

Mr. Wirba Lucas: *Transhumance: A Dichotomy of Philosophy vs Environment in the Tikar Plain of Cameroon*

ABSTRACT

Investigating the unique influence of transhumance- the seasonal, cyclical movement of livestock and herders between high-altitude and lower-altitude pastures, on the basis of philosophy, environment and technology in a zone of population mixing such as the Tikar Plain of Cameroon, can be a sustainable and a socio-ecological way to peaceful coexistence of communities, livestock and the environment especially in a milieu where tempers often flare up between farmers and grazers that may lead to loss of lives, property damage, tension and insecurity in the local communities despite UNESCO's inclusive views. The objective of this work is to create an awareness of this critical but current and sometimes imperceptive issue and to propose a sustainable solution to curb especially its negative impacts and to enforce strong community spirit among the diverse ethnic groups in the Plain. A multi-method approach involving different data collection tools and equipment, field surveys and observations, interviews, focus group discussion and questionnaires, has been used. Quantitative and qualitative data sources have been obtained from primary and secondary data and analyzed using SPI and SPEI and GIS. Spatial analysis and the contemporary issues of technology and development have been highlighted. Findings show a strong significance between the herders and the local agrarian communities and the modifications brought by the use of technological tools of change especially in tracking the herders and their flocks, spots of regeneration, water points, pasture, location of huts, and other land use heritage to facilitate movements. Land use management and zonation, creation of productive cattle parks/ranches for all-year-round grazing, environmental education, cultural-community living, more sedentary population and the inclusion under Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, SWAC, ECOWAS and CEMAC would lead to sustainable transhumance and development in the Tikar Plain of Cameroon and in the Central, West and Sahelian states of Africa in general.

Key words: Transhumance, Sustainable, Multi-method approach, UNESCO, Tikar Plain