



Laikipia Wildlife Forum
CONSERVATION IN ACTION

Forum Focus Newsletter



**Conservation
in Action**
Q3 Edition 2023

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and other incentives under
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BECOME OUR MEMBER TODAY

Join us in making a difference for wildlife conservation and the restoration of our natural resources in the greater Laikipia region. As a friend, philanthropist, and well-wisher, your support is vital to the success of the Laikipia Wildlife Forum.

With your generous donation, we can continue to work towards championing for wildlife conservation and sustainable natural resources management in the greater Laikipia landscape. Your contribution, no matter the size, will help us to ensure a future where the landscapes flora and fauna thrives and flourishes. Please consider making a donation today and together, we can create a better environment for all.

Also, you can access our membership brochure using the provided QR Code and feel free to subscribe to any of the membership categories highlighted.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are thrilled to present the Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF) Quarter 3 Newsletter, marking another quarter of dedicated efforts and remarkable accomplishments in the conservation sector. Our team continues to work tirelessly to promote conservation efforts, good governance and sustainability in natural resource management within the greater Laikipia Landscape, and we are excited to share our progress with you.

We continue to extend our heartfelt appreciation to our esteemed development partners, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the Mazingira Conservation Fund (MCF), and our latest partner, Alliance Bioversity International-CIAT. Your generous financial, technical, and overall support has been invaluable in the successful implementation of our programs in this 3rd quarter. We truly appreciate your unwavering commitment to our cause, which has played a crucial role in driving our achievements.

We also extend our gratitude to the National Government represented by Lead Agencies and Departments, County Governments within our area of jurisdiction, the Private Sector, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for their continuous collaboration and partnership. By working together, we have made significant strides in promoting effective wildlife and natural resource management, and environmental conservation. Your support has been instrumental in our collective success.

The accomplishments and milestones we have achieved as a united team at LWF are a direct result of the exceptional collaboration among our dedicated staff and stakeholders. We are grateful for your unwavering dedication, passion, and expertise, which have contributed to positive change in our region.

We firmly believe that teamwork is the key to extraordinary outcomes, and thus, we extend our sincere gratitude to all our members for their unwavering support and invaluable contributions. Your collaborative spirit and commitment to our shared vision have propelled us forward on our journey to success.

As you explore this Newsletter, we hope it will not only showcase our work, achievements, lessons learned and best practice, but also inspire you. Let us draw strength from our accomplishments and renew our commitment to creating a sustainable future for our environment and precious natural resources.

Benedict Erick Omondi
Communications Manager

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



We opened this quarter energized to implement projects and programmes after receiving blessings and authorization from our members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 16th June 2023. Armoured with our mantra, the 'Forumness', we held several meetings with our target audiences and beneficiaries to ensure a participatory engagement. We also involved them in carrying out activities to ensure ownership and sustainability.

Our engagement with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations picked a notch when we started implementing the "Restoration of arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) of Kenya through bio-enterprise development" project. The activities here entailed control of the invasive *Opuntia stricta*, soil conservation and restoration of degraded grazing areas through establishment of micro-catchments/halfmoon bunds, and establishment of hay farms to cushion livestock farmers during the dry season. Read more to establish the land area coverage of this effort.

Alliance Bioersity International-CIAT, is our other partner who has come on board to ensure we green Laikipia North. Through their funding, LWF is transforming conservation using the block chain technology. This approach will foster transparency, engender trust, enable real-time monitoring, evaluation, and verification, and facilitate the mobilization of crucial funding for restoration projects. Let's walk together through this three-year journey.

We highlighted the exceptional work that was done by our pioneer grantees of the Mazingira Conservation Fund (MCF) in our last quarter. In this quarter, we continue to inform you of progress made by the Leo Project, Ontulili Primates Protection (OPP), Oramat Lenaboisho Co-operative Society (OLCS), Naatum Women Group and ILMAMUSI Community Forest Association (CFA). The effort so far made by these groups have proven that given a chance, and with their capacity-built, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) can transform the Laikipia landscape.

Our participation in the Africa Climate Summit (ACS) cannot go unreported. LWF staff participated in the inaugural opening of the ACS as well as in side events. The result of this was enhanced networks and partnerships as well as establishment of new ones, learning, and improved knowledge. We hope to participate in the subsequent summits.

One of our partners in conservation education, the Laikipian is using the Nexus Dicey, a revolutionary and exhilarating board game, to merge entertainment with education. This game has supported the Laikipian's Elimisha Outreach project which is being done in collaboration with the Laikipia Wildlife Forum, Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Mount Kenya Trust, Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy, TonyWild Foundation and Borana Conservancy. Let us conserve as we have fun. Our commitment to youth empowerment, conservation, and sustainable development was exemplified by our participation in the Dreams Youth Expo. This event was organized by the Drawing Dreams Initiative, a youth-led community-based organization based in Laikipia County, Kenya.

We wind up this edition by giving briefs of other events we participated in for continued networking and partnerships. They include the IMRE Loeffler talk and the Women in Nature Network (WiNN) global conference and the first Wildlife Scientific Conference. LWF continues acting to conserve.

