Human Wildlife Conflict and Hate:
An exploratory study in motives of hippo violence relating to HWC.

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Angry at the incident, area residents – issued 24 hour-notice to the Kenya Wildlife Service to move in and remove the animals (hippos) or they would kill them.

Murage 2023. Regarding a sewer worker being killed in Naivasha Kenya
“Wildlife can pose a direct threat to the safety, livelihoods and well-being of people. Retaliation against the species blamed often ensues, leading to conflict between groups of people about what should be done to resolve the situation.”

Different species different causes of conflict

Not new however due to human expansion becoming increasingly frequent.
What this looks like.

- Damage to agricultural crops
- Damage to commercial forests
- Vehicle collisions
- Livestock deaths
- Property damage
- Loss of human life through direct attacks

And more.
Hippo Human conflict

- Increase in hippo human conflict
- Worsening due to human expansion (Bradshaw and Diminin 2019)
- Fisheries and agricultural disruption, property damage and direct killings
- Proximity to water (Post 2017).

Hippo’s territorial

- Responsible for injuries and deaths of human beings.
- Hippo range reduced due to retributive killings.
- One of the causes of hippo population decline.
An overview of hippos

- Large herbivore megafauna species
- Classified as Vulnerable species with numbers dropping
- CITES appendix II

Plus a small population in Colombia.
Green criminology and hate

- Green criminology explores both crimes and harms against the environment and wildlife regardless of legality (Nurse 2016).

- Speciesism, animals seen as property and based on anthrocentric values


- Hippo deaths and harm due to HWC do happen, do some fall under hate crime typology?
Hippos and legality

- Have some protections in most jurisdictions.
- Prohibited from being killed within conservation zones.
- “Self defence” “Dangerous Animals”
- Little data on enforcement of hippo killings
- Wider wildlife crime enforcement issues create challenges
The reality of HHC

- Defensive attacks and kills to keep hippos away via in either pre-emptive killings or more lethal control methods (Kanga 2010, Kifle et al 2023).

- Retribution kills for injuring or killing people (Dunham et al 2010, Tefera et al 2024).

- Case studies of hippos being caught in hippo trenches and then killed for trespassing/injuring and killing humans (Teshome and Erena 2022).
Motives and beliefs

- Negative attitudes towards hippo population commonplace. As such were against conservation (Tefera et al 2024).

- Misconceptions (Kifle et al 2023).
  Most (95.7%) respondents believed hippos had no ecological as well as economic benefit;
  Belief that hippos are affecting their livelihoods. No discussions of sentiency.

- Many wanting species removed from local areas

- **In short, some aspects of HHC involves hippos being targeted due to negative perceptions**
Alleviating hate.

Different locals have different attitudes.

Strategies used which could alleviate hate based killings. Each come with challenges (Van Houdt and Trail 2022).

Compensation built into legislation. (Post 2017, Marowa et al 2021)


In short more work needs to be done.
Wider species and negative attitudes.


Different species, different levels of negative attitudes and different contributing factors. As such tailored research and strategies needed.
Conclusion.

- Hippo human conflict is a growing issue due to human expansion and the territorial nature of hippos.

- Deaths of hippos do happen some of which are motivated by hatred of species.

- By acknowledging this, more work can be done to help alleviate HHC deaths.
Thank you