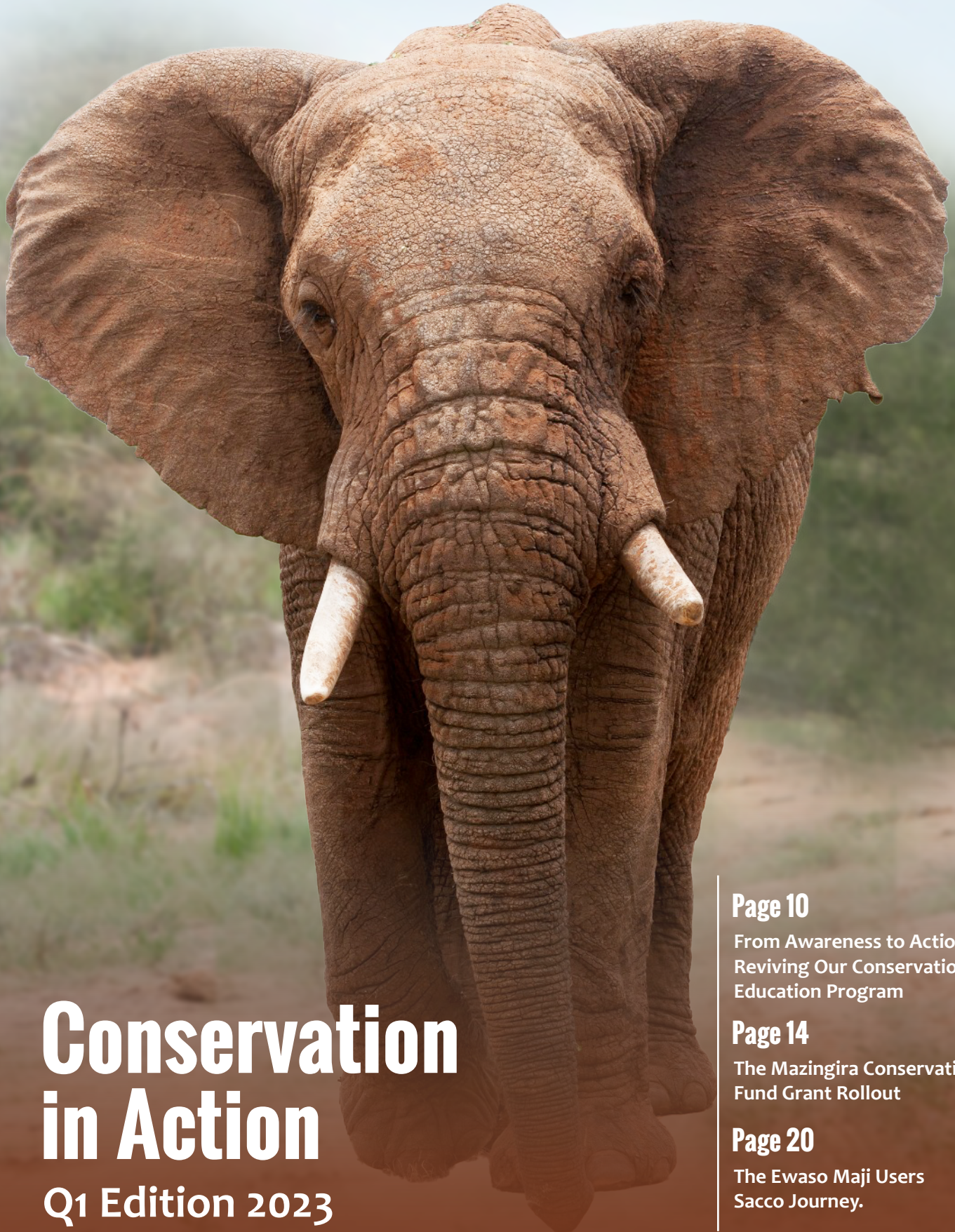




Laikipia Wildlife Forum
CONSERVATION IN ACTION

Forum Focus Newsletter



Conservation in Action

Q1 Edition 2023

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is with immense pleasure that we present the Laikipia Wildlife Forum Quarter 1 Newsletter, highlighting our activities and achievements in the conservation sector. Our team has been working tirelessly towards promoting good governance and sustainability in the wildlife and natural resource management sector. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all our development partners who have provided us with financial, technical, and other forms of support in the delivery of our programs.

We would also like to acknowledge the National and County Governments, Private Sector, and Civil Society organizations for their continuous collaboration with us in promoting our work on wildlife and natural resource management. The achievements and milestones we have made as a team in Laikipia Wildlife Forum are a result of the excellent collaboration by committed staff and stakeholders.

