challenge data were collected using questioners, interviews and focus group discussion. Firewood collection, House making, settlement, lack of coordination between stakeholders were the main conservation challenges in the Gamataja community forest.

Key words: - Conservation challenges, Gamataja

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

The protection of biodiversity is essential in the fight to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. Seventy percent of the world`s poor life in rural areas depends directly on biodiversity for their survival and well-being (Temesgen Mokonin et al., 2015). The impact of

environmental degradation is most severe for people living in poverty, because they have few livelihood options on which to fall back (IUCN's, 2010).

The livelihoods of an estimated 300 million people worldwide living close to tropical forests depend on trees or forest products for daily subsistence (Pimentel et al., 1997, Calibre Consultants, 2000). The relationship of these people to trees and forests has long been recognized as an opportunity for adopting community or small-holder forestry to improve rural well-being (Cavendish, 2000, Scherr et al., 2004). International organizations like the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Bank began to promote community or social forestry in the late 1970s and early 1980s, respectively (De Jong et al., 2008).

Upon conversion forest lands have been offering fertile croplands to sustain crop production. When protected forests are used as rangelands, act as biological measures to conserve soil and water and provide watershed protection (Tasfaye Gobeze *et al.*, 2009). Studies show that 90% of the energy used in Ethiopia originates from biomass, and nearly 80% of human and 90%of livestock populations in Ethiopia depend on traditional herbal medicine for primary health care (WHO, 2002; Haile Yinger *et al*., 2007). FAO (2002) estimated that Ethiopia's fuel wood consumption amounts to 84 million m^3 per year. Large areas of the world's forests have been lost or degraded, and the problem continues unabated (Mulugeta Lemenih and Habtemariam Kasa , 2014). According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO, 2010), around 13 million hectares (ha) of forest were converted to other uses or lost through natural causes each year between 2000 and 2010 compared to 16 million ha per year in the 1990s though marked variations are observed across regions. Due to natural expansion and plantations, the annual net forest loss remains at about 5.2 million ha. The overall effect of such a loss and widespread forest degradation is a decline in environmental goods and services, including climate stabilization and loss of biodiversity and reduction in human well-being in general (Lamb and Gilmour, 2013).

Most of the natural forests in Africa face pressure from communities who derive their basic livelihood from forests, or the land on which they grow crops, and even greater pressure come from commercial plantation companies and extractors of timber and other products (Alemayhu Wassie; 2002). Conflicts often occur because of competition for forest resources from local people's livelihoods, commerce, wildlife and forestry, and the alarming rate of biodiversity loss in African forests poses an international concern (Bennun *et al.*, 2004). The main objective of the

current study was to assess Conservation challenges of Community forest, in *Gamataja* of *Goba* district.

1.2. Statement of the problems

Natural resource degradation, a major form of which is deforestation, has become a serious problem in Ethiopia (Tola Gemechu and Woldeamlak Bewket, 2007). In Ethiopia, deforestation rates remain high and the gap between demand and domestic supply of forest products is expanding, even though government-initiated re-greening efforts began over a century ago (Mulugeta Lemenih and Habtemariam Kassa, 2014). The people living in and around the community forest are degrading forests for firewood, charcoal, construction and grazing. Due to this reason Community forest fell under great pressure. The current study is aimed to assess main conservation challenges affecting Gamataja community forest in Goba District

1.3. Significance of the Study

The livelihoods of rural households are adversely affected by the impacts of deforestation and land degradation since them indirectly directly or depend on forest resources. The findings of this study were expected to identify aspects of community forest degradation and efforts of forest conservation of rural households in the study area. It also has a great role in contributing to the assessment of the problem under consideration. This study was expected to inform the indispensable act for community forest conservation for all stakeholders who have their own interest to minimize the adverse impacts of deforestation by conserving forests in concerned area.

1.4. Objectives of the study

1.4.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study is to identify major conservation challenges facing Gamataja community forest, in *Goba* district, south east of Ethiopia.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To identify major conservation challenges of Gamataja community forest.
- To identify the main causes of conservation challenges in Gamataja community forest.

- To determine the local community perception of conservation of Gamataja communal forest in the Goba district.

1.5. Research questions

1. What are the major conservation challenges of *Gamataja* community forest?
2. What are the main causes of the conservation challenges of *Gamataja* community forest?
3. What is the perception of local people towards the community forest conservation in the study area?

1.6. Delimitation of the study

The study was conducted only in and around the *Gamataja* community forest and the study was focused on conservation challenges *Gamataja* community forests in this purposefully selected area due to time and financial problems.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. Description of the study area

The Gamataja community forest is one of the community forests that are located in the Goba district of Bale zone. This community forest is owned by three villages, Lashqonna, Shifario, and Gamataja which are currently known as Itittu sura. It is located in the Bale zone at about 15km North West of Zonal capital Robe and 445km southeast of Addis Ababa**.** Goba is located in 07^0 00’338” N and $39^0$58’009”E and located in the North Western extreme parts of the Bale Zone. The elevation of the study area lies between 2410m – 2878m above the sea level. It is characterized by little flat land on the top; most of its parts are river gorges. The community forest is bordered by Burkitu village from the north, Shifario zone from the south, Goba town from the east and Dinsho from the west and totally the forest is 548.85 in a hectare.

