Harmony in Habitat Project: Empowering Communities for Nature's Resilience

Project Period: 1 April 2025-31 March 2030

Presented by Leah W. Mwangi

RHINO ARK

Implementing Partners

- WWF-Kenya –Lead Organization (Tsavo and Mau)
- Rhino Ark- Mau Ecosystem
- Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA)- Tsavo Ecosystem together with Taita Taveta Wildlife Conservancy Association (TTWCA)
- Landscape Alliance (CIFOR-ICRAF) – Mau and Tsavo

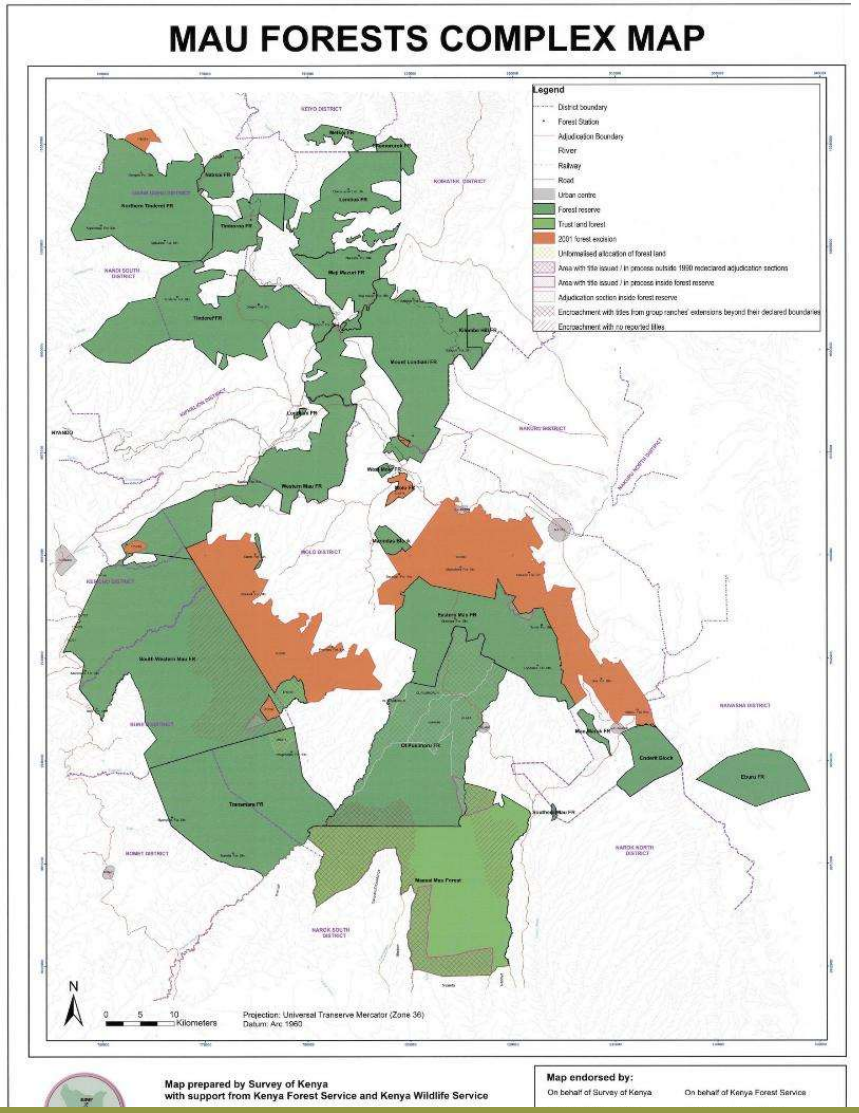
WWF KENYA

Implementing partners:

CIFOR World Agroforestry

RHINO ARK

KWCA Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association Living nature, Living people



SCOPE

Transmara –Olenguruone, Nyangores and Nairotia

Olpusimoru

Kiptunga (Eastern Mau)

By extension- SW Mau (Kericho, Itare, Maramara and Ndoinet)

