

## **COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE BENEFITS OF WETLAND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AND WETLAND DEVELOPMENT IN PORT HARCOURT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study compared the socio-economic, health and environmental benefits of wetland ecosystem services to wetland development by analyzing the benefits, services and their effects respectively on the environment and its inhabitants, using the result as a yardstick to recommend for policy review on wetland development in order to conserve nature's rich resources. This was achieved by making explicit the benefits/services of wetland ecosystem services and wetland development to the well-being of humans, plants and animals, and the associated impacts on wetlands/environment. This study will help decision makers in reviewing projects/development plans around wetland/coastal areas and also serve as a guide to the acceptance or rejection of such projects. This study provides an overview of wetland, ecosystem services and wetland development with its effects on the environment, especially as it affects the inhabitants of an area. The researcher also identified and revealed the conditions of the reclamation sites within the study area with detailed description of reclamation works on ground. The researcher identified study gaps in the area of the study, which are: (1) The measurement of (the quantity or quality) ecosystem services on the environment. (2) The description of interconnectivity or chain of interaction between the living members and non-living members of the ecosystem community. Overcoming the above-mentioned gaps is important, as it will help to enlighten wetland ecosystem services, thereby removing double counting of services in ecosystem service valuation. The study concluded that it is reasonable to preserve the wetlands, as their service provides life support system to the earth's inhabitants, while development on wetland destroys the natural environments.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Benefits of Ecosystem Services; Ecosystem; Ecosystem Services; Wetlands; Wetlands Reclamation Sites*

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### **Article History**

**Received: 20 Sep 2019 | Revised: 29 Sep 2019 | Accepted: 10 Oct 2019**

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