

## Abstract

Several schools of thought across scientific disciplines have dealt with the phenomenon of conflicts over natural resources. This has enriched the debate but like-wise has also blurred the discussion especially as a result of the generic use of some concepts such as natural resources. This chapter seeks insights in some of these conceptual misunderstandings especially towards the use of the word natural in resources. Examples are given how these varying understandings impact the way different scholars include or exclude certain kinds of natural resources. Furthermore, attention is devoted to work conducted by environmental scientists, having experienced similar problems within their own discipline, in building a model that aimed to set a standard in their field. This framework is elaborated upon by the authors following a political economy angle in an attempt to widen it to the conflict context. The result is an analytical model that underlines attention for history and different geographical scales of analysis. The importance of the role of politics and a globalised world in understanding natural resource conflicts is also stressed. An example from Kenya shows that, among others, political aspects, at some time in the course of development of the conflict are likely to come into play and should be included in any thorough understanding of conflicts over natural resources.