Maasai Mau

RHINO ARK

Project Goal



To strengthen governance, conservation, and green economy initiatives in the Mau Forest and Tsavo ecosystems, promoting inclusive and participatory management practices that support biodiversity protection, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods for local communities, especially women, youth, and marginalized groups

2.Specific Objectives

3 Pillars

- **Governance**
- **Conservation**
- **Green Economy**

Governance

To enhance the capacity of local communities and authorities in the Mau Forest and Tsavo ecosystems for inclusive land-use governance and natural resource management (NRM) by 2030 and beyond.

a) Establish an ecosystem level platform in Mau, outline core decisions needed in the landscape, and agree upon collaborative decision-making processes

b) Strengthen inclusive governance structures within 13 CBOs (membership drive, election, registration, training, HR and gender) –For RA 5 CFAs.

Conservation

To facilitate the establishment and functioning of participatory ecosystem coordination platforms (Mau-Mara, Tsavo, and SOK) by 2030, ensuring inclusive decision-making and collaboration in ecosystem management.

a) Support the participatory development of an Ecosystem Management Plan for the Mau
b) Support the development/review of Participatory Forest Management Plans (PFMP) in the Mau (Nyangores, Nairotia, Olenguruone, Olpusimoru and Kiptunga)
c) Establish 1 additional community ranger team in the Mau.
d) Build technical capacity and knowledge in scouts, community and government rangers in the Mau and Tsavo ecosystems (training and construction of 3 outposts)
e) Restoration of 700ha of degraded forests (Mau)

Green Economy

To create sustainable livelihood opportunities through green economy initiatives, focusing on alternative nature-based livelihoods (agriculture, rangelands, tourism) for local communities, particularly targeting women and youth-headed households, by August 2030

a) Develop and enhance the tourism sector in two ecosystems

b) Youth and women entrepreneurship skills development

Achievements

1. Project Launch

- Held in Bomet in April where stakeholders were engaged
- Recruitment of Project Staff- A total of 13
- Office establishment and equipping
- Assessment of Human Rights Issues conducted by the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR)
- Training of staff on Human Rights Based Approach
- Procurement of Project vehicles- 3 vehicles and 2 motorbikes

2.Community Engagement and Awareness

Introductory meetings to the five forest Stations where Rhino Ark is implementing the HiH project (Nairotia, Nyongores, Olenguruone, Olpusimoru and Kiptunga Forests) –enabling understanding of project scope and primary stakeholders (KFS and CFAs)
Community engagement planning meetings with all the 5 CFAs- enabled in identifying the CFA structure, membership scope and plan for project inception meetings as well as mobilization
28 project inception meetings were held across the five stations. (3724 participant- 1494 Adult Male, 830 adult Female and 1400 Youth)
32 awareness creation meetings (2975 participants-1238 Adult Male, 844 Adult Female and 993 Youth)

3. Joint Surveillance Unit- Recruitment





Completed training at KWS-LEA and KFS FOLEA

4. Mau Ecosystem Coordination Platform



A multistakeholder platform aimed for coordination and collaboration among stakeholders in the Mau.



Holds quarterly meetings



Anchors the development of an Ecosystem Management Plan and Ecotourism Development plan



Consists of Community Institutions (CFAS and WRUAs), KFS, KWS, Private Sector, Academia (universities around Mau offering courses in tourism and natural resource management), County governments (Kericho, Nakuru, Bomet and Narok), Indigenous Peoples, Youth and implementing partners.

5.CFA Strengthening

- Filing of annual returns
- Membership recruitment
- Development of institutional policies and governance structure (Finance and Procurement policies)
- Development of proposals for the FSTP fund from WWF-Kenya

6. Green Economy

- 1. Mapping of Ecotourism sites and development of ecotourism plan- inception meeting completed- listing of sites across 10 forest blocks and 4 counties.
- 2. Sensitization meetings on beekeeping- 2293 participants (953 adult Male, 477 adult Female, 863 Youth)
- 846 already own beehives- mapping scheduled for next quarter using SMART
- Key challenge is low rate of colonization especially for Langstroth hive and lack of knowledge in hive management and value addition of honey.