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TTWCA BULLETIN

Issue 2 | July 2022

Mid-Year in Review: Our 2022 Highlights So Far





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



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Karibu!

Welcome to the second edition of the TTWCA Bulletin.

As we settle into the last half of 2022, we wish to share an update on TTWCA's highlights so far this year.

TTWCA has experienced immense growth in the past two years that necessitated the formation of a secretariat and most recently, the appointment of its first-ever CEO: Alfred Mwanake.

The growing team is thankful to our members, partners and donors who make it possible for us to remain committed and effective in uniting the conservation efforts and stakeholders across the Tsavo landscape as we jointly seek to address the social, economic and environmental demands of not only today but the future.

Thank you for taking the time to engage with our mid-year review. Stay safe and stay in touch.





CS Balala presides over pass-out parade

Tourism CS Najib Balala joined TTWCA in the pass-out parade of 68 community rangers who had successfully completed a rigorous three-month training under the IWT-Kenya project.

The rangers were drawn from TTWCA (Kasigau, Wushumbu and Mbale) and MMWCA (Naboisho, Olare Motorogi, Marasiana, Olpua and Lamek) member conservancies.

The project, which is in partnership with UNDP and the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, aims to reduce illegal wildlife trade in the country.

Speaking at the pass-out parade held in May at the Kenya Wildlife Service Law Enforcement Academy, Manyani, CS Balala reiterated the importance of joining hands to fight illegal wildlife trade and poaching, which continues to prove a threat to the tourism sector.



“Tourism is one of Kenya’s major foreign currency earners, hence there is a need to protect this sector. I encourage such partnered efforts since it’s through such that we will be able to realise maximum benefits from it,” Balala said.

Other dignitaries in attendance included the PS Tourism and Wildlife Zainab A. Hussein, Director General KWS Brig. (Rtd) John M Waweru and representatives from AWF and WWF-Kenya.



Wildfire preparedness

WWF-Kenya donated an array of firefighting equipment in a ceremony conducted at Mgeno Conservancy in March. The donations included gear for 25 conservancy rangers, five motorcycles, camera traps and a tractor grader to maintain cutlines and roads in conservancies for quick response to emergencies.

The equipment comes in handy in the continuous joint effort by TTWCA and its partners to build the capacity of community conservancies to adapt to the ravaging effects of climate change experienced in the region, which is prone to wildfires.

In 2021, rangers from TTWCA member conservancies undertook a wildfire fighting training that was also conducted in partnership with WWF-Kenya and the KK Security Company.



TTWCA council holds AGM

Thirty-three (33) ranches and conservancies were represented by their executive members in the TTWCA's council AGM held in January where members gave updates on the challenges faced and strides made in the previous year. The board of directors also shared the 2022 action plan to provide a roadmap for the organisation as the year began.

While chairing the meeting, TTWCA chairman Donald Bong'osa Mcharo thanked the members for turning up for that crucial meeting. He reminded them of the potential and the vast opportunities the ranches have. "There is a need for collective efforts by TTWCA and her partners to explore the potential the Taita conservancies have to improve livestock production and tourism for improved livelihoods for the Taita and Taveta people," said the TTWCA Chairman.

The TTWCA chairman acknowledged the presence of Taita Taveta County Environment Director John Mlamba. "I am glad to see the growth that has been attained by TTWCA and the collaborative efforts that have been made so far with the county government. As a department, we commit our support to your ranches and conservancies through creation of different climate change financial kits that we encourage you to apply, so as to be able to support your operation in conservation work," Mlamba said.



"There is a need for collective efforts by TTWCA and her partners to explore the potential the Taita conservancies have to improve livestock production and tourism for improved livelihoods for the Taita and Taveta people"

*Donald Bong'osa Mcharo,
TTWCA Chairman*

TTWCA explores partnership with county departments

TTWCA and the Trade, Livestock and Environment departments of the county government of Taita Taveta started the year by making concerted effort to formalise their collaboration by developing Memorandums of Understanding to support the development of conservancies, increase public and private sector investments, improve county tourism products and the livelihoods of communities within Taita Taveta county.

County Executive Committee Member (CECM) Trade Daniel Mwakisha, who was present during the discussion and drafting of one of the MoUs, acknowledged the importance of partnerships in the growth of tourism. “There is a need for more strategic efforts like this in the tourism and cooperative sectors because they have been disregarded for a long time,” he said.

