



www.ttwcakenya.com
info@ttwcakenya.com

TTWCA BULLETIN

Issue 1 | December 2021

Year in Review: Celebrating Our 2021 Highlights





Uniting the voice and efforts of community-led conservation in the biodiversity-rich Taita Taveta-Tsavu landscape.



Inside



03
**Nature
bites**



07
**Building
synergies**



10
**Conservancy
status**



13
**Tackling
inclusion**



15
**Livelihood
updates**

Karibu!

Welcome to issue #1 of the TTWCA Bulletin, a periodic bulletin where we will be sharing the conservation highlights from the Tsavo ecosystem.

As we reach the end of 2021, we would like to take this opportunity to thank our members and partners for their unwavering support throughout the year. This support enabled us to adapt and adjust in our quest to help Taita Taveta conservancies and ranches to safeguard wildlife and habitats and improve livelihoods amidst a global pandemic.

Join us in this our maiden TTWCA Bulletin as we look at what made 2021 a remarkable year for TTWCA. Stay safe and happy holidays!





Fighting Tsavo fires

Wildfires continue to pose a great challenge to Taita Taveta ranches and conservancies, leading to the loss of wildlife, destruction of habitats and loss of grass for livestock. Emergency preparedness is, therefore, an ongoing priority in the Tsavo landscape, which has suffered a loss of over 35,000 acres of vegetation to wildfires in the drought season in 2020 alone.

Our wildlife conservation team commenced September by collaborating with WWF-Kenya and KK Security Company to conduct a wildfire fighting training at Mgeno Conservancy. Some 22 rangers from TTWCA member conservancies were provided with training and equipment to swiftly respond to wildfires in the Tsavo landscape.

In October, TTWCA conducted cutline/road maintenance within member conservancies to improve accessibility during emergencies and prevent the rapid spread of wildfires commonly experienced during dry seasons.



“The trained marshals received personal protective equipment to improve their efficiency while at work, as personal safety is the foremost factor to consider while firefighting.”

*Alice Lenjo,
Programme Assistant at TTWCA*

Joining forces to combat illegal wildlife trading

While the Tsavo ecosystem has made progress in combatting poaching, illegal trade in wildlife remains a threat. In June 2021, TTWCA collaborated with stakeholders to implement the UNDP-IWT project that seeks to combat poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

The project will see the establishment of a wildlife multi-agency security hub in Kasiagu Conservancy. This hub will greatly improve the coordination of ranger activities and enhance rangeland security in the ecosystem.





Mitigating human-carnivore conflict

Our wildlife programme teamed up with Action For Cheetahs in Kenya to conduct a carnivore conflicts mitigation training in October. This is part of our continuous pursuit to improve how we handle human-wildlife conflict across the Tsavo ecosystem, which is prone to human-wildlife conflict incidents due to its central location between the Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Parks.

During the two-day training, 10 rangers drawn from 10 TTWCA member conservancies and ranches assembled at Choke Conservancy to test the effectiveness of the conflict mitigation toolbox. It contains useful guides, including how to identify a predator using elements such as tracks, as well as how to guide the investigation and prevention of livestock loss from predators.





Enhancing ranger communications

Conservation efforts in the Tsavo landscape received a great boost at the end of September after African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) joined hands with TTWCA to establish a Digital Radio Communication System. The system will enhance ranger communication and coordination in the landscape, which is prone to incidents that require swift action, such as fire outbreaks, human-wildlife conflict and poaching.

Also present during the handover ceremony were TTWCA board members Charles Mwisegehe, Livingstone Kiute, Manuel Kitololo and Amos Chege as well as AWF's and BCE Systems Limited's engineers Charles Agoro and Kelvin Chengo.



“This is a powerful system that will sufficiently serve the landscape. It will enable rangers to easily communicate from as far as Lumo conservancy to Taita Wildlife Conservancy at the border of Kwale and Taita Taveta counties.”

*Maurice Nyaligu,
AWF Tsavo Mkomanzi Landscape Manager*



“The establishment of a multi-agency security hub at Kasigau, together with this radio communication, will enhance security coordination by establishing a control room that will monitor the landscape and provide real-time information for quick response.”