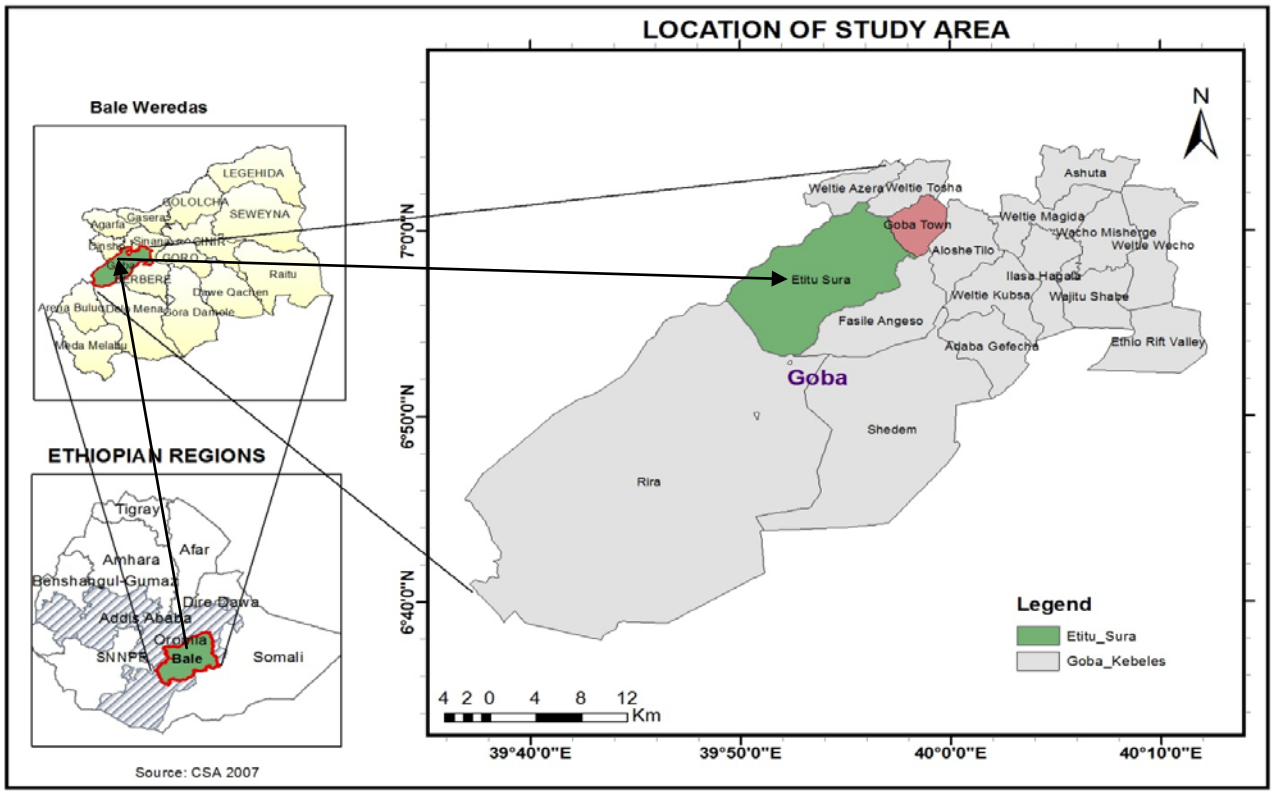

Figure 1. Map of the study area

2.1.1. Vegetation and wildlife

The area is dominated by different tree, shrub and open grassland. Some of plant species that found in the study area are *Oliea europea* subsps *cuspidata*, *Eucalyptus globules*, *Junipares procera*, *Hypericum revolatum*, *Vernonia amigdalina*, *Ficus vasta*, *Hygenea abyssinica*, *Discopodium penninervum*, *Rosa abyssinica*, *Podocarpus falcatus*, *Rubus apetalus* are among others. The fauna includes, Spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta)*, Colobus monkey, Warthog (*Phacochoerus africanus)*, and Antelope (*Ammospermophilus nelson*) (personal Communication 6 June, 2019).

2.1.2. Topography and Hydrology

2.1.2.1. Topography

Gamataja community forest is characterized by heterogeneous hilly terrain. Large portion of the study area falls on the valley floor. The study area lies on the top edge of the *Garenno* River.

2.1.2.2. Hydrology

The study area has many small rivers among few includes "*Bamo*", "*Garenno*", "*Sa'ada* rivers" and "*Chaffa urana*" small springs.

