



KENYA

ENVIRONMENT

Kenya's biodiversity and unique landscapes are among the most iconic in the world. The diverse wildlife and conservation areas are among the country's natural assets. Natural resources and nature-based tourism help drive the Kenyan economy and provide a livelihood to approximately 5.2 million people. Hence, the need to sustainably manage natural resources and related assets remains a priority. USAID works with the Government of Kenya at the county and national level to promote local natural resource management solutions that are championed, created, and managed by the local community and supported by the private sector.

Despite its importance, the nature-based tourism sector experiences many challenges such as climate change, increased greenhouse emissions, land use change, low private and public funding, human-wildlife conflicts, wild meat trade, and illegal poaching – all of which are linked to new trends in weather patterns and climate shocks. Climate threats compromise communities across the country, particularly marginalized areas such as the northern and coastal regions. The COVID-19 outbreak has further deepened Kenyans' vulnerability by driving a decline in the tourism sector, which in the past accounted for about 10 percent of Kenya's GDP and 1.5 million jobs. In response, USAID refocused approximately \$15 million toward essential operations of partner conservancies and community livelihood funds and earmarked \$2.25 million to fight ocean plastic pollution. In addition, USAID-supported partners successfully lobbied the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife to establish an \$8 million Wildlife Fund to support conservancies. An additional \$2 million was allocated to an Independent National Trust Fund to support community conservancies, and \$10 million was designated for recruiting and training 5,500 Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) rangers.

COUNTER WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

Wildlife crime is transnational and requires a strong regional and transcontinental approach. USAID's work supports efforts to strengthen cross-border security and boost resilience nationally and regionally. USAID supports KWS work in wildlife management and the enforcement and prosecution of wildlife crimes. The Mission's support has led to the development of a Wildlife Information Exchange that promotes accountability and effectiveness in combating wildlife trafficking. Across Kenya, elephant populations have been growing by 2.6

percent and are currently at 36,280 compared with 32,214 in 2014. In 2020, KWS reported record rhino births and zero rhino deaths from poaching.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Communities play a key role in both the protection and conservation of wildlife on community lands. USAID, in partnership with KWS, pioneered the community conservancy model in Kenya, a widely recognized approach to conservation that protects wildlife outside state-protected areas, expands economic opportunities for conservancy communities, and enhances the resilience of people and landscapes to withstand climate variability and shocks. USAID has scaled up its landscape approach to biodiversity conservation in critical wildlife corridors in northern and coastal Kenya and most recently, in Amboseli, Tsavo, and the Maasai Mara ecosystems. The community conservancy model promotes peaceful co-existence between communities and wildlife; improved management of wildlife; increased economic benefits from nature-based solutions, and peace and security. These 167 conservancies cover 11 percent of Kenya's land, which is home to 65 percent of wildlife outside Kenya's parks and reserves.

CLIMATE ACTION

USAID works with the Government of Kenya and partners, to enhance the resilience of Kenya's landscapes, livelihoods, and communities to climate change. Together, the United States and Kenya will amplify commitments to climate change interventions through Kenya's Vision 2030, and the [UNFCCC Paris Agreement](#). Furthermore, USAID supports Kenya's commitment to a low-emission and climate-resilient economy. USAID supported the development and implementation of Kenya's national climate legislative framework, a necessary step towards sustainable responses to climate issues. Key instruments include: [The Climate Change Act](#) (2016), the [National Climate Change Action Plan](#) (2018-2022), the improved and ambitious [National Determined Contribution](#) (2020), and the [National Adaptation Plan](#) (2015-2030) which is Kenya's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas and impact of climate change under the Paris Climate Agreement.

OCEAN PLASTIC POLLUTION

Globally, 11 million tons of plastic waste flow into oceans each year. Kenya has long struggled with plastic waste, which dots its Indian Ocean coast and often abounds in its lakes. In Mombasa, the country's second-largest city with nearly 2 million residents, 3.7 kilos of plastic per capita leach into bodies of water annually. USAID works with the Government of Kenya and partners to support the implementation of Kenya's plastic policies, especially the newest Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation. USAID also works to increase social awareness and change behavior, especially among youth, on how plastic consumption and disposal practices impact plastic leakage into oceans. In addition, USAID supports efforts to build the capacity of the private sector – especially collectors, recyclers, and manufacturers – to create a robust circular economy that reuses and recycles while also creating jobs.

BUDGET (FY 2021): \$8.9 million

KEY PARTNERS

Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Kenya Wildlife Services, Water Resource Management Authority, National Museums of Kenya, Kenya Forestry Research Institute, Kenya Meteorological, Kenya Water Towers Agency, NETFUND, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Department of Interior, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, U.S. Department of Energy (National Renewable Energy Laboratory), National Academy of Sciences, Smithsonian Institution, United Nations (UN) Development Programme, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, International Union for Conservation of Nature, International Development Law Organization, Northern Rangelands Trust

USAID CONTACTS

Aurelia Micko,
Director – Office of Environment
Tel: +254-20-363-2000
Email: amicko@usaid.gov

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email: usaidkea@usaid.gov
Website: <https://www.usaid.gov/kenya>
Facebook: USAIDKenya
Twitter: @USAIDKenya