ambition for biodiversity

BIODEV 2030

POLICY BRIEF

OCTOBER 2020

MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY INTO ECONOMIC SECTORS IN KENYA

- Kenya's Vision 2030 sets a blueprint for the future of economic growth which relies heavily on natural resources. However, declining trends of biodiversity and ecosystem services could put this vision at risk.
- A new report assessing the status, trends and threats of biodiversity and ecosystems aims to inform policy making and feed science-policy dialogues to ensure biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.
- Agriculture, forestry and fisheries are key economic sectors to be engaged to mainstream biodiversity in their voluntary commitments for an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration at national and county level is essential for establishing voluntary commitments to propel action towards promoting a sustainable and resilient economy in Kenya.

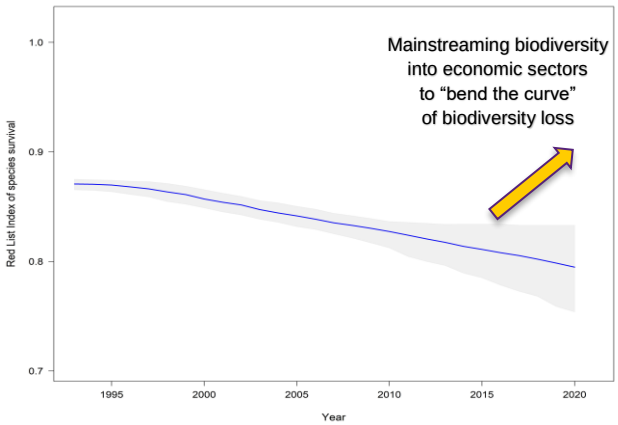

Figure 1: Declining biodiversity trends in Kenya (IUCN Red List Index). Restoring natural habitats and reducing threats to biodiversity are two complimentary ways to reverse the curve of biodversity decline.

KENYA'S BIODIVERSITY AT RISK

Kenya is endowed with unique natural ecosystems that constitute biodiversity assets in the terrestrial, aquatic and aerial environments (GoK, 2020). The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2019 – 2030 to be published in 2020, lists major 'natural' ecosystems as forest, woodlands, shrublands, grasslands, deserts, and wetlands.

A people-centered approach is vital to the conservation of natural resources in Kenya. ©Nuno Patricio (ADDB)

This incredible richness is reflected in the 73 identified Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and 47 further potential KBA sites. Since 1980, the coverage of KBAs within protected areas (PAs) in Kenya has increased by 7.5% (IBAT, 2020). The 400+ official PAs in Kenya include forest reserves, terrestrial and marine national parks and reserves, as well as community conserved areas.

The foundation of Kenya's economic wealth is driven primarily by economic sectors which rely heavily on natural resources, such as agriculture and tourism. The government has put in place a range of policy, institutional and legislative frameworks to address major causes of environmental degradation and negative impacts on ecosystems emanating from industrial and economic development programmes. However, despite existing regulatory frameworks, the large number of PAs in Kenya and the increase in coverage of KBAs within PAs, species are continuing to decline, putting at risk Kenya's development and people's livelihoods. To effectively conserve Kenya's diverse natural capital, understanding the conservation status and the root causes of the declining trends of biodiversity and ecosystem services is imperative.

TACKLING ECONOMIC THREATS TO BIODIVERSITY

The BIODEV2030 initiative being implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Kenya, aims to accelerate the mainstreaming of biodiversity into economic sectors which are key to biodiversity (BIO-) and development (-DEV), to '*bend the curve'* of biodiversity decline and promote more sustainable and resilient economies.

ambition for biodiversity BIODEV 2030

AFD AGENCE FRANÇAISE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT — FUNDING

EXPERTISE FRANCE — COORDINATION

IUCN WWF — IMPLEMENTATION

In the context of BIODEV2030, a study was conducted to provide a scientific overview and assessment of sectoral threats to biodiversity to inform voluntary commitments at country level. This new study identifies direct threats with the greatest impact on biodiversity and the economic sectors driving them for prioritisation in engagement through the BIODEV2030 Project.