2.1.3. Climate

The Goba district experiences dry and wet season with long wet season from March to November and relatively short dry season from December to February. During the wet season, most of the time, the area is blanketed by thick white fog and clouds usually accompanied with rain. The average monthly rainfall and temperature for the study area over ten years was obtained from the Ethiopian Meteorological Agency, Robe Field Station (EMA Robe field station, 2020).

The average monthly rain fall of Gamataja community forest is shown in figure 2 bellow. The region experiences a seasonal bimodal distribution of rainfall. Rainfall distribution for the region varies between average monthly minimum with in December, January, February and moderate rain fall with in June, November, March and May. While October, July, April, September and August experience the average maximum rainfall ranges from 102.5ml-155.5ml.

The temperature data of 2010 - 2019 indicates the maximum monthly temperature of the area lies within the temperature 20.5C^0-24.3C^o as shown in figure 3 bellow. The minimum temperature of the area lies within the average temperature ranges of 5.2 C^o-10.0C^o. The lowest temperature recorded in January and the highest temperature was recorded in July as shown in the figure 2 below.

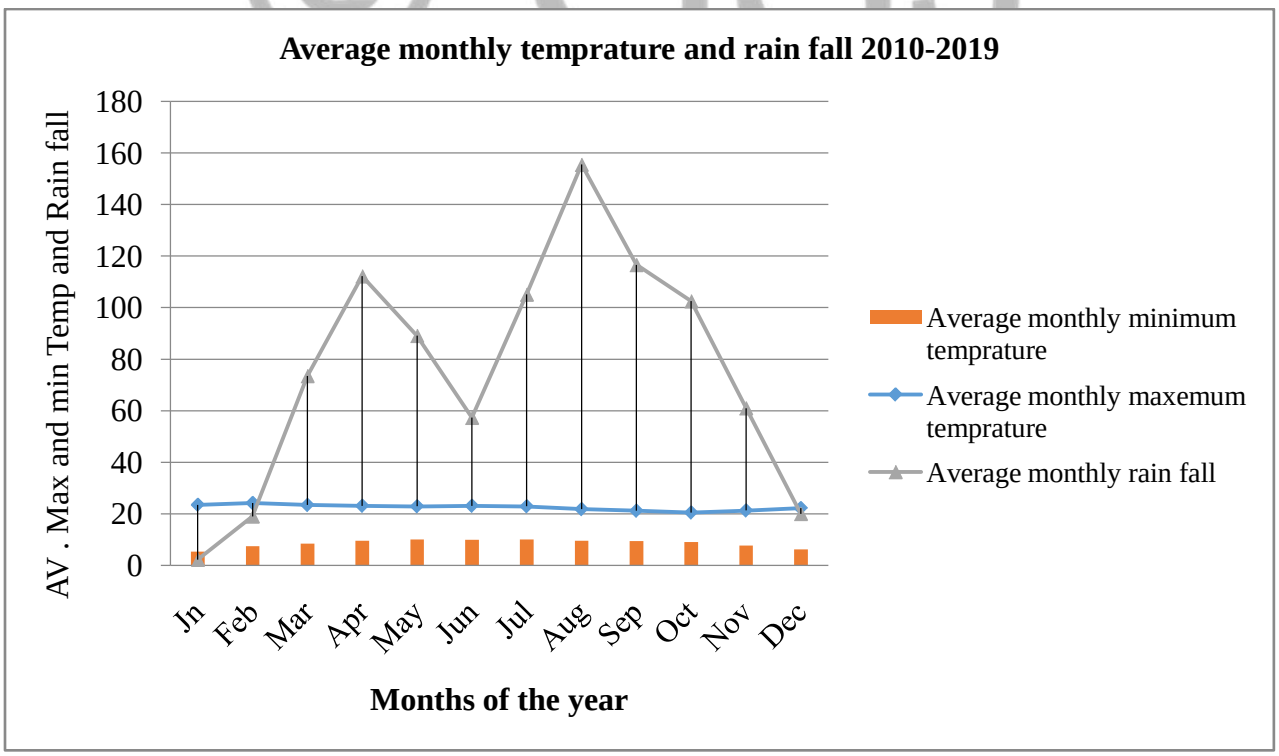

Figure 1. Goba district average monthly maximum, minimum temperature and rain fall of 2010-2019(EMA Robe field station, 2020).

2.1.4. Ethnic Diversity and Settlement in the Area

In the local area Afan oromo and Amharic are the widely spoken languages. The people in the area inhibit three villages surrounding Lashkona, Shifario, and Gamataja that are collectively referred to as Itittu-sura.

2.1.5. Population and Production System

The total population of Goba as Ethiopian Family year Population projection data of 2010 E.C indicates there are 55815, of this male 28231 and female 27584. Mixed agricultural practices are the sole livelihood of the majority of the inhabitants around the area. The most of the people practices traditional agricultural system that combines the primal and annual cultivation with livestock rearing. Shifting cultivation is common in whole parts of the study area. Permanent crops harvested in the area include cereals as Barley and wheat, pulse, vegetable and seed oil are the major staple crops on the highland side.