We recognize that it takes great teamwork to realize significant results. As such, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to all our members for their collaborative support and valuable contributions towards the success of our programs. We believe that this Newsletter captures our work, achievements, and lessons learned over this first quarter, and we hope that it will inspire us to continue working towards a sustainable future for our wildlife and natural resources.

CHAIRS STATEMENT



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Romano Kiome (PhD, CBS)

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Laikipia landscape has borne the effects of the long drought, documented as the worst in the last four decades. One of the main effects that impacted humans, their livelihoods and operations of ecosystems, is scarcity of water. Streams and rivers dried up hence reducing water supply. With limited supply, crops dried, resulting in low food supply.

There was also very limited grass and water for livestock, exacerbating conflicts over these two resources, particularly between upstream and downstream users.

Those in urban areas had their taps dry and had to spend more to purchase water. However, this took a turn when the rains began in mid-March 2023.

Water scarcity had become even more of a concern when the Water Resources Authority (WRA) increased the cost of water from 50 Kenya cents to Kshs. 5 per cubic meter. This impacted many water users within the landscape, making the commodity inaccessible. As a result, the Mount Kenya Ewaso Water Partnership (MKEWP), Likii Water Resource Users Association, Likiundu Water Resource Users Association and five individuals, petitioned against relevant government agencies over this issue. This case is pending hearing.

Despite these challenges, through our partner organization, the Ewaso Maji Users SACCO (EMU SACCO), we supported smallholder farmers to thrive in a changing environment by providing finances for water infrastructure towards improved water security. Other drought management measures include the Laikipia drought relief and large scale feeding program done by Governors Mugie House.

At the national level, LWF participated in public consultation meetings that were organized countrywide by the Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation.

The meetings sought the views of, as well as sensitized stakeholders on the importance of including Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the Water Act of 2016.

This inclusion and others, are found in the draft Water (Amendment) Act, 2023.

Laikipia Tourism Association (LTA) implements LWF's tourism programme. One of the ways it does this is by partnering with the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) to promote tourism. This is because Laikipia landscape is one of the unique tourism destinations in Kenya and you can read more about this from the opinion piece by Steve Mills. He talks about unlocking the potential of Laikipia County by enhancing tourism and economic growth.

Our other program is Wildlife and to this end, we joined the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and other stakeholders in commemorating the World Wildlife Day on 3rd March, by cleaning River Nanyuki.

Our team has been working towards reviving the Conservation Education Programme through which we had impacted many youths by making them responsible for their environment as well as defining their careers. Read more about this in our 'Back to Nature: Reviving Our Conservation Education Program.'

We implement a rangelands program too, in Laikipia landscape and wish to invite you to learn more about LWF's journey in rangeland management. We narrate this to you from the Grassroots to the Great Plains; come journey with us.

Ms. Celline Achieng'
Executive Director
Laikipia Wildlife Forum

ABOUT LAIKIPIA WILDLIFE FORUM

Laikipia Wildlife Forum also referred to as LWF, is a dynamic membership led conservation organization supporting, coordinating and facilitating conservation and natural resource management initiatives within the greater Laikipia Landscape.

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Our mantra of “Forumness” calls on us to bring people together to work on matters relevant to natural resource management. LWF provides a platform for people to find solutions to common problems. This is what makes it unique and is the origin of Laikipia Wildlife Forum.

OUR VISION

To nurture, support, and partner with organizations championing wildlife conservation and sustainable natural resource management within the greater Laikipia region

OUR MISSION

To realize a productive and robust Upper Ewaso Ng'iro landscape that supports livelihoods and healthy populations of wildlife



LWF provides a platform for people to find solutions to common problems

THE BOARD

The Laikipia Wildlife Forum's 15-member board is composed of individuals from different organizations, all of whom possess advanced knowledge and expertise in the fields of wildlife conservation, natural resource management, and sustainable development.

The board is chaired by Dr. Romano Kiome, a highly respected figure in the conservation sector, who brings his extensive experience and expertise to guide the organization's strategic direction. The diversity of the board members' backgrounds and experiences ensures that the Laikipia Wildlife Forum is well-equipped to address the complex challenges facing the conservation sector and to develop innovative solutions that promote sustainable development and the preservation of natural resources in the region.



MEET THE TEAM

Our team is comprised of dedicated and talented professionals who work tirelessly to promote the conservation of wildlife and natural resources in the region. Leading the team is Celline Achieng' who serves as the Executive Director. Celline brings advanced knowledge and expertise with more than two decades of work in the environment, natural resource management, and conservation sectors in the Eastern Africa region and beyond.