Ms. Celine 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.

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. We provide a platform for dialogue for a cross section of land owners and land users including local community groups, private ranchers, pastoralists, small-scale farmers and tourism industry players.

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



GREENING LAIKIPIA NORTH: GROWING TREES, NURTURING COMMUNITIES AND EMBRACING BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY



Women groups from Olgaboli community, in Mukogodo West receive tree seedlings for planting from LWF through the support of Alliance Bioversity International-CIAT

We are excited to share with you the latest endeavour undertaken by the Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF), made possible through the generous funding from Alliance Bioversity International-CIAT. In our continuous commitment to environmental conservation and community development, we are embarking on a remarkable journey to restore rangelands and enhance biodiversity through an innovative tree-growing project in Laikipia North.

Our ambitious project aims to plant a staggering 60,000 trees, encompassing both native and exotic species. These trees will not only rejuvenate the ecosystem but also provide essential habitats and sustenance for local wildlife. But that's not all—our project incorporates cutting-edge blockchain technology to monitor the growth of these trees with unparalleled precision.

Transforming Conservation through the Blockchain Technology

One of the most innovative aspects of this endeavour is the integration of blockchain technology through the entire restoration value chain. From species selection and seed sourcing to tree planting and maintenance, every step will be meticulously recorded on an immutable and traceable blockchain ledger.

This approach will foster transparency, engender trust, enable real-time monitoring, evaluation, and verification, and facilitate the mobilization of crucial funding for restoration projects. Farmers, who are the backbone of this project, will be rewarded for their hard work and dedication. Every six months, they will receive tokens equivalent to half a dollar for each tree they have nurtured. This innovative approach not only empowers farmers but also encourages them to become stewards of our environment.

Inclusivity and Collaboration

Our project is deeply rooted in community engagement and collaboration. LWF will partner with ten community groups encompassing men, women and youth to implement the tree-growing initiative. Additionally, we are proud to announce the involvement of five public schools, fostering a sense of environmental responsibility among the younger generation.



Community members from Mukogodo West plant trees during the launch of the My Farm Tree Project implemented by LWF

Nurturing growth by supporting Community Tree nurseries expansion

In line with our commitment to sustainable practices, we will support expansion of community tree nurseries to support this initiative. These nurseries will not only provide a continuous supply of saplings but also serve as educational hubs, teaching local communities about the importance of trees and environmental stewardship.



community members trained on proper tree planting methods by Miti Alliance and LWF

A 3-year Journey towards a greener tomorrow

Our project is slated for a three-year timeline, during which we anticipate seeing the transformation of landscapes, the empowerment of communities, and the flourishing of biodiversity. Together, we will work tirelessly to leave a lasting legacy for future generations to cherish.

As we embark on this journey, we invite you to join us in celebrating the power of collaboration, technology, and environmental stewardship. Together, we can turn Laikipia North into a lush, green oasis and create a brighter, sustainable future for all.

Stay tuned for more updates and stories of transformation in our quarterly newsletters. Your support is invaluable, and together, we can make a world of difference, one tree at a time.



Farmers, who are the backbone of this project, will be rewarded for their hard work and dedication

EMPOWERING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS: MAZINGIRA CONSERVATION FUND'S FIRST QUARTER TRIUMPHS

The Mazingira Conservation Fund (MCF) has been steadfast in its mission to empower local initiatives that champion sustainable natural resource management and community-driven conservation.

In the inaugural quarter of the MCF grant, our grantees have demonstrated exceptional dedication and achieved commendable milestones in their conservation effort.

The Leo Project

This dynamic organization has been at the forefront of building climate resilience among Laikipia County's youth. Through an immersive training session, 22 selected youths were equipped with valuable insights on climate change basics, policy advocacy, and environmental commitment. The impact of this training extends far beyond the session itself, as these young individuals emerge as effective climate advocates in their communities.



Jonathan Odongo of Lewa Wildlife Conservancy provides a detailed insight into climate change's intricacies, its contributors, and impacts.

In a parallel initiative, The Leo Project established a tree nursery at Muramati Primary School, turning it into a vibrant learning hub. Here, 25 students, will be guided by trained youth mentors and gain hands-on experience in nurturing seedlings.

This endeavor seamlessly integrates theory with practice, fostering practical environmental education.



With the assistance of the MCF grant, Wangechi Kiongo from The Leo Project and students from Muramati Primary School unveil their newly constructed nursery

Ontulili Primates Protection

This group embarked on an ambitious journey to restore the Ontulili riparian corridor for primate habitats and food. An inception meeting with local farmers marked the initiation of this vital project. The dialogue not only introduced the community to the project but also underscored the significant role of riparian zones in primate well-being.

The meticulous process of sourcing and preparing seeds further demonstrated Ontulili Primates Protection's commitment to habitat restoration. By ensuring quality seeds and conducive nursery environments, the group sets the stage for successful planting in early September with the onset of the short rains.

Adding another layer to their efforts, the group sourced Super Napier grass cuttings. This inclusive approach involved farmers directly in the restoration process, promoting community engagement and ownership.