2.2. Sampling Design

Informants size determination and selection

The research was designed to use both qualitative and quantitative. Questioner, key informant interviews, and focus group discussion was employed.

Yamane's (1967) formula is used to estimate the required households that was used in the study

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where,

n=the required sample size

N=the total number of households in *Etittu sura kebele of Goba* District

e =the margin of error with 95% precision the margin of error becomes 0.05

According to the information obtained Ethiopian Family year (2010) Population data from *Goba* district agricultural office currently there are 1006 households in *Etittu sura kebele of Goba* district. Hence, based on the total House holds the sample size for this study is calculated as follows.

$$n = \frac{1006}{1+1006(0.05)^2} = 286$$

A total sample size of 286 households was included in the study to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Out of this 256 were male individuals and 30 were female individuals

2.3. Material

The researcher was used the following material for the investigation. This is GPS to take elevation, northing and easting as well as to record the points to develop map of the study area.

2.4. Method of Data Collection

2.4.1. Conservation challenges

Semi-Structured question

Data was collected by means of a semi-structured and structured questionnaire modified from Newmark *et al*., (1994). Representative villages per protected area were selected based on the information gathered using the pilot survey and the distance from the community forest and problems related to conservation around from the boundary of the community forest. The questionnaire was administered to households. The questionnaire was designed to understand the conservation gaps in the forest in community forest areas. The questionnaire was administered to farmers within their area of farming and/or residence (Hill, 2000), at a random manner based on first come first serve basis (Newmark *et al*., 1994), and alternating male and female respondents as much as possible and different age groups.

Key informant interviews

Interview is one of the methods of gathering information of the challenges of Gamataja community forest as a result the interview was made purposefully with nine local people including one management committee of association of kermamida sura, three from Oromia forest enterprise stuff member, one from Gamataja village leader, and one kebele leader, one from Karmamida sura association organizers, one from Karmamida sura association leaders, one from Goba district Environment Forest and climate change authority(EFCA) they were selected purposefully and the interviews was made accordingly.

Focus group discussion (FGD)

Focus group discussion was another method used to gather information on community forest conservation challenges. Accordingly 18 people were selected from *Etittu sura kebele*, six from

each three villages i.e. (Gamataja, Lashkona, Shifario) were purposefully selected and discussion was made to gather information accordingly.

Personal observation

The final method that was used is personal observation. During this time, the researcher was observed the status of the forest whether it is conserved or not, major conservation challenges, the causes of conservation challenges whether it is natural and manmade causes.

2.5. Data Analysis

Conservation challenges data analysis

The conservation challenges data were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics such as Excel percentages and frequencies. The results were shown in tables and graphs.

3.RESULTS

3.1. Conservation challenges of community forests

3.1.1. Demographic and physical characteristics of the respondents

3.1.1.1. Gender

A total of 286 individual purposefully selected for semi structured question of this 256 respondents (89.5%) were male individual and rest 30(10.5%) were female individuals. The highest respondent was male individual this was due to the high number male households in kebeles as compared to female individuals in Itittu sura kebele (Figure 1).

