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Devolution of Natural Resources Management: Institutional arrangement for common property rights regimes

The thesis analyses the process and the nature of devolution in natural resource management and the institutional arrangement for common property resources in Ethiopia. It deals with the question of whether the transfer of responsibility and authority from central government to local communities results in a more effective and more sustainable management of natural resources. In this framework, Lake Ziway Fishery has been selected as a case study area. The Ministry of Agriculture, in coordination with Lake Fishery Development Project (LFDP), is promoting community-based fishery development in Ethiopia to implement devolution of fishery management.

The findings show that the communities face some problems and difficulties concerning the implementation of the local fishery management. It has been figured out that a lack of clearly defined property rights and legal enforcement are the major constraints for sustainable natural resource management. Due to insufficient and overdue legislation, the communities cannot fully make use and benefit from their fishery resources. It is clear to state that the sustainability of common pool resources are threatened due to lack of clearly defined and enforced common property rights.

Based on these main findings, the study concludes with proposals for the improvement of existing situation at national and local level.

Key words: common property rights, fishery, natural resource management, devolution, Lake Ziway, Ethiopia,