FOREST MANAGEMENT IN TRANS-BOUNDARY LANDSCAPES: PRACTICES AND THREATS. A case of Nyatana Woodland in Mudzi, Zimbabwe.

By

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APPROVAL FORM

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The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Department of Geography the project entitled:

FOREST MANAGEMENT IN TRANSBOUNDARY LANDSCAPES: PRACTICES AND THREATS. A case of Nyatana Woodland in Mudzi, Zimbabwe.

Submitted by HITA DECENT in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master of Science Degree in Natural Resources Management and Environmental Sustainability.

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed forest management practices in the transboundary landscapes of Nyatana woodland. The research was prompted by a research gap in terms of forest resources mapping and mapping of changes in forest extent that resulted from threats such as changing land-use. The study filled the knowledge gap by providing information on forest management initiatives and identifying current threats to forest management at Nyatana woodland. The major objective of the research was to assess forest management practices and threats to forest management at Nyatana woodland. The research determined changes in forest cover at Nyatana woodland, investigated threats to transboundary forest resources and identified forest management practices at Nyatana woodland. The research design used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The instruments used to collect data included interviews, questionnaires and forest change detection mapping. A sample of 100 community members was drawn from two wards of Mudzi District, Mukota A and Chimukoko wards using stratified random sampling. The study revealed that the adjacent community realized the importance of Nyatana woodland and obtained numerous products such as wild fruits, firewood and grass from it. There was a decline in forest cover in the study area over the past 20 years mainly due to change in land use and expansion of agricultural activities. There were no formal safari activities taking place in Nyatana woodland and no financial benefit of woodland management to the local communities. The study recommended that the Nyatana Joint Management Trust (NJMT) should be empowered through training and financing to run the Safari operation themselves instead of relying on an external operator. This would provide economic incentives for adjacent communities to become involved in sustainable forest management. Forest change detection analysis should be done at a national level to cover different types of woodlands to identify how forest cover has changed over the years and factors that have affected this change.

Key words: forest woodland, forest management, forest change detection.
DECLARATION

I, the undersigned Hita Decent, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work and that it has neither been submitted nor presented at any other University for a similar degree award.

Signed:...........................................................

Date:..............................................................
DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my husband Stanlake Kudakwashe Hita and my two children Mandy Elizabeth Hita and Tinotenda Jonathan Hita.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the assistance received from the following people who made it possible for this research study to be undertaken. My supervisor, Professor D. Manatsa for his tireless guidance during the conducting and compilation of the entire research project. Dr. P. V. Moyo, my Research Methods and Statistics lecturer for his assistance during this study. My gratitude goes to my husband Mr. S. Hita, for his support and encouragement throughout this research study.

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