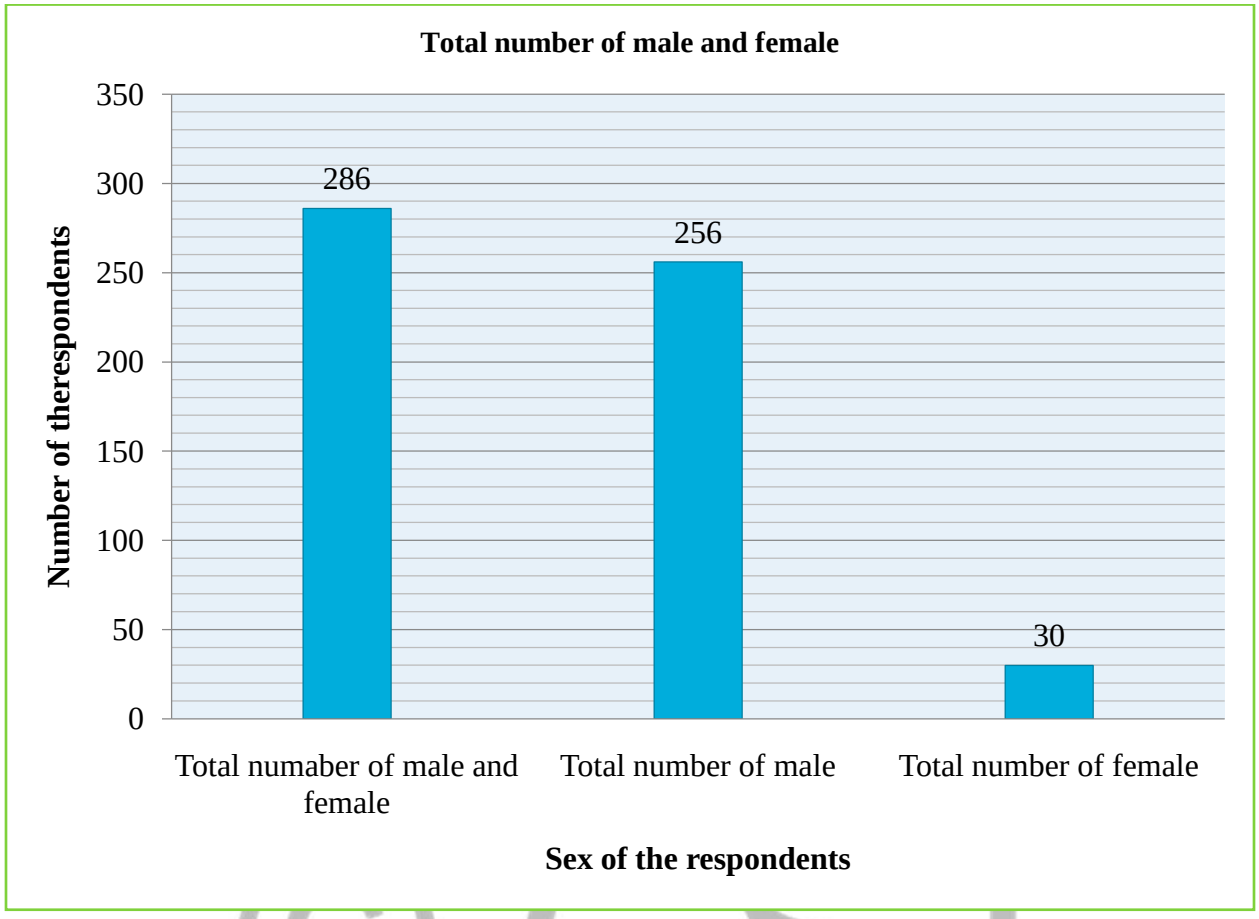

Figure 2. Gender of Gamataja community forest respondents

3.1.1.2. Age Distribution of the respondents for semi structured questions

For focus group discussion a total of 18 individuals were selected purposefully out of this 16 of them was a male individual while two of them were female individual this was due to the list number of female candidates in the association of Carmamida sura (an association that save guard gamataja community forest) and the discussion was made focusing on members of the association. The key informant interview was made with nine male individuals purposefully selected from Itiusura village leaders, leaders of the Kermamida sura association, and leader and staff members of Oromia forest and wildlife enterprises.

Age category

82 (28.67%) of the respondents fall within the age range of 20-30 that they were in the youngster age group while most of the respondents that is 140 (48.95%) falls within the age ranges of 40-50 age categories that is they were in an adult age group. The rest 64 (22.38%) falls within the age ranges of above fifty in which most of them are local elders. The number of male respondents was higher than female individual this was due to the list number of female household in the Itiusura kebele

Table 1. The age categories of Gamataja community forest respondents.

Age category	Frequency			Percent (%)
	Male	Female	Sum	
20-30	72	10	82	28.67
40-50	128	12	140	48.95
50	56	8	64	22.38
Total	**256**	**30**	**286**	**100**

Respondents' level of education

As shown in table 2. Bellow 68 (23.78%) of the respondents was not learned while 27 (9.44%) can read only 113 (39.51%) of the respondents was literate grade 4, 62 (21.68%) of the respondents' level of their education fall within the range of 5-9 that is 62 (21.68%) while the rest 16 (5.59%) had learned more than grade ten.

Table 2. Respondents' level of education

Level of Education	Frequency			Percent
	Male	Female	Sum	
Illiterate	56	12	68	23.78
Read only	24	3	27	9.44
Grade 1-4	104	9	113	39.51
Grade 5-9	56	6	62	21.68
Grade 10 and above	16	0	16	5.59
Total	256	30	286	100

Family size of the respondents

As shown in the table 3 bellow 43 (15%) of the respondents own 1-3 family size, 46 (26%) of the respondents had 3-5 family size, 140 (48%) of the respondents had 5-7 family size and lastly 57 (19%) of the respondents had more than seven family size.

Table 3. Shows Family size of Gamataja community forest.

Level of family of size	Frequency	Percent (%)
1-3	43	15

3-5	46	16
5-7	140	48
More than 7	57	19
Total	286	100

3.2. Conservation challenges of Gamataja community forest

3.2.1. *Possible reason(s) for Gamataja forest conservation challenge*

Table 4 shows the possible reason for Gamataja community forest conservation challenges. Accordingly 129 (45.1%) respondents responded that overgrazing was the major conservation challenges, 16 (5.6%) respondents responded that agricultural expansion was the major challenges, 109 (38.1%) responded that settlement in community forest was the challenges, 32 (11.2%) responded that weak government control was the major conservation challenges of community forest conservation.

