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NEWSLETTER

2018

LET'S PLANT 1 BILLION TREES TO BRING BACK OUR GREEN

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KENYA
TOGETHER FOR NATURE

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WWF-KENYA NEWSLETTER

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WWF is one of the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organization, with over 5 million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

Contributors: Contributors: William Ojwang', Austine Okande, Kevin Gichangi, Nickson Orwa and Nashipae Orumoy

Designed by: Anthony Diang'a/ WWF-Kenya

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TOGETHER FOR NATURE

It has been indeed a great year for World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)-Kenya and the Africa Rift Lakes Programme (ARL)! I wish to take this opportunity to thank all team members and partners for their continued invaluable contributions towards the conservation agenda in Kenya. The successes we have realised this year would have not been possible without your dedications and commitment to our common goal: to stop degradation of our natural environment, and build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature. We also acknowledge the support from our development partners (European Union, Sida, HSBC, Coop Switzerland and WWF National Offices: WWF-UK, WWF Sweden, WWF Switzerland and WWF Germany).

As we enter the last weeks of this year and taking our duly earned break, we would like to share key lessons and outcomes in various thematic areas: Freshwater, Forest, Food and Rangeland within the Mau Mara Serengeti and Naivasha Malewa Aberdares landscapes. These range from forging right and powerful partnership, empowering community participation in natural resource management, co-creating innovative solutions and promoting integrated approaches towards natural resource management.

The Mara Basin has experienced over the last couple of years unprecedented land fragmentation that poses great threat to conservation efforts. This has translated to drastic reduction of wildlife ranges and near breakdown of key livelihood source of the pastoralist communities. To help mitigate the vice, participatory and eco-friendly approaches have been devised by both WWF and pastoralist-landowners, using the holistic management approach to implement grazing plans in the community wildlife conservancies. Thus, securing space for people, livestock and wildlife as well as opening up key wildlife migratory corridors.

Under Civil Society Empowerment-Leading the Change Programme, WWF-Kenya is building the capacities of natural resource based civil society organizations in the Mara and Naivasha landscape to make their voices heard to ensure sustainable development in the landscapes as well as gain increased rights and benefits and at the same time holding the duty bearers to account.

Kenya is in the process of implementing Green Economic Strategy and Implementation Plan (GESIP) and WWF is supporting the greening agenda in the country through the Green Horticulture at Lake Naivasha (GOALAN) project, which is improving the capacity of MSMEs in the Naivasha to shift to sustainable consumption and production, and creating green jobs in the horticultural sector.

For more details, please read on.

By William Ojwang', Programme Manager, WWF-Kenya



Promoting Green Jobs

The youth constitute over 60 percent of Kenya's estimated 48 million population. Notably, majority of them are unemployed while many others underemployed. Whereas agriculture provides the highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to the country and widely viewed as the one avenue that has the potential to fix the challenge of unemployment in Kenya among the youth, many have shunned the venture.

Findings from a recent needs and capacity assessment conducted by the European Union funded Green Horticulture in Lake Naivasha (GOALAN) project, affirmed youth skepticism in pursuing agri-business. The report cited lack of ready market, poor infrastructure and inadequate storage facilities as key disheartening factors.

"Lack of access to land and lack of access to finance are also major deterrents for many youth and women," said Mrs. Magdalene Mbutu who is leading the project. She added that most financial institutions often demand for loan security before engaging with farmers.

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)-Kenya through the GOALAN project aims to solve these problems through promoting sustainable consumption and production while at the same time providing green jobs in the horticultural sector, which consequently provides for sustainable livelihoods. The project is working to empower 140 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with 30% youth representation.

According to Francis Maina, a small-scale farmer at Engineer, Nyandarua County, most parents are

reluctant to allow their children to take charge of the farms and would rather have them work with no pay. He argues that the latter coupled with lack of land ownership rights in the family farms has driven many youth to the cities in search of white collar jobs. Through the project, the youth are being empowered to sustainably produce for the market as a way to reduce post-harvest loss and increase income. The project also addresses the lack of infrastructure by supporting MSMEs with the much-needed infrastructure like greenhouses and pack houses.

The project has further established linkages with financial institutions that will develop innovative products for the horticulture industry especially for the youth who may not have the traditional collaterals; enhancing "green financing" amongst finance sector actors where GOALAN will be a case study to learn from.

Maina, one of the youth in the project in Nyandarua County cannot wait to see the fruits of the project. "I have been unable to use my two acre piece of land because of lack sufficient capital and market for the produce, For a long time brokers have taken advantage of farmers; not any more. We are excited about this project because we now have an opportunity to produce what the market wants. In addition, we will benefit from the expertise of financial institutions and lobby for friendly financial support," he said.

The greater responsibility now lies with policy makers and implementers to make horticulture intellectually stimulating and an economically sustainable career as well as endeavor to make horticulture 'cool' for young people across the country.





