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The Impact of Farming in Wetlands on Ground Biodiversity in Gweri Sub-county in Soroti District.

Wetlands are very important in the existence of human beings and ecosystem. Currently there has been encroachment on wetlands thus affecting the many advantages that they bring to both humanity and animal life. The study was conducted in Gweri sub-county in Soroti district to find out the impact of farming in wetlands on ground biodiversity. The study variables were: farming in wetlands and the environment.

Exploratory research design and purposive sampling were used because the research intended to explore new areas and because the respondents chosen at the Gweri sub-county were fairly knowledgeable about the subject. Questionnaires were developed and interviews were conducted to get the data.

The overall objective was to find out the impact of farming in wetlands/swamps to the environment. The specific objectives were: to find out the kind of farming activities in wetlands in Gweri sub-county in Soroti district; to find out how these farming activities impact on ground biodiversity in Gweri sub-county in Soroti district; and to come up with some suggestions to address the challenges brought about by wetland farming on ground biodiversity. The research questions were to find out: the kind of farming activities in wetlands in Gweri sub-county in Soroti district; how these farming activities impact on ground biodiversity in Gweri sub-county in Soroti district; and come up with some suggestions to address the challenges brought about by wetland farming on ground biodiversity. The gaps in the literature review were the positive and negative effects of farming on wetlands on ground biodiversity such as increased incomes and standard of living and the destabilisation of the eco-system, destruction of aquatic life and increased soil erosion thus leading to soil infertility. The study revealed that farming on wetlands has adverse effects that affects the environment and are long lasting effects while the economic gains/benefits got are short lived and benefit only few people. The Government needs to enforce its rules, regulations, policies and bylaws governing the use of wetlands, in-depth sensitisations need to be carried out and trainings should be conducted for local government field extension staff.

Key Words: Farming, Wetlands, Ground Biodiversity, Soroti District.