Ontulili Primates Protection guardians handing over the Super Napier grass cuttings to farmers who will participate in the riparian restoration

Oramat Lenaboisho Cooperative Society

Aiming to bridge gaps in pastoral communities, the Oramat Lenaboisho Cooperative Society (OLCS) committee engaged directly with women group leaders. This pivotal interaction marked a shift towards gender-inclusivity, focused on poverty alleviation and empowerment.

A subsequent training session equipped women group leaders with essential financial decision-making skills. This training, held at the Mazingira Yetu Conservation education center within Borana Conservancy, not only enhanced their abilities but also highlighted areas for future capacity building.



Representatives from five women groups undergo a training on financial literacy and leadership at the Mazingira Yetu Conservation Education center in Borana Conservancy. Some of the areas covered in the training include; capital, expenditure and profits.

Naatum Women Group

The Naatum Women Group showcased their unwavering commitment to conservation by clearing invasive *Opuntia* plants from their cultural site. This labor-intensive task, spanning three days, resulted in the successful clearance of one acre of land. This initiative not only highlighted the group's dedication to sustainable practices but also showcased their ongoing pursuit of skill enhancement. In the subsequent quarter, the group will focus on doing grass seeding in the restored land and creating a vertical garden.



*Naatum Women Group members carry out *Opuntia* removal within their cultural center. The activity went on for three days through which they cleared one acre of land*

Ilmamusu Community Forest Association (CFA)

Engaging with Kenya Forest Service (KFS), the Ilmamusu CFA aimed to discuss revenue-sharing arrangements. The meeting also focused on the implementation of the 2023 – 2027 Participatory Forest Management Plan (PFMP) and strategies for generating revenue through ecotourism.

Ilmamusu's project focuses on strengthening ecotourism by improving their campsites and collaboration among local stakeholders.



Ilmamusu CFA's Manager, Lestan Kimiri (Center) leads a meeting between Ilmamusu and KFS to discuss revenue sharing

Oramat Lenaboisho Cooperative Society

As we celebrate these achievements, it's evident that the first quarter of MCF's journey has laid a solid foundation for sustainable natural resource management, community-driven conservation, and livelihood enhancement in the greater Laikipia landscape.

The dedication and impact of these groups resonate far beyond the land they directly influence. They inspire a community-wide commitment to preserving the delicate balance of nature and human well-being.



Ilmamusu's project focuses on strengthening ecotourism by improving their campsites and collaboration among local stakeholders

LWF AT THE FOREFRONT OF RESTORING LAIKIPIA'S ARID LANDS

The Restoration Initiative project” is making significant strides in revitalizing arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) in Laikipia North. Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and executed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in collaboration with the Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF), this initiative aims to combat environmental deforestation and degradation. One of the project’s standout child projects is focused on restoring the landscape of Laikipia County, particularly the Maiyanat and Il Ngwesi community lands, which are grappling with ecological challenges such as invasive species and land degradation.

The Maiyanat community land, covering over 70% of Laikipia County, has been grappling with ecological challenges due to the presence of invasive species, notably *Opuntia stricta*, and unsustainable land management practices like over-grazing.

Opuntia species, initially introduced for ornamental and hedging purposes, have spread aggressively over the past decade, negatively impacting biodiversity and the local community’s livelihoods.



Maiyanat community members uproot Opuntia stricta. The invasive species has proven to be a menace over time

LWF’s restoration practices have emerged as a beacon of hope in addressing these challenges. Through invasive species control, water conservation, and restoration of degraded lands using mechanical and biological approaches, the project is promoting sustainable vegetation growth and the restoration of the ecosystem.

This is of paramount importance in a community primarily reliant on livestock production for their livelihoods, who are facing increasing risks due to land degradation and the impacts of climate change. Mechanical removal, though labor and capital-intensive, has proven to be the most effective method. An impressive 12.37 hectares of land have been reclaimed in Maiyanat through mechanical removal in just five weeks.

Furthermore, to ensure that the land is not left exposed after removing the invasive plant, the project is establishing six thousand six hundred and sixty (6560) micro-catchments. These catchments are designed to reduce surface run-off, promote moisture retention, and encourage natural regeneration. To empower the community and ensure sustainability, 30 community technicians have undergone comprehensive training. This not only equips them with the skills to construct and maintain these bunds but also fosters a broader understanding of rangeland restoration approaches. The restoration journey doesn't stop there. Reseeding the area with *Eragrostis superba* and *Cenchrus ciliaris* is a crucial step to kickstart sustainable vegetation growth and restore ecosystem health. These grass varieties are vital components of the restoration effort in Maiyanat.

In addition, the project is working to establish hay farms on 60 acres of land in the Iingwesi community. This initiative ensures a stable supply of fodder for the community's livestock while also promoting the economic well-being of its members.

The community's active involvement, including clearing of land and preparation, demonstrates their unwavering support for the project's success. The chosen grass variety for these hay farms is the resilient Rhodes grass, a crucial resource for both livestock and economic development.

This community-driven approach exemplifies a significant step toward achieving the project's desired restoration goals. The commitment and dedication of the Maiyanat community to restoring their lands and securing their future showcase the power of collective action and environmental stewardship.

