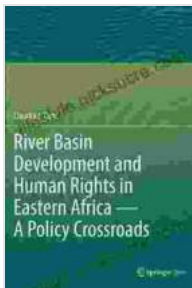


# River Basin Development and Human Rights in Eastern Africa: A Policy Crossroads

River basins are important natural resources that provide water, food, and energy to millions of people around the world. However, the development of river basins can also have a negative impact on human rights, particularly the rights of vulnerable populations such as indigenous peoples and the poor.



## River Basin Development and Human Rights in Eastern Africa — A Policy Crossroads by Claudia J. Carr

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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In Eastern Africa, river basin development is a major priority for governments. The region is home to a number of transboundary river basins, including the Nile, the Zambezi, and the Congo. These rivers provide water for irrigation, drinking, and transportation. They also support a rich diversity of plant and animal life.

However, the development of these river basins has also led to a number of human rights violations. These violations include the forced displacement

of indigenous peoples, the loss of livelihoods, and the pollution of water sources.

In order to ensure that river basin development benefits all members of society, it is essential to adopt a rights-based approach. This approach requires that the rights of all people, including vulnerable populations, are respected, protected, and fulfilled.

A rights-based approach to river basin development includes the following elements:

- Recognition of the rights of all people to water, food, and a healthy environment.
- Participation of all stakeholders in decision-making about river basin development.
- Assessment of the potential human rights impacts of river basin development projects.
- Mitigation of negative impacts and compensation for those who are affected.
- Monitoring and enforcement of human rights standards.

A rights-based approach to river basin development is essential to ensuring that development benefits are equitably shared and that the rights of vulnerable populations are protected. By adopting this approach, governments can harness the potential of river basin development to improve the lives of all their citizens.

## **Specific Examples of Human Rights Violations Related to River Basin Development in Eastern Africa**

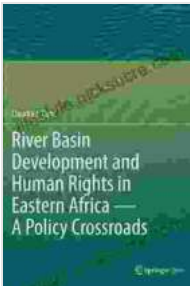
There are a number of specific examples of human rights violations that have occurred in Eastern Africa as a result of river basin development projects.

- In Ethiopia, the Gibe III dam project has displaced thousands of indigenous peoples from their traditional lands. The dam has also disrupted the flow of the Omo River, which has had a devastating impact on the livelihoods of downstream communities.
- In Kenya, the Tana Delta irrigation project has diverted water away from traditional grazing lands, which has led to the loss of livelihoods for pastoralist communities. The project has also polluted the Tana River, which has caused health problems for local communities.
- In Tanzania, the Rufiji River Basin Integrated Water Resources Management Project has led to the forced resettlement of thousands of people. The project has also caused environmental damage, which has had a negative impact on the livelihoods of local communities.

These are just a few examples of the human rights violations that have occurred as a result of river basin development projects in Eastern Africa. It is clear that a rights-based approach to river basin development is essential to ensuring that development benefits are equitably shared and that the rights of vulnerable populations are protected.

River basin development has the potential to bring significant benefits to Eastern Africa. However, it is important to ensure that development projects are planned and implemented in a way that respects, protects, and fulfills

the human rights of all people. A rights-based approach to river basin development is essential to achieving this goal.



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