Mara River Citizen-Led Health Assessment

“This activity is important because it gives the empirical evidence on how unsustainable human activities are threatening the rivers’ flow regime.”

Joseph Chebusit, chairman Amala Water Resource Users Association (WRUA).

Local communities play a critical role in conserving the environment, in Mara River basin World Wide Fund for Nature-Kenya (WWF-Kenya) is championing for a community led river health assessment to promote good environmental stewardship of the river shared by Kenya and Tanzania.

Through their respective water users’ associations’ in both Kenya and Tanzania, communities living along the Mara River were recently involved in the assessment of the water quality and quantity of the Mara and subsequently producing river health score cards for various sections of the River. It is expected that through citizen science the local communities and key stakeholders in the basin would understand the condition of the river and encourage pollution prevention approaches.

“This activity is important because it gives the empirical evidence on how unsustainable human activities are threatening the rivers’ flow regime.” noted Joseph Chebusit, chairman Amala Water Resource Users Association (WRUA). He further added that, being involved in the river assessment exercise also accorded the local communities with an opportunity to come up with practical solutions to mitigate river pollution.

The Mara River continues to face numerous threats occasioned by unsustainable human activities such as water abstraction, pollution by raw effluent from hotels, lodges, industries and high sediment load from soil erosion and solid waste dumping.

In a bid to save the Mara River, WWF-Kenya is working with local communities in the upper catchment area to embrace conservation agriculture to help reduce sediment loads and nutrients levels in the rivers. Downstream in Tanzania we are working with small-scale artisanal gold miners to construct mercury retention ponds away from the river to minimize mercury pollution during gold processing.



“With improved tree cover, farmers in the Lake Naivasha Basin’s Upper Catchment will also have improved farm yield due to controlled soil erosion and thus improved livelihoods.”

Jonathan Muya, Chairman Friends of Kipipiri Water Towers

Improving Kenya’s forest Cover through Gold Standards

The short rains are here. We have managed to plant an additional 43.7 hectares of trees with local communities in Kenya’s Lake Naivasha Basin. This translates to 243.1 hectares of new forest planted under the Lake Naivasha Basin Reforestation Project that is funded by Coop Switzerland.

In his own words, John Kihiu who is a beneficiary of the projects and has been managing a tree nursery for the past 15 years as a business venture, together with his wife Ruth says

“From this business, we have been able to school three children and built a permanent house. We also intent to invest in water harvesting to ensure water supply during dry seasons,” they said. John Kihiu.

“With improved tree cover, farmers in the Lake Naivasha Basin’s Upper Catchment will also have improved farm yield due to controlled soil erosion and thus improved livelihoods.” Jonathan Muya, Chairman Friends of Kipipiri Water Towers

The project’s target is to establish 1,000 hectares of new forest area during the period 2018-2020 which will generate a minimum of 42,000 Gold Standard Verified CO₂- Certificates before the end of 2024.

Water scarcity in Kenya escalates when the dry season kicks in. In the Mara river basin, water is a precious resource supporting people and nature. Kingasunye Reyia, a mother of four is forced to walk more than six kilometres daily during the dry season in search of water.



“When drought strikes, water becomes elusive and the implications are distressing. “Everything in the village stops. Our children stop going to school, men move out of villages in search of water and pasture for livestock, human-wildlife conflict becomes rampant and we experience waterborne diseases outbreaks.” she narrates.



The Mara River stretches 395 Kilometers from Kenya to Tanzania. The river faces numerous threats affecting both water quality and the flow; most of these are caused by human activities and climate change.

“Through community engagement, incidents of forest fires, illegal logging, elephants poaching and bushmeat hunting has significantly reduced.”

Community in the forefront in Mau forest restoration

It's 7:00 AM, a cloudy and chilly morning, we meet Richard Langat, at the Nyangores Forest Station, a passionate conservationist. For the past four years, Langat has been volunteering as a scout at Nyangores Forest, which forms part of the Mau forest Complex.

Today, Langat and five other scouts will be accompanying Kenya Forest Service and Kenya Wildlife Service officers for a four-day routine foot patrol inside the forest. Donned in an old green uniform, Langat tells us that, occasional joint patrols help weed out illegal activities inside the forest, but nothing beats involving the forest community as first line of defence in protecting this critical resource.

Langat argues that, it is through sensitising forest communities on the importance of forests and developing a benefit sharing mechanisms that they have managed to create a functional social fence, which has helped restore the forest.

“Through community engagement, incidents of forest fires, illegal logging, elephants poaching and bushmeat hunting has significantly reduced.” In Nyangores Forest Stations, scouts have recorded zero charcoal production in sections of the forest for months. Charcoal burning was a daily occurrence before participatory forest management was introduced.

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)-Kenya has been working with forest communities in the Mau Forest Complex to develop and operationalise participatory forest management that has helped improve forest management as well as livelihoods for the forest adjacent community.