The restoration project in Maiyanat is a compelling tale of hope, resilience, and transformation. It highlights the impact of The Restoration Initiative (TRI) and the unwavering spirit of Laikipia's communities as they work to create a greener, more sustainable future. The journey towards restoring Kenya's arid lands is a remarkable conservation story that inspires us all to protect our planet's natural heritage.



Restoration in progress: Before and after images of the micro-catchments dug at Lekuruki to catalyse water retention towards land restoration

GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TOWARDS RESTORATION



The Principal Secretary in the State Department of Forestry, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Mr. Gitonga Mugambi, welcomed by Maiyanat community members during his project monitoring visit

The Principal Secretary in the State Department of Forestry, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Forestry, Mr. Gitonga Mugambi, held a visit to Laikipia County to assess the progress of The Restoration Initiative (TRI) Project.

Accompanying him were Mr. Peterson Kamau, the Head of Projects and Strategic Initiatives, the Deputy Governor of Laikipia County, Mr. Meshack Muga, who is the FAO National Project Coordinator (GEF 6), and representatives from FAO, KEFRI, KFS and various local leaders.

The overarching goal of this project is to rehabilitate degraded lands through the Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR) approach. The project also seeks to enhance the socio-economic development of local communities by leveraging Non-Timber Forest Products and Services (NTFPS) in arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs).

Notably, the PS visited Maiyanat site where Laikipia Wildlife Forum is working towards restoration of 82 Ha of land through the mechanical removal of the invasive species *Opuntia stricta*, and the demo plot where multiple rangeland restoration practices including the semi-circular bunds and Vallerani system are being implemented to bring back the health of the ecosystem.

Upon completion of the two site visits, the Principal Secretary flew over Mukogodo forest which covers an area of 30,189 hectares. This forest serves as a vital catchment area for several rivers, such as Sieku and Kopio. Moreover, it holds great significance for the adjacent communities due to its rich biodiversity and promising potential for eco-tourism. The forest functions as a migratory corridor between the Northern Rangelands and Laikipia, spanning Borana and Lewa Conservancies through Ngare Ndare forest.



The Principal Secretary in the State Department of Forestry, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Mr. Gitonga Mugambi, addresses community members from Mayianat during his Laikipia tour visit

The site visits later ended with a local community baraza to discuss conservation agendas held at Kiwanja Ndege Primary School. In his remarks, the PS expressed his appreciation to the community for their conservation and restoration efforts of Mukogondo forest.

On the second day, he visited Laikipia Permaculture Centre to familiarize himself with the economic utilization of *Opuntia stricta*, which is being utilized to produce juice, wines, and oils.

He later paid a courtesy call to the Governor, His Excellency Joshua Irungu, where they engaged in a debrief session to further strengthen the collaborative efforts aimed at conservation and sustainable development in Laikipia County.



The Principal Secretary in the State Department of Forestry, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Mr. Gitonga Mugambi during his visit at the Laikipia Permaculture Centre

YOUTH-LED INITIATIVES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: DREAMS YOUTH EXPO HIGHLIGHTS



H.E Reuben Kamuri, Laikipia Deputy Governor visits the Laikipia Wildlife Forum stand during the Dreams Youth Expo

In August, we had the privilege of participating in the Dreams Youth Expo, an event organized by the Drawing Dreams Initiative, a youth-led community-based organization based in Laikipia County, Kenya. The expo, held on the 11th and 12th, was an exciting platform that brought together young change-makers and organizations dedicated to driving meaningful social change.

One of the major highlights of our participation was the opportunity to showcase the Mazingira Conservation Fund (MCF).

MCF is dedicated to supporting sustainable natural resources management in the greater Laikipia landscape. Its focus includes practical interventions in habitat protection, conservation education, community-based conservation, and women-led enterprises.

MCF passionately collaborates with women, indigenous groups, and youth to develop creative solutions for wildlife and habitat conservation.

During the expo, we seized the opportunity to spotlight the remarkable work of our current grantees by distributing our Forum Focus quarter two newsletters. Additionally, we connected with numerous youth groups eager to join the ranks of MCF grantees in upcoming fund roll-outs.

In addition to showcasing our conservation efforts, we introduced attendees to Nexus Dicey, an engaging board game designed to raise awareness about climate challenges and environmental conservation. This game takes players on a global journey, highlighting the collective responsibility we all share in safeguarding our planet.



Attendees and exhibitors playing the Nexus Dicey Game, an engaging indoor and outdoor board game that takes players on an extraordinary journey around the planet to combat climate challenges and safeguard our environment.

Our participation in the Dreams Youth Expo went beyond marketing our products and services. It allowed us to connect with key stakeholders, including national and county governments, corporates, financial institutions, and learning institutions. We also had the privilege of onboarding new members and showcasing our work across different thematic areas.

By supporting initiatives like the Dreams Youth Expo, we contribute to lasting, meaningful social change, empowering the next generation of conservationists. We believe that investing in youth ventures is an investment in the future.