Table 4. Possible reason(s) for Gamataja forest conservation challenge

Possible reason for major conservation challenges	Number of the respondents	Percent (%)
Overgrazing	129	45.1
Agricultural Expansion	16	5.6
Settlement in community forest	109	38.1
Weak government control	32	11.2
Total	286	100

Local people reside on forest resource to get their fuel as energy sources and made or anthropogenic factor was the main causes for Gamataja community forest conservation challenges.

Over promising by government and fall of implementation brings conflict between local government and peoples and absence of quick response by the government for local peoples question as road construction and absence of job creation for local youngsters. Selling of forest resource by OFE without discussion with local people who take part in forest conservation un equitable sharing of the benefits of the forest resources by concerned body. Stated 10% benefit

from this plantation tree was not given for local people this irritate and forced the community to cut plantation trees as a hole the act was transferred to natural tree forest or community based conserved forest as well.

Distance of the community forest towards capital city makes easier transportation of forest resource for the negative attitude by youngsters up on community forest conservation and considering the daily income and unsustainable utilization of forest resources. Absence of income generation for kebele youngsters who does not have jobs. An assumption as considering the benefit resulted from community forest resources belongs to the government only and local people does not benefited. Less productivity of the land and inadequate crop production in the village as result dependence of local people's livelihood on community forest.

The result from a focus group discussion also assures what was stated by the key informant interviewer as major conservation challenges of Gamataja community forest. A weak relationship between local community and government body on community forest conservation. Delay implementation of the promises made by government for local people as road construction. Unquotable sharing of benefits resulted from forest resource, weak coordination between forest committee up on forest conservation illegal division by clan.

The in appropriate the use of forest resources by certain groups that create competition between the rest of the group. Absence of job opportunities for young people and unsustainable use of forest resources for their daily use may be due to drug abuse. Weak forest management system at all stages, starting with the leaders of Keble and the district, and the expansion of illegal practices by the community.

3.2.2. Utilization status of Gamataja community forest resource by local people

The utilization status of Gamataja community socioeconomic benefits that directly contribute to Gamataja community forest conservation challenges. Based on that 97(33.91%) of the respondents responded that fuel wood collection contribute conservation challenges, 59 (20.63%) of the respondents responded that cutting wood for house, making contribute to conservation challenges, 8 (2.8%) responded that settlement affects Gamataja community forest and 122 (42.66%) of the respondents responded that fuel wood collection, house making, settlement are the major factors that contribute to Gamataja community forest conservation challenges (table 5).

Table 5. Utilization status of Gamataja community forest resource by local people

Utilization status of Gamataja community forest resource by local people	Number of the respondents	Percent (%)
Fuel wood collection	97	33.91
For house making	59	20.63
For settlement	8	2.8
Fuel wood collection, House making, and for settlement	122	42.66
Total	286	100

The assessment of socioeconomic benefits of Gamataja community revealed that 19 (6.64%) of the respondents responded that the livelihood dependence of the local community on community forest was the socioeconomic benefit that directly influence Gamataja community forest conservation. The rest 221 (77.27%) the local community livelihood dependence on forest resource and income source was directly influenced Gamataja community forest conservation. The rest 46(16.1%) respondents responded that livelihood depended; income generation source of local community on forest resource, and sources of employment was the socioeconomic benefits that directly influence Gamataja community forest.

Table 6.The socioeconomic benefits that directly influence Gamataja community forest

The socioeconomic benefits of Gamataja community forest	Number of the respondents	Percent (%)
Livelihood sources	19	6.64
Livelihood source and income generation	221	77.27
Livelihood source, income generation and employment	46	16.1
Total	286	100

3.2.3. Attitudes of local community towards Gamataja community forest

The table 7 bellow shows Attitudes of local community towards the Gamataja community forest. Accordingly 19 (16.64%) argued with idea that foundation of Gamataja community forest was more for the local community and the rest 267 (93.36%) its foundation was not by the local community and for the local community uses. Concerning the benefits of Gamataja community forest for the local community 16 (5.59%) of the respondents responded that Gamataja community forest creates more labor opportunities for local communities while the rest 227 (94.41%) of the respondent does not argue with the idea that the community forest creates more labor opportunities for the local community.

Concerning local community perception 5 (1.75%) of the local community had a very good perception of Gamataja community forest, 30 (10.49%) respondents had good perception and the rest 251 (87.76%) had a poor perception they connect the uses of community forest with the benefits they expect from local government.

Table 7. Attitudes of local community towards Gamataja community forest

Attitudes of local community towards community forest	Responses and number of respondents		Percentage (%)	Total %
Foundation of Gamataja community forest is more of to the local community	Yes	19	16.64	100
	No	267	93.36	
Gamataja community forest creates more labor opportunities for local communities.	Yes	16	5.59	100
	No	270	94.41	
What is your perception towards the Gamataja community forest?	Very good	5	1.75	100
	Good	30	10.49	
	Poor	251	87.76	

The result of key informant interviews shows that local people had strongly believed in conservation they work on conservation and sustainable utilization by dividing into three conservation groups Bamo, Goro, and Hansawe but this view became week from time to time may be due to instability of the government and expansion of unlawful acts by the local people specially the youngsters. Unsuitable utilization of the forest resource by considering their daily

needs, especially in some zones of the villagers was expanded. Some of the villagers direct connect the benefit they didn't get from the OFE plantation as the major source of conflict.