Celline Achieng'
Executive Director



Rosemary Oyugi
Finance & Administration Manager



Benedict Erick Omondi
Communications Manager



Peter Mathenge
Program Officer



Susan Gathoni
Water Resource Specialist



John Kiongo
Membership & Grants Officer



Emmanuel Obuchere
Transport Manager



Rosemary Sanoe
Office Assistant



Gabriel Maina
Grounds Manager



FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION: REVIVING OUR CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF) is proud to announce the intent to revive its conservation education program aimed at creating awareness and behavior change among communities living in and around the greater Laikipia landscape.



The program, which was halted a few years ago, seeks to create a community of conservation-minded individuals and organizations who not only understand the importance of wildlife conservation and natural resource management but are also actively involved in it.

The Conservation Education Program desired objectives will be achieved by increasing knowledge and awareness among target audiences on conservation issues, promoting behavior change by encouraging the adoption of sustainable and conservation-friendly practices in their daily lives, empowering them to participate in conservation efforts, and promoting self-sustainability of the program through enterprise initiatives.

To achieve these objectives, the conservation education program will have several components, including curriculum development, teacher training, student education, community engagement, enterprise development, and fundraising strategies. The program will develop a comprehensive conservation education curriculum, conduct teacher-training workshops, provide conservation education to students through various activities including growing of trees, engage with local communities to promote awareness and behavior change, explore enterprise initiatives to generate income, and seek funding from various sources.

Partnering with stakeholders already in this sphere within the landscape will be crucial in achieving the program's objectives. The program seeks to build on existing successes and lessons learned from past activities, including the Bus Program, Resource Centers, Radio Programs, Conservation Short Films, Training of Conservation Guides, and Training of Teachers.

We believe that the revamped conservation education program will have a significant impact on the communities living in and around the Laikipia landscape. It will not only promote conservation awareness and behavior change but also generate income to ensure long-term sustainability. We, therefore, urge all stakeholders, including private sector companies, governmental Organizations, the academia, Non-Governmental organizations including Foundations, and individuals, to support this noble cause.



We believe that the revamped conservation education program will have a significant impact on the communities living in and around the Laikipia landscape.

Together, we can create a community of conservation-minded individuals and organizations who will not only protect our wildlife but also contribute to sustainable natural resource management for the benefit of future generations. Please, join us in this new effort to revive the program as we seek to walk this journey again of conservation education in the Laikipia landscape!

EMBRACING NEW PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE LEO PROJECT AND PATHWAYS POLICY INSTITUTE

As an organization, we have continued to tirelessly work towards promoting conservation and sustainable development in the greater Laikipia region. We have been at the forefront of developing innovative strategies to address the complex challenges facing the region, including habitat loss, wildlife conflict and climate change. In recent months, LWF has entered into partnerships with two organizations, the Leo Project and the Pathways Policy Institute, to advance their shared goals of conservation education and climate action.

The Leo Project is a non-profit organization that seeks to promote sustainable development by fostering partnerships between communities, businesses, and conservation organizations. The organization is committed to supporting local communities in conserving their natural resources while improving their livelihoods.



The Leo Project has been working closely with LWF to identify opportunities for co-fundraising and joint conservation initiatives. Through this partnership, LWF hopes to leverage the expertise and networks of the Leo Project to attract funding and support for their conservation and sustainable development programs. The Pathways Policy Institute is a think-tank that focuses on developing evidence-based policies to address environmental and social challenges. The organization is committed to advancing policies that promote sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and climate action. LWF has partnered with the Pathways Policy Institute to strengthen their advocacy and policy influence efforts. The partnership will enable LWF to access the latest research and policy analysis on conservation and climate issues, and to use this information to inform their advocacy and policy work.

The partnerships with the Leo Project and Pathways Policy Institute are a testament to LWF's commitment to collaboration and innovation in addressing the challenges facing the region. The partnerships will enable LWF to leverage the strengths and resources of these organizations to advance their shared goals of conservation education and climate action.

In addition to their joint conservation and advocacy initiatives, LWF, the Leo Project, and the Pathways Policy Institute are also working together to promote community engagement on conservation and climate action. The organizations believe that education and awareness-raising are critical components of promoting behavior change and building support for conservation and sustainability initiatives.





As an organization, we have continued to tirelessly work towards promoting conservation and sustainable development in the greater Laikipia region

LWF has a strong track record of working with local communities to promote conservation and sustainable development. The organization has developed innovative programs to promote sustainable land use, wildlife-friendly farming practices, and eco-tourism. LWF is working towards reestablishing its environmental education programs in local schools to promote awareness and understanding of conservation and climate issues.

