Wetlands are important life support systems. They possess a wealth of biological resources, which range from micro-organisms to complex and diversified forms of flora and fauna species. These are utilized by man for food, medicine as well as cultural and aesthetic purposes. Wetlands also play an important role in maintaining environmental quality. Despite the great importance of wetlands, encroachment for different values has greatly threatened them.   In view of this, this study was carried out to examine the value of wetland resources and implications to their conservation in Rurie and Nkunga wetlands, Meru District. Data on this were collected using questionnaires, interviews with user groups and key informants, observation and random walks and review of documented information.

Frequencies, totals and percentages were used to analyse descriptive data. Data was also subjected to Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) using the procedures of the Standard Statically Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). This was used to test the Null hypothesis that: there were no significant differences between the means of various categories of respondents on the way they rated the wetland values (i.e. by gender, education level, occupation, family size, age and the number of years a respondent had lived adjacent to the wetland). Differences between respondent's means were declared significant at $p < 0.05$. Separation of means was done using Tukey-HSD test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results of the study show that both wetlands are valued for various purposes by residents adjacent to Rurie and Nkunga wetlands. These include: sources of food, fodder, medicine, building material, saltlick, water, wood fuel and honey. They are also valued as areas for cultivation and ritual purposes. Some of these values have impacted on the wetlands negatively leading to loss of plants and degradation in general inspite of this, no direct measures have been implemented to cope with this loss of resources and the degradation in general by either the community or the government.

Further, the study revealed significant differences on the implications of resource use between Rurie and Nkunga wetlands as manifested in the current status of both wetlands. Nkunga wetland, for example, is endowed with rich and dense vegetation, which could partly be attributed to minimal anthropogenic influence in the wetland, due to its protected status allowing for plant regeneration. Rurie wetland, on the other hand, is not protected and has suffered greatly from devegetation. The latter scenario could be attributed to free access to resources in the wetland by the adjacent community as attested by the emergent 'tragedy of commons' in the use of the wetland.

On the whole, this study has underscored the value of wetland resources and some of the threats to wetland's resources resulting from these values. To control further degradation in Rurie wetland it is recommended that alternative economic options be sought to ease the pressure to utilize wetland resources among the adjacent residents. Farmers also need to be educated on, and made aware of the harmful effects of all activities that degrade both wetlands. Further, the local community should be involved in the management of the wetlands through a combination of some customary management with market-oriented solutions, based on conservation and sustainable use.