

Exploring the use of conventional identification methods and Deoxyribonucleic Acid technology [And related technologies] in combating stock theft: The selected Southern African Development Community initiatives

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Abstract

Statistically, developing countries account for more than 2/3 of the world's livestock population. This sector contribute about 40% of the global value of agricultural outputs and support rural livelihoods, food and nutrition security of almost 1.3 billion people globally. Numerous tangible and intangible benefits are also provided. Negatively, within the context of developing economies, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region is also prone to stock theft and inadequate value placed on livestock practices. The objectives of this study were Two (02) folded, namely: **1)** Determining the conventional identification methods and DNA technology [And other related technological] methods and techniques used to combat stock theft; and **2)** Identify factors that hinder effectiveness in curbing stock theft in the SADC region respectively.

From a qualitative standpoint, the empirical evidence was obtained through documentary studies, semi-structured Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), aided with telephonic interviews. About 60 participants were targeted. This study presents selected findings from studies and publications on policing of stock theft in the SADC region to affirm the following findings: Despite the notion that international and local literature studies were found on the conventional identification methods, DNA technology [And related technologies] and stock theft, limited previous research on this topic in this region, often leave researchers with limited guidelines to work with in terms of establishing relevant contents on these subjects. It is also acknowledged that rapid growth and technological innovation have led to profound structural changes in this sector, calling for dire needs of using of the collated conventional identification methods and DNA technology, together with related technologies to combat stock theft in the selected SADC region effectively. Importantly, developing this sector can end extreme poverty, boost shared prosperity and feed a projected 9.7 billion people by 2050. It can also raise incomes among the poorest compared to other sectors.

For recommendations; this sector should be protected at all costs, all relevant stakeholders in the SADC region should collaborate to ease the current burden presented by this crime, as it is still touted as the strongest pillar of global food systems and a contributor to poverty reduction, food security and agricultural development. Therefore, effective cooperation between structures and/or other relevant stakeholders in the policing of stock theft in the SADC region is highly sought and should be incorporated into Anti-stock theft operations, by means of developing set of good practices guidelines, to efficiently assist in solving existing problems relating to this form of rural crime.

Keywords: Combating, Conventional identification methods/techniques, Deoxyribonucleic Acid technology [And other related technologies], Southern African Development community initiatives, Stock theft.

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