

# **Shadows of Strife: The role of Environmental Law in Safeguarding People and the Environment in Times of Conflict**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Shining the light on Ecocide: Understanding the Impact of Environmental Degradation on the Karamoja region in Uganda**

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The Karamoja region in eastern Uganda has experienced conflict induced by climate change and ecocide. Ecocide encompasses severe environmental destruction, and stems from unsustainable human activities affecting the environment, such as deforestation, mining and overgrazing.

The Karamajong people have experienced decades of environmental degradation being product of climate change. The research illuminates the importance of both international and national mechanisms for addressing these challenges.

The research questions are: How does ecocide, predominantly from largescale and artisanal mining, and overgrazing, contribute to climate-induced conflicts among the Karamajong in Uganda? What role can the Rome Statute, play in addressing environmental obliteration and its associated socio-economic impacts in the Karamoja region? How can climate justice mechanisms, contribute to mitigating the devastating impacts and build collective community resilience in the region?

The region comprises of pastoralists. However, fragile ecosystems have been severely affected by overgrazing, deforestation, mineral extraction activities. The regions climate is characterized by prolonged severe droughts, forcing the pastoralists to migrate in search of water and pasture, often leading to violent clashes for grazing areas and water points.

There are proposals to recognize ecocide as an international crime under the Rome Statue of the International Criminal Court. Further climate justice mechanisms such as loss and damage financing and adaptation funding under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the African Union which emphasizes conflict resolution, could play a pivotal role in supporting the community.