In conclusion, the partnerships between LWF, the Leo Project, and the Pathways Policy Institute represent a new and exciting chapter in the organization's efforts to promote conservation, education, and climate action in the region. These partnerships will enable LWF to leverage the strengths and resources of these organizations to advance their shared goals, and to develop innovative programs.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO CONSERVATION: THE MAZINGIRA CONSERVATION FUND GRANT ROLLOUT

Under the direction of the Laikipia Wildlife Forum, a new program called the Mazingira Conservation Fund (MCF) has been launched to promote practical conservation actions. The MCF's mission is to channel funds to support local initiatives that result in benefits to people, wildlife, and their habitats, while its vision is to combine conservation, community, and commerce in positive benefits for biodiversity and their habitats.

The MCF's thematic grant areas cover assessments and feasibility studies, community conservation actions, citizen science, capacity building and skills development, internships, and conservation education. These thematic areas are designed to address the root causes of environmental issues and promote measurable and quantifiable impacts.

Numerous groups submitted concepts to be awarded the grant, and after a rigorous selection process, only five groups were selected. These groups, namely the Ilmamsi Community Forest Association, Ontulili Primates Protection, The Leo Project, Oramat Lenaboisho Cooperative Society, and Naatum Women's Group, were chosen based on their ability to promote habitat conservation, support the MCF's primary thematic areas, demonstrate funding support, contribute to conservation actions with a multiplier effect, and address the root cause of environmental issues.



Representatives from these groups were invited for a two-day grant proposal development training, where they learned how to develop a full proposal, create a results framework, work plan, monitor and evaluate, and promote their initiatives on social media.

The training was engaging and promoted peer learning, ensuring that participants were well-equipped to develop comprehensive grant proposals.

The launch of the Mazingira Conservation Fund has conservationists excited because it creates a fresh chance to support Local Conservation and advance sustainable environmental practices.





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Representatives of Naatum Women Group in deep deliberations during one of the break-out sessions at the MCF grant proposal training



These five organizations will be able to create cutting-edge solutions with the help of the MCF that benefit both people and wildlife, while having a positive effect on biodiversity and their ecosystems.

For Kenyan conservationists, the launch of the Mazingira Conservation Fund represents a critical turning point in the struggle to preserve our ecosystem.

We can be confident as we look to the future that programs like the MCF will assist us in creating a more sustainable world for future generations.

KENYA'S NEW WATER LEVIES: A FINANCIAL BURDEN ON USERS



The water sector is an essential part of any economy, and Kenya is no exception. With the increasing demand for water and the challenges brought about by climate change, the government is constantly reviewing and implementing policies to ensure efficient management and allocation of water resources. Recently, the Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation implemented the New Water Rules 2021, which has raised concerns among Water Resource Users Associations (WRUAs) in the Ewaso Nyiro North Basin region

This is likely to have far reaching impacts to the community water projects who are members of the WRUAs. Possible short-term implications will be evidenced by non-operational WRUAs who rely on the members' subscription to finance their operations.

The key salient features in the New Water Rules 2021 which directly affects the water users are discussed below:

Domestic, public and livestock permit holders will pay Sh5 for 1000 litres of water up from 50 cents for the same volume. This signifies a 1000 per cent increase, aggravating woes occasioned by the drought which is Kenya's worst in 40 years even as a majority of the users term the new charges too punitive.

Permit fees for Class A, B, C and D have also been increased significantly, in addition users will now be required to pay the water bills monthly and not quarterly as has been happening.

The five-year renewable permit for classes A, B and C has been increased to Sh3,000, Sh25, 000 and Sh45, 000 from Sh1,000, Sh7, 500 and Sh25, 000 respectively.

The community water projects alleged the government's plan to deny them water saying the new charges were too high for a majority of them to afford due to the harsh economic times even as the government is set to launch a water protection police unit that will be tasked with protecting critical water assets.

The majority of the counties in the ENNBA region are usually the worst hit by the drought exposing over 5 million Kenyans to hunger and resulting in the death of hundreds of thousands of animals. Hence, the biggest question revolves around the affordability. A number of sentiments have been raised by the community members clearing stating their struggle to pay 50 cents per cubic metre.

For irrigation the new water levies will be Sh2 per cubic metre for the first 300 cubic metres in a day and Sh2.5 if one uses more than 300 cubic metres daily.

Fish farmers will pay Sh1 per cubic metre of water while commercial or industrial Sh5 for the same volume for the first 300 cubic metres in a day and Sh6 for over 300 cubic metres.

Besides the monthly water use charge, permit holders will also pay a levy amounting to 5 per cent of the monthly water user fee as a water conservancy levy. The renewal of the permit is required to be done three months before its expiry.



it is important for the government to recognize that water usage is metered at the point of abstraction and not at the household level

Regulation 36 (2) indicates a penalty of Sh25, 000 for each month of delay in submitting the application for renewal meaning if one's permit is expiring in December and they fail to apply for renewal in October and do so late or after expiry, they will pay Sh75, 000 in penalties.

