

## ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to evaluate and understand how the working environment of Kenya Forest Service (KFS) forest rangers affects their performance. The rangers, under the Enforcement and Compliance Division (ENCOM) of KFS are mandated to implement the enforcement of laws and policies pertaining to forests and its allied resources as prescribed in the Kenya Forest Act of 2005. Qualitative research approach was employed in the data collection using structured questionnaires in four forest stations. From a population of 46 rangers, 32 rangers, 8 serving in each of the three forest stations (Londiani, Masaita, and Sorget) of Kericho Zone, Mau complex and the Kericho Ecosystem Conservator's Office were sampled randomly. A pre-tested questionnaire on demographic trends, duration of service, work environment variables constituting of remuneration, living conditions, motivation, appraisals, rewards, empowerment, communication, work tools, mobility, uniforms, challenges and personal life were administered in January 2016. The performance indicators gave dissatisfaction rates of 59% and 63% in most of the parameters tested. Comparison of the finding of this study with the findings of the surveys of 2010 and 2013 in different conservancies in Kenya gave an index of 51.4% and 56.74% satisfaction respectively. The results therefore denote a progressive correlation between the working conditions drivers and the performance of forest rangers. Kenya Forest Service under ENCOM Division has a responsibility and large task to improve the working conditions and environment of the rangers. No matter how efficient conservation and regeneration programs may be undertaken while enforcement lags the cumulative performance of the entire process shall ever record dismal performance. More radical measures must be undertaken to enhance the performance and productivity of rangers through motivation, improve both their intrinsic and extrinsic working environment. KFS must as well acknowledge that low employee satisfaction rates shall ever incapacitate the forest rangers' performance.