Our participation in the Dreams Youth Expo was a testament to our commitment to youth empowerment, conservation, and sustainable development

CHARTING A SUSTAINABLE COURSE: INSIDE THE AFRICA CLIMATE SUMMIT



Laikipia Wildlife Forum representatives at the Africa Climate Summit

The Africa Climate Summit (ACS), a pivotal gathering of leaders, visionaries, and climate activists, unfolded against the backdrop of a continent known for its resplendent landscapes and diverse cultures. With a resounding theme of “Driving Green Growth and Climate Finance Solutions for Africa and the World,” the summit convened to address urgent climate issues, propelled by a shared commitment to a sustainable future.

The ACS was more than just a conference; it was a convergence of purpose. Leaders and representatives from every corner of the vast continent gathered in a display of unity and resolve. They recognized that the challenges posed by climate change spared no one and crossed both geographical and cultural boundaries, making it imperative to work together.

As the summit unfolded, passionate discussions took place under the African sun, spanning urban metropolises to remote villages. Delegates brought stories of adaptation and resilience from their own communities, shedding light on how innovative solutions were transforming lives. From drought-resistant crops lifting farmers in Mali out of hardship to coastal communities fortifying themselves against the encroaching sea, these narratives underscored the vital role of localized solutions.

Among the summit’s highlights was the “Green Innovation Expo,” where young African entrepreneurs unveiled their groundbreaking solutions. Here, the world witnessed the ingenuity of Africa’s youth, who showcased solar-powered water purifiers, eco-friendly building materials, and electric motorcycles tailored for rural transport. These innovations vividly portrayed Africa’s potential to lead the charge in sustainability.



Central to the summit's outcomes was the historic Nairobi Declaration, a document of collective commitment. African leaders pledged to reduce carbon emissions, protect endangered ecosystems, and usher in green economies. This monumental declaration was complemented by substantial investments in renewable energy, afforestation, and clean technologies, announced by financial institutions and global partners alike. Together, these actions reflected an unwavering dedication to sustainability and environmental protection.

The ACS yielded invaluable lessons. It reinforced the significance of inclusivity and cooperation, highlighting that solutions must be rooted in communities and transcending borders. The summit underscored the urgency for immediate and sustained action, both at local and international levels. To ensure lasting change, lessons learned must be translated into practical solutions. This entails continued support for youth-led innovations, substantial scaling up of renewable energy investments, and empowering communities to adapt to the challenges of climate change.

The Summit was an epochal moment, where the spirit of Africa's resplendent landscapes and diverse cultures converged to forge a path towards a sustainable future. This historic event has not simply concluded; its legacy lives on in the actions taken by African nations and their global partners. It serves as an inspiring reminder that through unity, determination, and innovation, we can navigate the climate crisis, paving the way for a greener, more sustainable future where both people and nature thrive in harmony.

“
**African leaders pledged to
 reduce carbon emissions,
 protect endangered
 ecosystems, and usher in
 green economies**”

REMEMBERING SUDAN

By Ami Vitale

Sudan was the last male northern white rhinoceros on earth. He had become an international celebrity, not because of any special talents but because he represented an entire subspecies that was about to become functionally extinct. This extinction wasn't because the rhinos failed in evolution. It was because they could not survive us, mankind.

Wild rhino populations had been reduced from hundreds of thousands a century ago to just 19,000 by the 1980s due to hunting. By 2008, the entire wild northern white rhino population had been decimated by poachers and there were only eight of these gentle, hulking creatures known to be alive—and they were all living in zoos.

In December 2009, a bold plan was put in place to airlift four of these rhinos from Dvůr Králové Zoo in Czechia (the Czech Republic) all the way to Africa. It sounded like a storyline for a Disney movie, but in reality, it was a desperate, last-ditch effort to save an entire species.

The animals were loaded into crates and flown to Ol Pejeta Conservancy over an arduous 24-hour journey, over 4,000 miles away. The hope was that the air, water, and food, not to mention room to roam, might stimulate them to breed—and the offspring would then be used to repopulate Africa.



But the rhinos never successfully bred, and in March 2018, Sudan had to be euthanized because of his old age. In his final moments, he was surrounded by all the people who loved and protected him. Their quiet sobs could not be muffled against a backdrop of an eerie stillness. I think back often on this moment and it is the silence that I remember most—a haunting silence that seemed to foreshadow what a world without wildlife would be like.

Sudan's daughter, Najin, and granddaughter, Fatu, are now the last two remaining northern white rhinos. They remind us that the world is still so beautiful in spite of all that is breaking our hearts.



Thanks to the groundbreaking work of the BioRescue Project, there are now 24 northern white rhino embryos that are ready to be transferred into surrogate southern white rhino females in the near future

Remarkably, hope is still not lost. A multidisciplinary team of scientists spanning five continents has turned to innovative reproduction techniques and cutting-edge stem cell technology in an attempt to save the subspecies. Thanks to the groundbreaking work of the BioRescue Project, there are now 24 northern white rhino embryos that are ready to be transferred into surrogate southern white rhino females in the near future.