TTWCA used the meeting to point out the private sector engagements opportunities, particularly in the area of tourism development in the county. TTWCA CEO Alfred Mwanake mentioned that TTWCA had created a tourism map that captures points of interest in the landscape. “There are numerous areas where the county administration and TTWCA can collaborate to improve the livelihood of the people of Taita Taveta county. This relationship would provide more direct and real livelihood benefits to the community and the staff of conservancies and ranches,” said Mwanake.



Alfred Mwanake appointed CEO

“TTWCA endeavours to improve community livelihoods through sustainable management and utilisation of the natural resources within the landscape. To achieve this, there is a need to build synergies through partnerships with various stakeholders both nationally and internationally. A multi-sectoral approach that will result in the socio-economic empowerment of the community.”

*Alfred Mwanake,
TTWCA CEO*



TTWCA marked the end of the first half of the year in historic fashion by appointing its first-ever CEO: Alfred Mwanake to steer the TTWCA secretariat and manage the partnerships with key partners and stakeholders. His core duties will also include developing strategies for the member conservancies, and ensuring their diversity through incorporation of tourism and livestock enterprises among other feasible land uses to improve the livelihoods of community members.

Mwanake takes the helm after more than six years of coordinating the activities of the organisation and its member conservancies as the association’s coordinator, a role that was not only a great learning opportunity but also grew his resolve to actively protect and enrich the Tsavo landscape.

“I’d like to take this opportunity to thank the TTWCA board for entrusting me with this monumental task of taking TTWCA to new heights,” Mwanake said during the board’s announcement of his appointment.

Kambanga commences land use plan development

Kambanga DA Ranching Company, a 34,000-acre, community-owned ranch with more than 500 shareholders, has commenced the development of a land use management plan. This will help to manage conflicts, ease tensions and bring about more effective and efficient use of land and natural resources.

Forming part of the Kasigau wildlife corridor connecting Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Parks, the community ranch is rich in wildlife and other natural resources. This provides an ideal setting to showcase a regenerative land use model for an ecosystem that integrates

improved livestock production, wildlife conservation and tourism, carbon off-setting and mining.

Over the past few years, however, the ranch has faced several threats, with human encroachment by the adjacent community being rampant, hence the need to develop this crucial document to salvage the situation.

The goal is to bring together resources and community to nurture a thriving economy that will benefit all stakeholders and neighbouring communities for generations to come.





Maungu inches closer to wildlife conservancy status

Maungu Ranch, a 53,420-acre ranch owned by more than 1,200 indigenous local shareholders, conducted its first stakeholders' meeting in February to discuss the development of a wildlife management plan as they eye to meet the requirements to become a legally recognised wildlife conservancy as per the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act of 2013 (WCMA 2013).

As a key stakeholder in the landscape, AWF representative Mary Wanyika congratulated the Maungu Ranch management for taking that bold step in developing a plan that will see it advance economically. The meeting was also graced by a senior community warden from KWS, Stephen Kuseren from the Tsavo Conservation Area, to ensure the process conforms to the set guidelines under the WCMA 2013.

Upon completion of the plan, Maungu Ranch will join TTWCA members such as Mgeno and Wushumbu conservancies who completed their management plans in 2021 and are now awaiting gazettelement by the Ministry of Tourism and wildlife to attain conservancy status.

Kasigau and Chalongo conservancies are the two TTWCA members that have been gazetted.





Kasigau elects board

Kasigau Conservancy held its AGM in May where its more than 800 shareholders attended and got to hear from the board about issues brought up at the previous AGM, examine the 2021 audit report, comprehend the company’s financial situation and, most importantly, elect a new board of directors.

Jonathan Mwangeje, who was retained as the Kasigau chairman, praised the shareholders and the board for their efforts in raising the ranch’s economic standing. Among the accomplishments and projects completed during Mwangeje’s tenure are the designation

of Kasigau as a wildlife conservancy, improved livestock production, and increased collaboration with donors, such as SNV and AWF, to initiate pasture production programmes.

Congratulations to the new board members who were elected to represent the five villages that comprise the ranch, namely: (1) **Rukanga:** Jonathan Mwangeje and Allen Mwakesi, (2) **Bungule:** John Mwamburi and Daniel Mademu, (3) **Jora:** Livingstone Kiute and James Mwakuja, (4) **Makwasinyi:** Milton Mwaeghwa and Jones Mwakapoe, and (5) **Kiteghe:** Gibson Challa.

Publication information

Publisher: Taita Taveta Wildlife Conservancies Association (TTWCA)

Editorial Lead: Stanley Kadege, 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.

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Our Partners

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





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