*Alfred Mwanake,
TTWCA Coordinator*



PS Kimtai meets with Taita Taveta conservancies

Livestock Principal Secretary Harry Kimtai joined Taita Taveta conservancies at a consultative workshop in November to develop strategies that will improve the institutional and technical capacities of livestock producers and ranchers in the region.



Speaking during the workshop at TTWCA member Mgeno Conservancy, the PS said the visit was vital in ensuring his office fully grasps the challenges facing ranchers and how best to curb them, adding that the Taita Taveta ranches and conservancies are an integral player in the sustainable beef value chain sector in the country and in the implementation of Vision 2030.

The PS was joined by a delegation from the county government of Taita Taveta that included the County Executive Committee Member for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Davis Mwangoma.



“We would like to appreciate PS Kimtai for agreeing to convene this workshop in a ranch set-up. This has helped provide the true picture of the ranches situation and how ranches are battling with factors such as the prolonged drought.”

*Donald Bong'osa Mcharo,
TTWCA Chairman*

Partnerships with institutions

TTWCA developed action plans with various partners at the start of the final quarter of 2021. These include the county government of Taita Taveta, through the departments of Trade, Tourism, Industrialisation and Cooperative Development, and that of Water, Sanitation, Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources.

We also signed MoUs with the University of Nairobi's Education for Sustainable Development in Africa Phase II Project, SNV Netherlands Development Organisation, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Five Talent Kenya, Tsavo Cheetah Project and Maliasili.

The MoUs will provide a formal and efficient framework that will enable the strengthening of technical cooperation in the Tsavo landscape.

Launch of new, user-centric website

TTWCA revamped and launched our new website at www.ttwcakenya.com. Developed with the user experience in mind, the new website is a resourceful and responsive platform that boasts of a refreshed, modern and clean design, with a more intuitive navigation experience based on improved menu functionalities that provide our stakeholders with an easier way to engage with our work, interact with us and browse for information on conservation efforts across the Tsavo ecosystem.



“As a leader in transformative conservation in the country’s richest biodiversity ecosystem, it is important for us to continuously improve access to valuable information and resources about our work. The new website is pivotal towards us achieving this.”

Alfred Mwanake,
TTWCA Coordinator



Introducing
THE NEW TTWCAKENYA.COM
Resourceful. Responsive. Redesigned with you in mind

TTWCA
TAITA TAVETA
WILDLIFE
CONSERVANCIES
ASSOCIATION

Joining Efforts

We're excited to welcome you to the new ttwcakenya.com website, a brand new engaging experience with new features and intuitive navigation built to keep you informed and inspired by the joint work and impact of the Taita Taveta Conservancies.

Check out the new website. Join the Herd. Let's Stay Connected.



Duo inch closer to conservancy status

The Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2013 requires that all conservancies have a management plan that not only guides the conservancy's activities but also enables continuity of management and members to hold the conservancy managers and board to account.

Mgeno Ranch and Wushumbu Ranch, which are strategically located on wildlife corridors rich with wildlife and biodiversity,

completed their management plans in 2021.

The duo now await gazettelement by the Ministry of Tourism and wildlife to attain conservancy status, joining Kasigau Ranch Wildlife Conservancy and Chalongo Conservancy.

Meanwhile, Choke Conservancy obtained provisional registration as a conservancy as it looks forward to finalising its management plan.



Transitioning to community land

Five TTWCA member group ranches underwent a governance workshop in February on the Community Land Act 2016 and how to transition from a group ranch to community land as per the Act. The ranches are Mbulia Group Ranch, Mramba Ranch, Ndara B Group Ranch, Oza Group Ranch and Teri B Group Ranch.

The workshop, held at Lumo Conservancy, was conducted by TTWCA in partnership with national conservation policy experts Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA), led by KWCA's Policy Coordinator Gladys Warigia. It equipped the ranches with the know-how to undertake the next steps towards transitioning to community land.

“The advent of the Act brings transparency and equity on land issues and provides a process of conflict resolution on land matters.”