They plan to use frozen cell cultures from northern white rhinos, including Sudan, to create stem cells, which could become egg and sperm and unite to create an embryo. This scientific knowledge will not only change the fate of the northern white rhino, it will have profound implications for the other species of rhino that are also critically endangered—as well as the more than 16,000 endangered animals on Earth today.

How did we arrive at the point where such desperate measures are necessary? It's astonishing that a demand for rhino horn, based entirely on misinformation, has caused the wholesale slaughter of a species. At the same time, it is encouraging that a disparate group of people have come together in an attempt to save something unique and precious, something that if not saved, will be gone forever.

What happens next is in all of our hands. What's going to save us all is to get beyond our routine ways of thinking. Wonder is what allows us to reimagine our future together. Wonder allows us to believe that we can fundamentally change the course we are currently on. Our fate is linked to the fate of animals. Without rhinos and other wildlife we suffer more than loss of ecosystem health. We suffer a loss of imagination, a loss of wonder, a loss of beautiful possibilities.

Learn more about how you can help and support this effort by watching the short award-winning film, *Remembering Sudan* and following [@olpejeta](#) [@BioRescue_project](#) and [@SafariParkDvurKralove](#).

MERGING FUN AND ACTION TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSERVATION ISSUES



The biggest existential threat to our world is climate change, which is no longer just a trendy phrase. Scientists, environmentalists, and activists have been sounding the alarm about the effects of climate change, the rise in sea level, and extreme weather conditions for decades. The problem, however, continues to be distant, theoretical, and difficult for many. This is where Nexus Dicey comes in, a revolutionary and exhilarating board game that merges entertainment with education to bring climate change and conservation issues to life and empower players to become climate champions and conservation advocates.

Nexus Dicey is the brainchild of The Laikipian, a Kenyan-based creative and innovative enterprise that is dedicated to creating a sustainable future for our planet through the transformative power of art. The game's mission is clear: to empower players to become climate and conservation champions, armed with knowledge and inspired to take action. Nexus Dicey beautifully blends engaging gameplay with vital climate and conservation education to foster an understanding of the climate and ecological crisis and inspire actionable change.

Conservation and climate change-themed board games have gained popularity in recent years, becoming platforms for learning and social engagement.

However, Nexus Dicey sets itself apart by going deeper and providing players with comprehensive knowledge and practical tools to address climate change. The game artfully combines the thrill of gameplay with the weight of the climate and ecological crisis, presenting players with real-life challenges, obstacles, and opportunities that mirror the realities of our changing world.

Nexus Dicey's gameplay mechanics are designed to immerse players in the world of climate change and conservation issues. Players come across hurdles and challenges that are realistic to our changing globe as they move across the board game.

The level of simplicity and richness offered by Nexus Dicey sets it apart from other Conservation and climate change-themed board games.

The game incorporates multiple dimensions of climate change, including climate science, carbon footprint, sustainability, renewable energy, natural resource conservation, and societal impacts. By playing the game, players can gain a comprehensive understanding of climate change and conservation issues, from the global impacts to local solutions.

Nexus Dicey has been celebrated by players across Kenya for its ability to educate and inspire change. It has been lauded as an innovative tool that merges fun and action, making education about climate change and conservation accessible and engaging. The game presents players with practical steps they can take to reduce their carbon footprint, embrace sustainability, support conservation, and advocate for policy changes. During the recently held Africa Climate Summit 2023 in Kenya, Nexus Dicey made a significant impact on climate discourse by engaging individuals, both young and old, and fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges ahead.

One participant aptly summarized the experience, stating, "The Nexus Dicey board game captures all aspects of conservation and climate change. It encompasses not only natural phenomena but also human involvement. The fact that it presents both the problem statement and the solutions makes it the best conservation-themed board game of the 21st century."

The game has also made a considerable impact through The Laikipian's Elimisha Outreach Project in collaboration with the Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Mount Kenya Trust, Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy, TonyWild Foundation, Borana Conservancy and the Laikipia Wildlife Forum, is an initiative powered by Nexus Dicey that aims to promote conservation-themed education in schools and communities across Kenya. The project is supported by Cambridge Masters in Conservation Leadership.

Since its launch in June 2023, the Elimisha Outreach Project is expected to reach 100 schools impacting up to 25,000 children, young adults and communities in Laikipia, Homabay, Nairobi, Narok counties and beyond. The project will provide both children and adults with a dynamic and interactive tool for learning about climate change and conservation issues. For many children, Nexus Dicey has shown them the link between taking action to adapt to the effects of climate change while simultaneously learning about the causes, effects, and steps they can take to make a difference.



Participants at the Africa Climate Summit interact with the Nexus Dicey board game

The Nexus Dicey Board Game is available in four distinct versions tailored for schools, public spaces, families, outdoor enthusiasts, companies, and more. These variants encompass the forex board tabletop, foldable board tabletop, canvas tabletop, and the human version.

In conclusion, Nexus Dicey is not just another board game; it's a powerful tool for change that can empower players to become climate and conservation champions. The game's mechanics, combined with its beautiful illustrations and innovative approach, make learning about climate change and conservation accessible, engaging, and fun. The game inspires solutions, encourages action, and cultivates deep understanding, making it an unparalleled tool for promoting climate education, conservation, and sustainability. With Nexus Dicey, we can bridge the gap between knowledge and action and take meaningful steps towards a more sustainable future.