In the event, one extracts water exceeding the permitted amount by over five per cent, they will be charged Sh10 per cubic metre of water, the regulation indicates.

The regulations further indicate that payment of water use charges is a major condition for the permit and a basis for suspension or revocation of the permit.

“The permit will automatically lapse if the holder fails to apply for renewal on expiry and the cancellation process will be immediately initiated”.

Users who reconnect abstraction facilities without consent from WRA after the authority disconnects an intake due to non-payment will be liable to a fine not exceeding Sh1 million or imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or both.

Those who have installed and used water from their own flood water storage facilities will be entitled to a waiver of the premium payable if the storage equals or exceeds 90 days of water demand, otherwise, the premium payable will be calculated on a pro-rata basis. Mount Kenya Ewaso Water Partnership which provides a platform to address water related challenges, has remained very vocal towards amplifying the voice of the WRUAs and community water projects. The platform has brought together majority of WRUAs to seek way forwards on this issue.

One of the pertinent issues which is being raised by the members is the question of public participation. The Ministry did not conduct adequate consultations with the different water users in this issue. The failure to adhere to a senate report dated 9th July 2022 which declared these rules null and void and ordered for a fresh public participation shows clearly the total disregard of the process in policy issues.

Currently, the WRUAs resolved to seek legal redress and have filed a petition challenging the implementation of the New Water Rules 2021. This matter is yet to be determined. This has been made possible through pooling of resources together from the 20 most active WRUAs in the upper Ewaso Ng'iro basin.

In conclusion, it is important for the government to recognize that water usage is metered at the point of abstraction and not at the household level. As such, any changes in water resource use charges will have far-reaching impacts on community water projects and other key users such as flower farms, especially in regions like the Ewaso Nyiro North Basin where water scarcity is a perennial problem. Therefore, sufficient consultations with the stakeholders should be given priority before implementing such rules to ensure that they are fair and equitable for all parties involved. This will not only ensure sustainable water management practices but also foster good relations between the government and the water users in the long term.



MINING STRATEGIES FOR PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT IN THE WATER SECTOR

Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF), in partnership with the Kenya Water and Sanitation Network (KEWASNET), supported Mount Kenya Ewaso Water Partnership to hold a technical working group workshop in Embu with the theme of private sector engagement in the water sector.

The workshop brought together stakeholders from CSOs, WRUAs, Water Companies, Water Resources Authority and County Governments, and the main output was a position paper recommending strategies for involving the private sector in improving the service delivery and management of water resources.

The timing of the workshop was particularly relevant, given the proposed amendments to the Water Act that would allow for private sector involvement through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). The position paper produced during the workshop will serve as a guide for the private sector's engagement in the water sector, in line with the proposed amendments.

The recommendations in the position paper include partnering with private companies to improve infrastructure development, financing water projects, and providing technical assistance to improve water efficiency.



The position paper produced during the workshop will serve as a guide for the private sector's engagement in the water sector, in line with the proposed amendments

The paper also calls for increased collaboration between the private sector and government entities to develop policies and regulations that support private sector involvement in the water sector.

With the proposed amendments to the Water Act, private sector involvement in the water sector is set to increase, and LWF is committed to supporting the implementation of the position paper's recommendations. The organization will continue to work with partners and stakeholders to improve water service delivery and management in Kenya and ensure that water resources are sustainably managed for the benefit of present and future generations.



HARVESTING WATER, HARVESTING HOPE: THE EWASO MAJI USERS SACCO JOURNEY

In the semi-arid region of Laikipia, where water is a scarce commodity, a community-based organization is making a significant impact in ensuring that farmers are water secure. Ewaso Maji Users Sacco (EMU- SACCO) is a farmer-led organization that provides affordable loans to its members to finance their water projects.

Through EMU-SACCO, farmers are connected to service providers offering technologies for water harvesting at the farm level. These technologies include drip irrigation systems, dam liners, rainwater harvesting tanks, and solar-powered water pumps, among others. EMU-SACCO also provides technical expertise to farmers in the installation and maintenance of these technologies, ensuring that the systems are running efficiently.

One of the beneficiaries of EMU-SACCO's initiatives is Kaguma Manampiu, a farmer who owns a small farm in Laikipia. Manampiu has been a member of EMU-SACCO for the past one year and has accessed a loan to install a 2000 cubic meters water pan on his farm.

Before the installation of the water pan, Elijah's farm was reliant on erratic rainfall patterns, and he could only cultivate his land during the rainy season. With the new system, Manampiu has been able to irrigate his farm throughout the recently dry spell, increasing his crop yields significantly.

