

## IMPACT OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN OBAN DIVISION OF CROSS RIVER NATIONAL PARK

*Atim Ayuk Nchor<sup>1</sup> & Timothy Okey Ogar<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Forestry and Wildlife Resources Management, University of Calabar, Nigeria*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Geography, Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa, Nigeria*

---

Received: 29 Jun 2018

Accepted: 14 Aug 2018

Published: 31 Aug 2018

---

### **ABSTRACT**

*Ecotourism in recent times has become very relevant globally as one of the sources for income generation. However, though its strategies are tailored towards sustainable use of natural resources with little or no impact on the environment, protected area managers always encounter challenges that lead to the degradation of the environment. This study therefore, assessed the impact of ecotourism development in Oban Division of Cross River National Park. Primary and secondary data were used for this study. The sample size was 1% of the estimated population in each community. Therefore 53, 28, 35 and 14 questionnaires were administered in Obung, Aking, Nisan, and Orem communities respectively giving rise to a total sample size of 130. Also, 20 separate questionnaires were administered to the staffs of the park. The results were analyzed using descriptively. The results indicated that the community was fully aware of the presence and activities of the park (100%). Majority of the respondents (67.69%) were in support of the Park's benefit-sharing programme a situation that was supposed to encourage the communities to support the park and its programmes. The community's participation in tourism development was (69%) while participation in at policy implementation (10%) and policy formulation (7%) was less impressive. Funding was a major challenge as general allocations to the park were below proposed estimates submitted by the park. It was therefore recommended that adequate funds be made available to the park for effective execution of park projects.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Awareness, Funding, Challenge, Cross River National Park, Ecotourism*