Written by
Victoria Wangui Wanjohi
Marketing and Social Media Coordinator
The Laikipian,



The project will provide both children and adults with a dynamic and interactive tool for learning about climate change and conservation issues

The Laikipian is a creative and innovative enterprise dedicated to creating a sustainable future for our planet. Through art, we develop informative and visually stunning educational materials. Our deep commitment lies in promoting awareness of urgent environmental challenges. By sparking innovation and reimagining existing models, we aim to create a world where ecosystems thrive for generations to come. Learn more about our art for conservation projects and visit The Nature Shop, our online marketplace for innovative and eco-friendly products <https://thelaikipian.co.ke/>.

ONE STEP, ONE TREE, ONE PEOPLE: WELCOME TO WALK WILD II

Nature lovers, adventure seekers, and champions of the environment, get ready for an extraordinary journey! On November 25th, 2023, the breathtaking Mukogodo Forest in Laikipia County, Kenya, will host the 2nd edition of the Mukogodo Forest Walk Wild event.

Step into a world of wonder as you explore one of Kenya's last remaining dryland forests. The Mukogodo Forest, the largest in Laikipia County, is your playground. Get ready to embark on a 10km journey that's not just about adventure but a cause worth every step.



ILMAMUSI CFA rangers guide participants for a 10KM walk through Mukogodo Forest during the first edition of the Walk Wild event

This isn't just a walk in the woods; it's a mission to raise awareness about the pressing issues that threaten our planet. Feel the pulse of climate change, support the ambitious 15 billion tree-growing campaign, and stand by the Forest and Landscape Restoration Plan (FOLAREP). This is your chance to be a guardian of the environment, a voice for the voiceless trees, and a warrior for a greener world.

The Mukogodo Forest isn't just a sanctuary for diverse flora and fauna; it's a lifeline for local communities. It nurtures honey production, supports pastoralism, provides medicinal herbs, welcomes ecotourism, and shelters precious conservation efforts. By participating, you're not just walking; you're making a profound impact on lives and livelihoods.

Participating in the Walk Wild event isn't just about walking; it's about showcasing your unwavering commitment to environmental conservation and community well-being. It's your chance to wear your passion on your sleeve, stand tall for a cause, and inspire change.

In the heart of nature, you'll find the perfect backdrop for team building and networking. Meet kindred spirits, share stories, and forge connections that could last a lifetime. It's not just an event; it's a community of like-minded individuals.

Every step you take, every mile you conquer, contributes to restoration and community projects.

The funds raised during this event will breathe life into initiatives that will make a difference for the Mukogodo Forest and its communities. Your involvement translates into action and positive change.

Ready to be part of this monumental event? It's as easy as clicking a link. Register, inquire about sponsorship, or delve into more details at our event page or reach out to Lestan Kimiri at +254715-922-779.

We believe that everyone's involvement in this noble cause can make a significant difference in preserving this natural treasure and securing a sustainable future for local communities.

Join us for an adventure that will leave footprints of change in the heart of Kenya's natural heritage.



**In the heart of nature, you'll find
the perfect backdrop for team
building and networking**



THE 1ST WILDLIFE SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE 2023 IN KENYA



Kenya's inaugural Wildlife Scientific Conference took place from the 26th to the 28th of September 2023 at the Lake Naivasha Resort, organized by the Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI).

The conference served as a platform to bring together diverse researchers and experts to examine Kenya's conservation endeavors from a research perspective.

Presentations covered a wide range of topics, including invasive plant species, large and small mammals, and infrastructure's role in conservation, ecotoxicology, and genetic variation in the context of conservation, among others. The event gathered significant participation from various organizations and delegates.

Notable attendees from Laikipia County included the Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF), Loisaba Conservancy, Mpala Research Centre, Grevy's Zebra Trust, Save the Elephants, Space for Giants, Lewa Conservancy, Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Ol Jogi Conservancy, among others.

The conference was inaugurated by the Prime Cabinet Secretary, Honorable Musalia Mudavadi, who represented the President. He was accompanied by Ms. Peninah Malonza, the Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage. Other dignitaries included Ms. Sylvia Museiya, the Principal Secretary for the State Department for Wildlife, Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife, and Heritage, and Members of Parliament from Mwatate, Voi, Likuyani and Kitui North.

One significant outcome of the conference was the launch of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Kenya Species Specialist Group.

This group was entrusted with several key responsibilities including:

1. Completing global Red List assessments for species not yet on the IUCN Red List.
2. Conducting national Red List assessments for priority wildlife and socio-economically important species.
3. Promoting and contributing to the development and implementation of existing species conservation action plans.
4. Publishing species assessments on authorized platforms to support decision-making.
5. Supporting the integration of species information into development sector planning and national strategies.
6. Promoting the integration of species information and conservation actions into national and county-level policy processes.