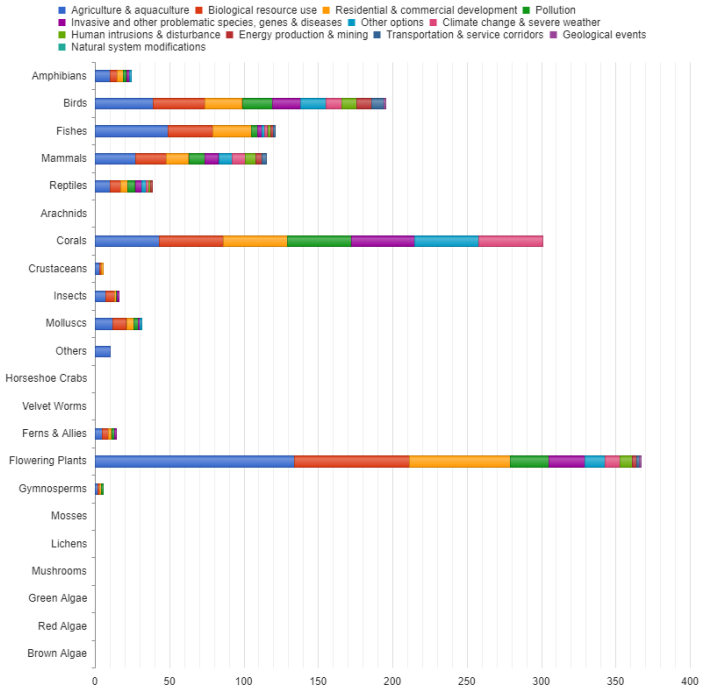

Figure 2: Major global threats to biodiversity affecting taxonomic groups in Kenya as per the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (IBAT, 2020).

To determine what direct threats from human sources were impacting biodiversity from a national and county perspective, and to what extent, the study used the Species Threat Abatement and Restoration (STAR) Metric and threat assessment survey tools (Gudka, 2020). The assessment of direct threats was based on the IUCN-CMP Threat Classification System. These results were complemented through literature review and national expert assessments using two specialised assessment tools: Expert-based Threat Assessment Tool (EbTAT) and Simplified Threat Assessment Tool (STAT).

Based on the study findings, Annual & Perennial Non-timber Crops and Hunting & Collecting Terrestrial Animals were identified as major threats to terrestrial biodiversity. In addition, climate related Habitat Shifting & Alteration, followed by Oil & Gas Drilling and Fishing & Harvesting Aquatic Resources were determined as key threats to aquatic and marine biodiversity. The economic sectors driving these threats were identified as agriculture, forestry, and fisheries accordingly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To effectively conserve Kenya's biodiversity, the study recommends that:

- ***Agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors are prioritised for engagement*** when setting voluntary commitments through BIODEV2030.
- ***Commitments include spatial prioritization and Key Biodiversity Areas avoidance****:* In Kenya, areas where intensive crop farming is concentrated coincide with areas harbouring the highest species richness and remaining indigenous forests in the central highlands and parts of western and coastal Kenya. Avoiding KBAs, when implementing development projects will contribute to conserve biodiversity.

To support the Government of Kenya to secure a high-level political commitment in the above sectors, the following recommendations are made:

- ***Science – Policy Dialogues:*** Scientific research and knowledge is important towards providing evidence of the important role that biodiversity plays, threats faced and how to reduce threats and restore nature in an equitable and sustainable manner.
- ***Multi - Stakeholder Engagement****:* When establishing voluntary commitments, engaging stakeholders from communities, government, private sector, research and non-governmental organizations at the national and county levels is critical for ownership and implementation.
- ***Sectoral Linkages****:* Voluntary commitments could foster enhanced coordination between sectors to facilitate biodiversity mainstreaming and development of integrated biodiversity management plans. This will also contribute to the simultaneous achievement of climate change targets as well as land degradation neutrality.

About BIODEV2030

BIODEV2030 focuses on mainstreaming biodiversity through sector-based commitments emerging from multi-stakeholder dialogue in pilot countries. Funded by the French Development Agency (AFD) the project is being implemented by IUCN, The World Wide Fund for Nature – France (WWF-France) and Expertise France.
IUCN is implementing the project in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guinea Conakry, Kenya, Mozambique and Senegal.

For more information about the project contact:
Kaori Yasuda: Kaori.Yasuda@iucn.org
Catherine Mungai: Catherine.Mungai@iucn.org

Reference: Masumi Gudka (2020) Kenya National Biodiversity Threat Assessment, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

ambition for biodiversity BIODEV 2030
AFD AGENCE FRANÇAISE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT — FUNDING
EXPERTISE FRANCE — COORDINATION
IUCN WWF — IMPLEMENTATION