Negative reward as cutting trees because of absence of response to their questions considering forest as government properties, especially by youngsters by considering the daily profit and division between committee and others.

3.2.4. Control measure to safeguard Gamataja community forest

The control measure to safeguard Gamataja community forest is shown in table 8. Based on that 254 (88.81%) respondents responded that collaboration of regional, local administration and the local community is crucial to safeguard Gamataja community forest while 32 (11.19%) of the respondents refuses this idea. Concerning training 286 (100%) argued that providing training to increase awareness of local community towards the community forest conservation is needed to safeguard Gamataja community forest.

Table 8. Control measure to safeguard Gamataja community forest

Control measure to safeguard Gamataja community forest	Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage	Total
Collaboration of regional, local administration members and local community.	Yes	254	88.81	100
	No	32	11.19	
Providing training to increase awareness of local community towards the community forest conservation	Yes	286	100	100
	No	-		

The result from key informant interview and focus group discussion shows the conservation measure to be taken to safeguard Gamataja community forest discussion should be made by local people on how to solve their problems. The concerned body should make a clear discussion with kebele structure and seeking a possible solution to the observed problems and restructure the association leaders if required. Alternative source of firewood as should be required Collaboration of local communities and government in order to conserve Gamataja community forest.

4. DISCUSSION

Conservation challenges of Gamataja community forest

Possible reasons for Gamataja community forest conservation challenges

The main reason for community forest conservation challenges was overgrazing, agricultural expansion, settlement in the community forest; weak government control of the community forest was the major conservation challenges of this challenges overgrazing and agricultural expansion contributes the major conservation challenges while settlement in the community forests, weak government control over community forest contributes list. The result of key informant interviews shows that Week commitment by participatory forest management committees and lack of coordination between concerned body as local government authorities, police and others, political instability and expansion of unlawful acts by local people especially by youngsters who participate on forest cutting and free release of the suspected individual by the district courts and unlawful chain based on benefit was made by local people, forest association leaders and some district police was the major conservation challenges.

Over promising by government and fall of implementation brings conflict between local government and peoples and absence of the quick response by the government for local peoples question as road construction and absence of job creation for local youngsters. Selling of forest resource by OFE without discussion with local people who take part in forest conservation un equitable sharing of the benefits of the forest resources by concerned body. Stated 10% benefit from the this plantation tree was not given for local people this irritate and forced the community to cut plantation trees as a hole the act was transferred to natural tree forest or community based conserved forest as well. Many scholars also argue that local people need to benefit in some way if they are to manage common pool resources to meet the broader societal goal of environmental improvement (Yonas Yemshaw,. 2007).

Distance of the community forest towards from Goba town makes easier transportation of forest resource for cell. Negative attitude by youngsters up on community forest conservation and considering the daily income and unsustainable utilization of forest resources. Absence of income generation for kebele youngsters who do not have jobs. An assumption as considering the benefit resulted from community forest resources belongs to the government only and local

people does not benefited. Less productivity of the land and inadequate crop production in the village as result dependence of local people's livelihood on community forest.

The result from a focus group discussion also assures what was stated by the key informant interviewer as major conservation challenges of Gamataja community forest. A Weak relationship between local community and government body on community forest conservation. Delay implementation of the promises made by government for local people as road construction. The current conservation policies seeking to empower local communities economically are encouraging, but their implementation is yet to engender the expectations (Kideghesho *et, al.,* 2013). Un equitable sharing of benefits resulted from forest resource, weak coordination between forest committee up on forest conservation illegal division by clan. Inappropriate use of the forest resources by some groups which create competition between the rest groups. Absence of job opportunity for youngsters and unsustainable uses of forest resources for their daily uses it may be for drug abuse. Weak forest management system in all stage beginning from district leaders and expansion of unlawful practices by the community.

Utilization status of Gamataja community forest resource by local people

Utilization status and socioeconomic benefit that directly influence of the Gamataja community forest of conservation status that directly affect Gamataja community forest was fuel wood collection, house making, settlement in the park, was some of them. Of this fuel wood collection, house making and settlement accounts, high utilization status, followed by a fuel wood collection. The Socioeconomic benefit that directly influences Gammataja community forest includes livelihood and income generation dependence of local people up on community forest resources accounts the highest percentage.

