

Environmental issues

Business



There are three geographical cities in the world that have been of crucial interest to me. These are the City of Beijing in China, City of Manchester in the Great Britain, and the city of Nairobi in Kenya.

These cities illustrate the latest environmental trends facing the world from different locations. Nairobi, for instance, is a classic presentation of emerging developing nations faced with environmental imbalance in their quest to become middle level economies. The three cities have different environmental issues, with some being common to each country while others are unique. Nairobi First, I will start with the city of Nairobi. Nairobi is one of the fastest growing cities in Africa and serves as the economic hub for Eastern and Central Africa.

Currently, the city faces myriad of environmental issues ranging from pollution to informal settlements. In this study, the three environmental issues of concern have rapid urbanization, air and water pollution and informal settlements. Nairobi, which was referred as the “ Green City in the Sun”, has been under scathing attack of rapid urbanization. The city, which is in a list of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), was once considered green zone full of natural forests and wetlands (Tibaijuka, 2007). Being a faster growing city housing almost eight percent of the country’s population, it has experienced a rapid conversion of natural environment to physical buildings and infrastructure. Consequently, natural areas that harbor bushlands and rangelands are quickly being cleared to pave way for the construction of mega buildings and superhighways like Thika superhighway.

Besides infrastructural developments, high influx in population means that, much of the forested lands have to be converted into farmlands to feed urban population. This conversion of surrounding forest lands into farm lands has completely changed the beautiful scenery of the city and prompting to degrade it further if not appropriately addressed (Tibaijuka, 2007). Informal settlement is another striking environmental issue for Nairobi city. Informal settlements in the city are the direct result of bumping growth which has increased the prices of land beyond the reach of poor majority. Land has become a preserve of the rich while the poor urban dwellers have been forced to settle in fragile areas like Kibera, the world's greatest slum.

Inadequate and inefficient urban planning and high levels of unemployment also continue to fuel informal settlements. Air and water pollution is another issue of environmental problems for Nairobi. Air pollution specifically, is a problem which is threatening the lives of city dwellers. Such pollution is majorly carried out by industries, vehicle emissions, charcoal use for cooking and burning of wastes in the open by municipal councils. Water pollution which related to air pollution is also evident in the city.

The city's major water sources like Ndakaini, Ruiru and Susumua face a lot of compromise ranging from high fluoride content to water treatment problems (Tibaijuka, 2007).