*Gladys Warigia,
KWCA's Policy Coordinator*





Biodiversity inventories

This year, TTWCA supported the development of biodiversity inventories for five member conservancies and ranches, namely: Bura, Dawida, Kambanga, Maungu and Mbale. The biodiversity assessment inventory is a key document in the development of conservancies' management plans.





Tackling inclusion in leadership

TTWCA is committed to better inclusivity in conservation across the Tsavo ecosystem. As part of this commitment, TTWCA's board and secretariat teams, together with the board and management teams of Kasigau Wildlife Conservancy, took part in a social inclusion in governance and management training under the Resilience Inclusive and Sustainable Environment project in June.

The training, conducted in partnership with KWCA, also included an introduction to the Social Analysis and Action (SAA) approach. SAA helped participants to explore the social norms and practices that shape

management and act together to challenge the restrictive norms and adopt more equitable social and gender norms for enhanced programmes and impact.

"I came to this training knowing that our board is well versed with gender equality," said Jonathan Mwangeje, Chairman, Kasigau Wildlife Conservancy.

"But after this conversation, I have realised we can do better in terms of gender mainstreaming. In the next AGM, we shall involve women and youth more as we are now more aware of how crucial social inclusion is in management."



Cultural barriers and conservation

Cultural barriers often hinder the involvement of women in decision-making processes, particularly around the management of natural resources. To address the gender inclusion gap, TTWCA organised several gender mainstreaming undertakings in 2021, which included partnering with KWCA and the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) to conduct a pilot Site-Level Assessment of Governance and Equity (SAGE) assessment in Lumo Conservancy.

The exercise involved the board, management, investors and community members. It unveiled how the conservancy was faring in areas such as decision-making, dispute resolution, transparency and accountability, equitable benefit sharing and accomplishment of conservation objectives.



“We appreciate KWCA and TTWCA for this timely assessment as it has enabled us to identify our weakness and strengths and informed us on the areas we need to work on.”

Lumo Conservancy member





Supporting nature-based enterprises

During the second quarter of 2021, our community and livelihoods programme, in collaboration with WWF-Kenya, distributed 500 beehives to 23 groups (youth, women and persons living with disabilities groups) and three TTWCA member conservancies (Bura, Lumo and Mgeno).

The beehive beneficiaries were also taken through a beekeeping course facilitated by WWF-Kenya in partnership with KWCA. The beehives project seeks to expand the opportunities for a diversified and sustainable income that the community members have.



Funding for tourism

The tourism sector was among the hardest hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, suffering total income loss as well as massive job losses.

The final quarter of the year brought renewed hope for TTWCA members Mgeno Ranching Company and Wushumbu Conservancy as they joined hands with WWF-Kenya to pilot a 12-month project: Response to Covid 19: Nature Conservation and Tourism.

The project is set to be piloted in Kenya, Mexico and Namibia. It will support the two conservancies to build the capacity of their board and management and explore a diversified income streams model by venturing into nature-based enterprises as well as scaling up their sustainable tourism enterprises.

Meanwhile, Lumo Conservancy, which heavily depends on tourism, partnered with Sunworld Safaris to utilise the lessons learnt during the global pandemic to develop a more robust, income-diversified tourism model



Enhancing livestock production

TTWCA member Kutima Ranch commenced a pilot project in October to develop a GPS livestock tracking system to trace lost livestock within the ranch and inform the rangeland management decision-making through the use of data on grazing patterns.

TTWCA is keenly following this development as the sustainable management of rangelands is crucial in handling the shrinking resources between wildlife and livestock in the Tsavo landscape.



Publication information

Publisher: Taita Taveta Wildlife Conservancies Association (TTWCA)

Editorial Lead: Stanley Kadeghe, TTWCA

Editors: Tom Jallo and Julia Wanjeri, Jeri Consulting

Design and layout: Michael Lusaba, Jeri Consulting

About TTWCA

TTWCA is a conservation nonprofit organisation that works with conservancies and ranches to safeguard the wildlife, habitats and livelihoods across one million acres in the Tsavo ecosystem, one of the world's last remaining mega fauna habitats.

 TTWCAtsavo

 ttwca_tsavo

 TTWCA

Our Partners

TTWCA would like to thank our partners for their invaluable support. **ASANTENI SANA!**





www.ttwcakenya.com