EMU-SACCO's work is not only benefiting individual farmers but is also contributing to the larger ecosystem. By providing farmers with sustainable access to water, EMU-SACCO is reducing the pressure on the region's natural water sources, including rivers and springs. This, in turn, is preserving the water resources for wildlife that rely on them, including elephants, lions, and giraffes.

EMU-SACCO's efforts in promoting water security are aligned with Laikipia Wildlife Forum's vision of sustainable land use practices that benefit both people and wildlife.





Through collaboration with organizations such as EMU-SACCO, Laikipia Wildlife Forum is working towards a future where communities can thrive while coexisting with the region's diverse wildlife.

EMU-SACCO's success story is a testament to the power of community-led initiatives in promoting sustainable development.

As EMU-SACCO continues to empower farmers in the greater Laikipia landscape, the organization is setting an example for other communities across Africa that access to water can be a reality, even in the most arid regions.





UNLOCKING THE UNTAPPED POTENTIAL OF LAIKIPIA COUNTY: ENHANCING TOURISM FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

Laikipia County, located in central Kenya, is a region with immense potential for tourism. It is home to a diverse range of wildlife, breathtaking landscapes, and rich cultural heritage, making it an ideal destination for both local and international tourists. However, despite its vast potential, tourism in Laikipia County is yet to reach its full potential. Thus, there is a need to enhance tourism in Laikipia County to tap into its economic potential fully.

One way to enhance tourism in Laikipia County is through the development of infrastructure. The county needs to invest in roads, airports, and other transportation systems that can facilitate easy movement of tourists to various tourist destinations.

This would make it easier for tourists to access the different attractions in Laikipia County, thus increasing their number and length of stay in the region.

Another way to enhance tourism in Laikipia County is by promoting cultural and natural attractions. The county is home to several cultural festivals, such as the Ngare Ndare Forest Festival and Laikipia Highland Games. Promoting such events can help draw in more visitors and showcase the county's unique cultural heritage.

Additionally, the county is home to several wildlife conservancies, such as the Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Lolldaiga Conservancy, Borana and Illingwesi Conservancy. Tourists are drawn to these conservancies to experience wildlife and nature. The county can promote these conservancies and ensure that they are well managed and conserved to maintain their appeal to tourists.



Laikipia is home to a diverse range of wildlife, breathtaking landscapes, and rich cultural heritage, making it an ideal destination for both local and international tourists

NETWORKING FOR GROWTH: LAIKIPIA TOURISM ASSOCIATION MEMBERS CONNECT WITH TRADE PARTNERS AT KTB'S FUN DAY

The Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) is currently undertaking a six-month domestic tourism campaign dubbed #YouDeserveAHoliday. This campaign aims to support the tourism industry by encouraging Kenyans to travel to various tourism destinations within the country. The event is timely as the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected the tourism industry, leading to reduced uptake of hospitality services, the closure of properties, and the laying off of staff in the sector.

To ensure the success of the campaign, KTB has collaborated with 21 trade partners, including tour operators, hoteliers, and airlines, in joint marketing initiatives to reach out to the domestic target audience. The campaign is promoted through various touchpoints, including corporate organizations that employ Kenyan locals and residents, mall and church activations, as well as media promotion, in order to sustain long-term demand for domestic travel.



Former LWF chair Rt. Major-General Peter Waweru, shares his tourism insights with County Director of Tourism, Paul Kimiri and John Kiongo of LTA during the Kenya Tourism Board fun day



Trade partners connect with LTA members and other attendees during the Kenya Tourism Board Fun Day at the Nanyuki Sports club



This campaign aims to support the tourism industry by encouraging Kenyans to travel to various tourism destinations within the country

As part of the campaign, KTB organized a fun day at Nanyuki Sports Club on March 25, 2023, and members of the Laikipia Tourism Association were invited to attend. The event was an excellent opportunity for Laikipia Tourism Association members to interact with KTB staff, trade partners, and other members of the tourism industry. The event was free of charge, and it allowed participants to exchange contacts and have B2B sessions with the trade partners, ultimately gaining insights into what Laikipia has to offer.

The event was significant for the Laikipia Tourism Association as it provided a platform for our members to network and exchange ideas with other players in the tourism industry. Through such interactions, members can learn from others' experiences, share their own, and develop partnerships that can lead to

the growth and development of the tourism sector in Laikipia County.

The Laikipia Tourism Association aims to continue supporting such initiatives as they provide a great marketing platform for its members. The association recognizes the importance of such events in marketing Laikipia's tourist destinations and showcasing the unique experiences available in the region.