Improved Rangeland Management Promotes Human-wildlife Integration

Unprecedented land fragmentation characterised by fencing, change in land use and infrastructural development is a major challenge pitting conservation efforts in the Mara basin. This, has augmented human-wildlife conflict and further led to a loss of the ecological integrity of the area.

To minimize its impact, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)-Kenya has been working with communities living in wildlife- rich zones to adopt a suitable grazing model aimed at improving the health of the rangelands while improving the livelihoods of landowners in the Mara ecosystem . To date, key achievements of the projects include: improved rangeland health, livelihoods through eco-tourism and livestock enterprise, reduced human-wildlife conflicts and rehabilitated water resources.

Cumulatively, over 39,150 acres of rangeland have been secured and are under sustainable rangeland management through the holistic management approach in wildlife conservancies surrounding the Maasai Mara National Reserve.

“Through grazing plans we are not only guaranteed of sufficient water and pasture throughout the year but also increased benefits to landowners and further help secure critical wildlife corridors,” said Julius Manguyo a founding member of Oloisukut Conservancy. The conservancy, which covers 23,000 acres, recently adopted the planned grazing initiative.

To further improve livelihoods, WWF-Kenya is supporting local communities to integrate both livestock and wildlife related eco-tourism enterprises. On livestock production, the principle is low numbers but high quality livestock breeds. On the fattening programme alone, the 500 steers each approximated to weigh 300 Kg after fattening is currently valued at Ksh. 17 million.

Samson Kotikot, Chairman of Oloosekin mini-ranch notes that they recently sold 23 billy goats for Ksh.90, 000.00. “We decided to use the amount to lease two additional parcels of land, approximately 70 acres,” Kotikot noted.

39,150

Cumulative acreage of rangeland secured and under sustainable rangeland management through the holistic management approach in community wildlife conservancies in the Mara basin.

15,000

Individuals benefiting directly from planned grazing initiatives in Mara Siana Conservancy (Naramatisho, Oloosekin, NCDO, Megwara); Enonkishu Conservancy; Oloisukut Conservancy and Purko Conservation Trust in the Greater Loita plains and forest.

Ksh 17 millions

Current value of the livestock fattening programme.

159

Number of local communities recently trained on comprehensive holistic management modules, equipped with herding and monitoring skills.

Empowering Communities to Advance Better Natural Resources Management

“A number of us felt powerless in the past and were unable to push the government whether county or national to address some of these threats. With the support from WWF-Kenya, we are now bold and united and we will be engaging the duty bearers to ask questions when the need arises. We will make sure that no one is left behind including women, youth and people living with disabilities. Our voices must not only be heard but we also have to be listened to,”

Enock Kiminta, Lake Naivasha Water Resource Users Association Chairman.

The ecological and economic significance notwithstanding, the Lake Naivasha and Mara basins experience immense negative impacts due to human related activities. Whilst appreciating that local communities play a critical role in the management of natural resources, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)-Kenya through Leading the Change programme is helping build capacities of Civil Society Organisations in Bomet, Nakuru, Narok and Nyandarua counties to advance better natural resource management.

The hope is that empowered Civil Society Organisations will not only play the watchdog role by pointing out the problems but also offer solutions towards better natural resource management.

In 2018, Lake Naivasha Basin Landscape Association played a vital role in whistleblowing the when Water Resources Authority made a proposal to reduce the size of the Lake Naivasha riparian zone. Proposed verification meetings had to be indefinitely suspended after lengthy deliberations including a sustained media awareness campaign led by the network. The National Land Commission (NLC) has since issued a notice to tens of investors who have encroached on riparian land around Lake Naivasha.

“A number of us felt powerless in the past and were unable to push the government whether county or national to address some of these threats. With the support from WWF-Kenya, we are now bold and united and we will be engaging the duty bearers to ask questions when the need arises. We will make sure that no one is left behind including women, youth and people living with disabilities. Our voices must not only be heard but we also have to be listened to,” said Enock Kiminta, Lake Naivasha Water Resource Users Association Chairman.

The programme also facilitated the formation of the Narok County Natural Resources Network and the Mau-Mara-Catchment Conservation Forum; umbrella bodies for environment Civil Society Organisations in Narok County and Community Forest Associations in the Mara River basin respectively.

The existence of the forums has created an avenue for top level advocacy which in turn shape decisions pertinent to natural resources management in the landscape. The forums have also created an opportunity for constituent Civil Society Organisations to have a unified voice on conservation matters, especially in a political environment where Civil Society Organizations and the communities in general have had little influence.



OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

RESPOND

WWF Kenya ensures that large scale infrastructure development has minimum adverse environmental and social impacts

ENGAGE

WWF Kenya engages in and influences global, regional, national and county policies and laws while leveraging strategic partnerships



SECURE

WWF Kenya ensures that key freshwater, marine and forest ecosystems are secured and populations of flagship species in target places are stable or increasing.

ADDRESS

WWF Kenya is keen to see that agricultural and fisheries production systems are based on environmentally and socially sustainable practices.



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

www.wwfkenya.org