

Sustaining Wetlands: Kenya's Pathway to Biodiversity Conservation

Submitting organisation

[Wetlands International](#)

Country

Kenya

STRP Output

Task 5.2: [Scaling up wetland conservation and restoration to deliver the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#)

Description

Wetlands International continues to influence policies and actions that enhance management of wetlands and biodiversity in Kenya. Particularly, Wetlands International is supporting the national process on the revision of NBSAP targets to align with the KMGBF targets to integrate wetlands conservation. The targets have been finalised awaiting validation. Other actions include the development of the standardised biodiversity framework and conducting wetlands inventory to mainstream within county special plans with a focus on mangrove ecosystems.

While progress has been made from a policy perspective, challenges persist, including resource constraints and competing land-use pressures. To address these challenges and implement the NBSAP's wetland conservation goals, the following actions are being implemented.

In Lamu County, Wetlands International collaborates with the County Government and wetland adjacent communities to implement integrated pathways for wetland conservation and land-use planning: These include:

Conducting research and sharing knowledge on the value of mangrove wetlands and interconnectedness with other ecosystems. This has helped inform the development and implementation of effective conservation and management strategies to address key drivers of loss and degradation. For instance, Lamu County's spatial plan has delineated zones for different land uses, including protected areas, buffer zones, and development areas, ensuring that wetlands are afforded appropriate levels of protection.

We have also implemented initiatives with a focus on strengthening the resilience of coastal communities and wetlands to changing weather patterns. This includes restoring and conserving mangrove ecosystems through active community involvement using ecological mangrove restoration approaches.

Capacity strengthening programmes for local communities and government officials including establishing community-led mangrove monitoring and management groups to oversee restoration efforts have been initiated.

To achieve the ambitious targets set in the NBSAPs, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms embedded within spatial planning processes will be key in the assessment of the effectiveness of conservation measures and adapting to changing environmental conditions. Tools such as the Global

Mangrove Watch are useful to map and identify successes, including the extent and coverage of mangrove wetlands as a result of spatial planning processes. Securing funding mechanisms to among others, support enforcement of zoning regulations that prioritise the protection of wetlands and inland waters from incompatible land uses, enhance stakeholder collaboration and scale up conservation efforts are needed.

Key Messages

- Kenya's commitment to biodiversity conservation aligns with the Post-2020 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). Led by the Ministry of Environment Climate Change and Forestry, the process of aligning Kenya's National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (NBSAP) with the KMGBF, aims to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2030 and achieve harmony with nature by 2050.
- This participatory process has led to the outlining of Kenya's biodiversity conservation approach. Inland, marine and coastal wetlands and their biodiversity have been acknowledged in Kenya's draft NBSAP with specific targets and priority actions outlined therein.
- To deliver the targets identified in the draft NBSAP, the following policies, actions and pathways which include inland, marine and coastal wetlands have been identified:
- The integration of wetland considerations into national and local spatial planning processes is a key pathway for delivering target 1 of the NBSAP. Kenya's National Spatial Plan (2015-2045) provides a comprehensive framework for sustainable land and sea use activities. This plan has been cascaded into the sub-national level. For instance, the Lamu County Spatial Plan (2016-2026) prioritises the conservation of mangrove wetlands and integrates wetland protection into development planning.
- From a policy perspective, Kenya's Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Policy of 2009 explicitly focuses on the sustainable management of coastal areas, including wetlands. The policy framework emphasises the conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems, aligning with the objectives of the NBSAP.
- The National Wetlands Policy, 2015 provides for the identification of wetlands for designation and gazettment as conservation areas and to develop and implement appropriate management plans.
- One of the goals of the Kenya Wetlands Restoration Strategy (2023-2032) is to develop strategies for the implementation of wetland conservation and Management at county and national levels. These include appropriate wetlands management plans.

Additional information

- [Integrated Coastal Zone Management Policy \(2009\)](#)
- [Kenya National Spatial Plan \(2015 – 2045\)](#)
- [Lamu County Spatial Plan \(2016 - 2026\)](#)

Contact point

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