The event highlighted the importance of domestic tourism in supporting the industry, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Laikipia Tourism Association will continue to support such initiatives in the future to promote the county's tourism industry and create awareness about the unique experiences available in the region.



LAIKIPIA DROUGHT RELIEF AND OUR LARGE SCALE FEEDING PROGRAM

Approximately 183,000 people in Laikipia are facing famine; lack of pasture and food in homes prompts parents to send their children to herd in far away lands to ensure the survival of their livestock. It is during these times, when school attendance decreases, that there is a significant increase of early girl marriages, early pregnancies, stock thefts and insecurities.

With the logistical support of Mugie Conservancy, Governors' Camp Collection rolled out a large-scale feeding program to twelve schools in the pastoralist communities that surround Mugie Conservancy. Providing schools with food significantly improves attendance and concentration in class and therefore reduces the negative ripple effects that arise from poor attendance.

It costs USD7000 to provide one nutritious meal per day to all of the 2,470 students for one term.

In order to start raising funds, Governors' created an online fundraiser raffle and donated an amazing FIVE night Kenya Safari for TWO people towards this cause with return flights on Governors' Aviation to the Masai Mara worth USD 8,500! The lucky winner was Roshni Peshavaria and she is looking forward to spending time at Governors' Mugie and Governors' Camp later this year.

The food drive took place on the 10th of March, it was a challenging day with great distances between each of the schools, however our team was brilliant and kept going despite the heat of the day and we managed to hand out close to 7.5 tons of food to the schools.

We spent over twelve hours moving across the harsh landscape, travelling from school to school. It was extremely hot and dry with not a blade of grass in sight - croton bush leaves had shrivelled up with the heat and the only livestock to be found were goats. Many families have already had to move away in search of pasture and water and this explains why so few children were present in some of the schools.

It was heartbreaking to hear from the teachers how each day, children will come to school having walked many kilometers through the heat and dust, only to faint in class due to their hunger and thirst. Many schools lacked even a single drop of water, since they rely on rainwater harvesting to fill their water tanks. If the children can't bring some water in with them from home (many cannot as there is no water at home either) then they go thirsty.

The words of thanks that we received from teachers, students and parents were incredibly moving and we would like to pass on their deepest appreciation to each one of you who helped us to raise the funds required to provide this food. We would also like to thank our partners at Mugie Conservancy for their vast logistical support and the Kenya Defence Forces for providing their lorry and personnel to move the supplies. It was a huge team effort and one that all of us can be proud of - together we positively impacted hundreds of school children and their families.

Story By;
Alisa Karstad, Community and Conservation Manager Governors' Camp



Many schools lacked even a single drop of water, since they rely on rainwater harvesting to fill their water tanks