Attitudes of local community towards Gamataja community forest

Some of the local people argued with the idea that foundation of Gamataja community forest was more for the local community while the most percentage (93.36%) of the local people opposes this idea and agreed that its foundation was not by the local community and for the local community uses. They assume that its foundation and uses doesn't belong to the local community but for the local government. These attitudes have its negative amplification on community forest conservation as it lacks senses of belongings. For the current study shows that lack of benefit of local people from community forest this result in the community forest undermined by local people this resulted poor perception by the local community for community forest

conservation. Observation by Yohannis Gebremedhin (2004), agree that development is unthinkable without the participation of the native people and People should be placed first in development projects in general and forestry program in particular, and the forest users are the major actor of sustainable forest management since they are the primary users and live adjacent to the forest.

Control measure to safeguard Gamataja community forest

In the current study the control measure to save guard the Gamataja community forest mostly includes Collaboration of regional, local administration members and local community and providing training to increase awareness of local community towards the community forest conservation. The result from key informant interview and focus group discussion shows the conservation measure to be taken to safeguard Gamataja community forest Discussion should be made by local people on how to solve their problems. The concerned body should make a clear discussion with kebele structure and seeking a possible solution to the observed problems and restructure the association leaders if required. Alternative source of firewood as should be required Collaboration of local communities and government in order to conserve Gamataja community forest.

The collaboration of local people with government leader was strong as previously, but over promising for local people make delay in answering some question made in giving quick response to their question this made inconvenient between government leader and local people this brings the weak attention of local people on forest conservation. But the awareness was created by concerned body on how to conserve the community forest. Open discussion should be made by the local community and the local government to solve conflict between local community and the government. Identification of those local people who actively participate on deforestation and creating job opportunity for youngsters and poor people found near the vicinity of the forest. Conflict between local community and government should be resolved by a panel discussion and creating another alternative source for forest fire as plantation trees in their individual garden. All development policies, projects or activity should be subjected to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in order to identify their potential impacts and proactive effort should be made to restore the degraded or damaged range areas, which are preceded by the development activities, such as those in the mining areas as well as in refugee-affected areas (Kideghesho *et, al.,* 2013)

Stabilizing Security and supremacy of the constitution, regular discussion with stakeholders based on how to solve local community problems way of conservation and sustainable utilization is important. The conservation benefits shared by local people should be clearly stated and paid specially the benefits resulted from plantation trees. Seeking solution for the problems raised by the local community as building infrastructure as road construction to make easier for regular monitoring of concerned body and those people who cut the forest should be suspected by crime creating another alternative source for forest fire as plantation trees in individual garden is needed.

Strengthen Conservation program in the villages to overcome the community forest conservation challenges. Political instability and insecurity should be resolved by the government. The community forest association leaders should give attention to keep forest cutting by resolving their conflict. The relationship of community forest association and district leader and other concerned body should strengthen and the government should respond to questions raised by local community. Equitable sharing of benefits resulted from plantation tree and making local people to own forest as their properties very important. Increasing collaborative efforts between local and international scientists in addressing the challenges facing biodiversity conservation across Tanzania's rangelands. Such efforts should target toward enhancing capacity of local scientists and practitioners particularly in advanced research skills and monitoring techniques of biological resources (Rija and Hassan, 2011).

5. CONCLUSION

Concerning conservation challenges overgrazing, agricultural expansion, settlement in the community forest was some major conservation challenges. Local community resides in the forest resource to sustain their life. Lack of coordination with stakeholders on community forest conservation was noticed. Some negative attitudes towards community forest conservation, especially by youngsters and absence of job opportunity for them was lacking. The local security and unlawful act by some local people were noticed. To safeguard the Gamataja community forest discussion making with local community, seeking alternative sources of firewood strengthen the collaboration of local people and insuring the conservation priority was important. Lastly this research might benefit the local community by providing information about conservation challenges of Gamataja community forest to stake holders and indicating the clue for the main problems recommend the possible solution.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- The regeneration status of Gamataja community forest shows poor, none and new regeneration status and so needs the highest conservation priority.
- Conservation challenges as overgrazing, agricultural expansion, weak government control for community forest conservation was noticed this should be resolved by stakeholders.
- There was misunderstanding between local governments on the benefits shared by local people this should be clearly stated by concerned body.
- There were some negative attitudes upon community forest conservation by local youngsters other community member this should be resolved by providing them a discussion forum with local peoples.
- Local peoples' dependence on community forest resource must be changed by providing the job opportunity for them and providing the other sources of fuel by facilitate the expansion of alternative energy sources, such as fuel saving technology diffusion in order to reduce dependency on fuel wood.
- There was an insecurity problem around the community forest this should be resolved by the local government.
- The collaboration among stakeholders was weak and this should be strengthened by all stakeholders and forests resource should be managed accordingly.
- Promoting environmental education and awareness for local communities for those highly their life depend on forest resources.
- The local knowledge should be supported by scientific knowledge in order to fill their gab concerning environmental protection.
- Capacity building should be given for the local people on community forest Conservation.
- Further study is needed on soil minerals, climate change and seeds.

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