As the Conference came to a close, Dr. Patrick Omondi, the CEO and Director of the WRTI, underscored the importance of researchers applying their scientific findings to address conservation challenges. He stressed the need for scientists to simplify their language for the benefit of policymakers and conservationists who may not have a deep understanding of complex scientific terminology. Furthermore, he encouraged organizations to embrace the principles of the “4C” approach, which stands for collaboration, communication, coordination, and connections. Dr. Omondi highlighted the significance of networking as a powerful tool in resolving environmental issues.

LWF PARTICIPATES IN THE IMRE LOEFLER TALK

The LWF Executive Director represented LWF in the IMRE Loeffler quarterly talks organized by the East African Wild life Society (EAWLS). This talk took place on 26th August 2023 in Nanyuki and was attended by over 60 participants.

Dr. Christian Lambrechts, a seasoned conservationist and Executive Director of Rhino Ark Charitable Trust, presented his account of over twenty-five years dedicated efforts towards the protection of Mount Kenya's pristine ecosystems.

Dr. Christian talked about the evolving conservation landscape of Mount Kenya, sharing tales of triumph over challenges and the power of collaboration.

His talk captivated, educated, and inspired, emphasizing on the profound impact of long-term dedication and visionary thinking on our planet's delicate ecosystems. For more details on this talk, please contact Gideon Bett at Gideon.bett@eawwildlife.org.



Dr. Christian talked about the evolving conservation landscape of Mount Kenya, sharing tales of triumph over challenges and the power of collaboration

LWF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PARTICIPATES IN THE WOMEN IN NATURE NETWORK (WiNN) GLOBAL CONFERENCE IN NAIROBI

The Executive Director of LWF participated in a global conference organized by the Kenya Women in Nature Network (WiNN) Chapter in Nairobi from 31st July to 4th August 2023. The event brought together various groups to share experiences and knowledge on mentorship and conservation with each other. The event's theme 'Promoting women participation and visibility in conservation science through mentorship' was carefully selected, as documented reports indicate that women's involvement and leadership are fundamental to creating inclusive conservation for sustainable processes.

The WiNN connects women across the world who are working to conserve natural ecosystems and species with the aim of strengthening the role of women in conservation leadership and enhancing conservation impact. WiNN has grown over the years to a total membership of 600 across more than 20 countries with 17 WiNN Chapters, Kenya being one of them. The network holds annual global networking events which are hosted by the member countries on a rotational basis. These have been impactful and inspirational for hundreds of women who find a chance to share on matters of conservation in a less formal setup. With focus now drawn towards mentorship, these events offer room for capacity building and continual improvement in conservation leadership.



LWF Executive Director Celline Achieng' (Left) poses for a photo with Dr.Faith Muniale of WiNN Kenya- Chapter during the Kenya Women in Nature Network Global Conference

THE LAIKIPIA COUNTY TREE GROWING PLANNING MEETING



Participants pose for a photo after the Laikipia County tree growing planning meeting

Laikipia Wildlife Forum participated in the Laikipia County Tree Restoration Workshop, which was held at the Sportsman's Arms Hotel in Nanyuki from August 29 to August 31, 2023. With Laikipia County committing to planting 30 million trees by 2032, a crucial contribution to the President's 15 Billion Tree Growing Initiative and our fight against climate change, it was a reflection that the Future is Green to turn the County, which has one of the largest ASAL lands in Kenya, green with trees grown during this period of the UN decade of restoration.

Participants from diverse organizations were there to support the event with their technical knowledge and expertise. The private organizations and Laikipia County departments represented at the workshop include the following: MKWEP, LISTEN, NIA, Ng'arisha Mtaa, CGA, KFS, The Department of Agriculture, NEMA, Borana Conservancy, LWF, ILMAMUSI CFA, ZEITZ Foundation, KDF, WRA, Mt. Kenya CFA, The Department of Education, ENNDA, LCA, WRUAs, The Department of Interior, NDMA, KEFRI, Nature Kenya, Equity Bank, Laikipia Permaculture and FAO.



The team used the Jaza Miti app to identify ideal planting sites, and the discussion cut across several topics, including: Reflection on Laikipia’s deforestation concerns; Crafting a strong Tree Planting and Growing Plan by Exploring Tree-Growing Techniques and Species; KFS, KEFRI, and certified nurseries were chosen to assist with the process by delivering seedlings suitable to the zoned regions in order to get the initiative off the ground quickly.

Monitoring was cited as being crucial for the project’s success, and problems with tree planting were reviewed and fixes put in place. We anticipate that with the effective planning, the county will experience remarkable tree-growing initiatives that will put the words into practice.



Participants from diverse organizations were there to support the event with their technical knowledge and expertise

WALK WILD

2ND EDITION

MUKOGODO FOREST

25
NOVEMBER

2023 8:30am - 12 Noon



Together, we restore, protect, and ensure a sustainable future for the Mukogodo Forest and its communities. Every step counts!



SCAN ME

Conservation fees:

- Individuals - 1000
- Group (10 People) - 10,000
- Corporates (10 to 20 People) - 15,000
- Corporates (20 to 30 people) - 20,000
- Corporates (30 to 40 People) - 25000

SCAN TO REGISTER

<https://mookh.com/event/walk-wild-event/>



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ONE TREE
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