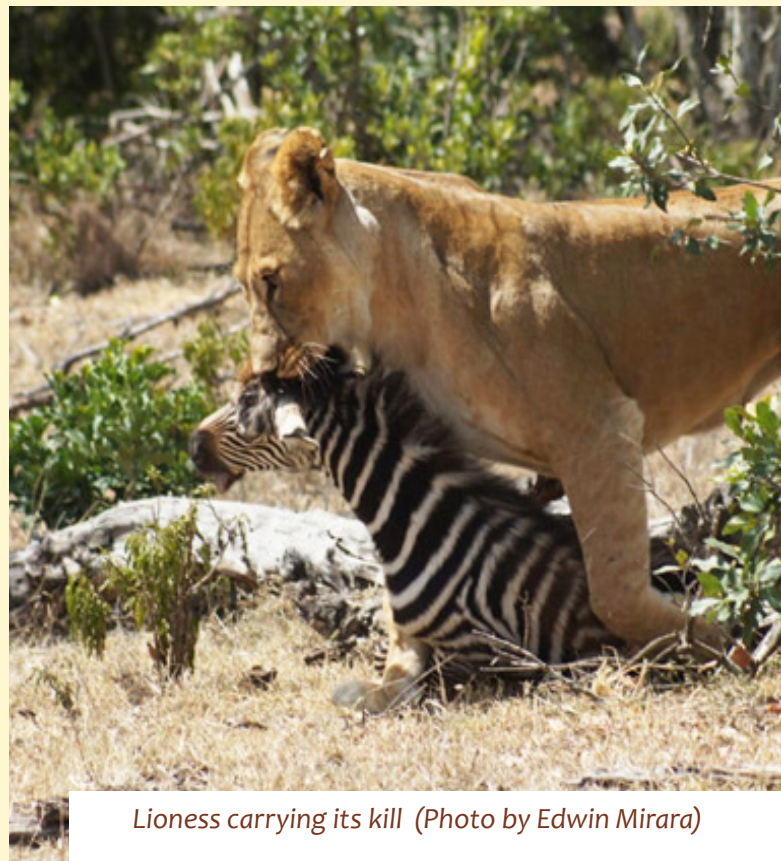
LION KILLS BABY ZEBRA IN PORINI RHINO CAMP, OL PEJETA CONSERVANCY

Porini Rhino Camp, located in the Western part of Ol Pejeta Conservancy has been experiencing a lot of wildlife action lately with various wildlife flocking the watering hole right at the front of the camp. Guests at the camp have been seeing many elephants, giraffes, zebras, rhinoceros, birds and lions. There are even some rarely-seen animals such as striped hyenas that have a den just behind one of the guest tents. Recently, our staff at camp got to witness one of the most exciting wildlife interactions, a female lion hunting down a baby zebra.

According to Porini Camps Relief Manager, Edwin Mirara, he was busy in his office at camp when he suddenly heard some loud galloping outside. He quickly went to check what was happening only to be met by the cloud of dust left behind by a herd of zebras and impalas on the run, being chased by a lioness. Excited that this was taking place literally within the camp grounds, he rushed to get his camera, jumped into a safari Landcruiser together with one of the guides and followed the action.

Following a short chase that ended about 30 meters from one of the guest tents, the lioness, believed to be a member of the Ajali Pride, managed to catch one of the weakest in the group, a baby zebra. For smaller prey, lions use their paw to slap the rear of the animal on its legs or haunch to knock it off balance and then drag it down. A bite to the neck or throat quickly kills the animal. The lioness then carried its kill away from the camp, across the seasonal river adjacent to the camp, and into an open field about 100 meters away.

She was then joined by another lioness believed to be her sibling who joined her in devouring the fresh meal. Lions eat – a lot! Male lions will eat up to 7kgs in a day while females eat 4.5kgs. However, It is believed that both male and female lions are capable of eating up to 15% of their own body weight in just one feeding.



Lioness carrying its kill (Photo by Edwin Mirara)



View of elephants, giraffes, and zebras from the Porini Rhino Camp lounge/mess tent (Photo by Edwin Mirara)



Conservancy has been experiencing a lot of wildlife action lately with various wildlife flocking the watering hole right at the front of the camp

They are also known to be very greedy and will hunt an animal even if they are not hungry. In fact, lions are so greedy that even when digging into this tiny zebra, they will not hesitate to hunt down any other animal that comes close to them. This being a small meal, the lionesses shared the meal grudgingly.

In about 15 minutes and after a brief scuffle, the lionesses successfully succeeded in splitting the meal into two and after eating to their fill, one of them carried its remaining share to what is believed to be its cubs. Unfortunately, our team did not manage to see where the cubs were hidden. However, the two females are known to have seven cubs between them. In most cases when a pride is feeding, the smallest and weakest lions often lose out altogether as hungry mothers will not share the kill with their own offspring.



Lionesses sharing zebra meal (Photo by Edwin Mirara)

The Ajali Pride has been around Porini Rhino Camp for about three weeks now due to the large number of animals that visit the waterhole that is right in front of the camp. The lions also go to the waterhole at night to drink water.

Imagine vacationing where you get to see and hear wild animals from the comfort of your tent. If you are lucky enough, you even get to be part of such unique encounters. This is exactly what Porini camps offer their guests. With the aim of leaving a small print as possible, the camps are unfenced and provide guests with an authentic and immersive safari experience that is as close to nature.

Additionally, Porini camps are located in private conservancies that are carefully managed to maintain a delicate balance between conservation and tourism.

These conservancies are often located adjacent to national parks or game reserves and are also unfenced, allowing wildlife to move freely between protected areas.

While not having fences may seem risky, Porini camps prioritize safety and have trained staff members who are knowledgeable about wildlife behavior and safety protocols. Guests are always accompanied by an experienced guide and are provided with safety briefings upon arrival to ensure that they know how to behave around wildlife. Porini Rhino Camp is owned and managed by Gamewatchers Safaris. Other Porini camps include Porini Mara Camp, Porini Cheetah Camp and Porini Lion Camp in Maasai Mara, Porini Amboseli Camp in Amboseli, Rhino River Camp in Meru and Nairobi Tented Camp in Nairobi. Prices start from just Kes. 19,900 per person per night on an all-inclusive basis. Send an email to res@gamewatchers.co.ke. For more information.

All Porini camps are small and intimate with no more than 10 ensuite guest tents fully and tastefully furnished so that you will have just a few other like-minded people as company.

Story by Ivy Vuguza, Gamewatchers Safaris & Porini Camps.



One lioness taking remaining kill to cubs (Photo by Edwin Mirara)

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