

APRIL 2025

THE VOICE OF CONSERVATION IN EAST AFRICA

# NEWSLETTER



East African Wild Life Society | P.O.Box 20110-00200 Nairobi, Kenya Riara Rd, Kilimani, Nairobi | Tel: +254 (020) 3874145 | Mobile: +254 (0) 722 202 473 / +254 (0) 734 600 632 | Email: info@eawildlife.org

f @eawildlife  
X @eawildlife  
@eawildlife  
eastafricanwildlifesociety

## EAWLS Elected to Lead WIO-C and Co-Chair Plastic Pollution Group

The East African Wild Life Society's (EAWLS) Executive Director, Nancy Ogonje, has been elected as the new president of the Consortium for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO-C). Her election follows the recently concluded WIO-C members' vote held on March 12, 2025, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

After her election, Ms Ogonje underscored the importance of a unified regional approach to achieving WIO-C's priorities. "I am honoured by the WIO-C community's trust in the East African Wild Life Society's leadership for the next two years. We will focus on strengthening regional collaboration, working closely with sub-committees and thematic working groups to advance the Consortium's shared goals."

In her new role, Ms Ogonje pledged to work with member organisations to align with the 2025-2028 Nairobi Convention Work Programme and drive the implementation of decisions made during the Convention's 11th Conference of Parties (COP). These decisions focus on integrated ocean governance, capacity building for Contracting Parties and key stakeholders, improved environmental quality, area-based conservation planning, and ocean sustainability.

Key priorities identified during the meeting include tackling plastic pollution, advancing fisheries management, addressing biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), promoting sustainable and innovative ocean finance mechanisms, and strengthening Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs). In addition to the presidency, EAWLS will co-chair the Plastic Pollution Thematic Working Group, reinforcing its commitment to addressing one of the region's most pressing environmental challenges.



**Nancy Ogonje, Executive Director, East African Wild Life Society, and president of the Consortium for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO-C).**

WIO-C is a consortium of international and regional non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working with intergovernmental agencies to support marine and coastal ecosystem management in the Western Indian Ocean. Its core activities include networking, coordination, lobbying, decision support, resource mobilisation, and programme implementation. Established during the 5th Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention in November 2007 in Johannesburg, South Africa, WIO-C continues to be hosted by the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA).



SWARA  
2025-2  
ON SALE!

## IN THIS ISSUE

Court Affirms Jurisdiction in Landmark Environmental Case

EAWLS Joins March to Celebrate Women in Conservation

EAWLS Participates in BIODEV 2030 Policy Workshop on Biodiversity

Lake Ol'Bolossat Hosts EAWLS-Led Drive for Forest and Water Conservation

# Court Affirms Jurisdiction in Landmark Environmental Case

**Kenya's Environment and Land Court (ELC) has ruled that it has jurisdiction to hear a petition challenging a government decision to build a road through Aberdare National Park and Aberdare Forest. This is another triumph for a consortium of conservation groups opposed to the project's implementation.**

The Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) had argued that the ELC lacks jurisdiction over the matter, saying that the petition should first be heard by the National Environment Tribunal (NET). However, on March 13, the ELC ruled that the petition raised significant constitutional issues beyond the jurisdiction of NET.

The petitioners, including the East African Wild Life Society (EAWLS), argued that the proposed road project posed environmental threats, including deforestation and biodiversity loss, and raised constitutional issues such as the right to a clean and healthy environment. They opined that the ELC had the authority to hear the case under constitutional and environmental law provisions.

In its preliminary objection, KeNHA argued that the petition should be dismissed because the petitioners had not first taken the matter to the NET, which is designated under Section 129 of the Environmental Management and Coordination Act (EMCA) to handle disagreements over environmental licences.

In its ruling, the Court found that while the NET has jurisdiction over disputes related to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) licences, the controversy over the construction of the Ihithe-Ndunyu Njeru Road through the protected Aberdare ecosystem raised broader constitutional issues, which fell within the jurisdiction of the ELC, the part of the judiciary empowered to address constitutional and environmental rights violations.

The Court issued a conservatory order on April 15, 2024, halting the construction of the Ihithe-Ndunyu Njeru Road, which traverses the Aberdare



PHOTO BY EAWLS PHOTO LIBRARY

**The Aberdare Mountain Range, also known as the Aberdare Ranges, is a prominent highland region in central Kenya, located just west of Mount Kenya. It's part of the eastern rim of the Great Rift Valley and is known for its dramatic landscapes, rich biodiversity, and historical significance.**

National Park and Aberdare Forest. This order remains in effect pending the inter-partes hearing of the lawsuit.

Publicly available information suggests the existence of an alternative route, the Kariamu-Ndaragwa Road. Petitioners expressed concern over KeNHA's failure to consider this substitute path. Public records indicate that the alternative thoroughfare offers efficient connectivity between Nyeri and Nyandarua counties and promises to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, and cultural effects on the protected ecosystem.

The Aberdare National Park, a potential UNESCO World Heritage site, hosts numerous rare and critically endangered wildlife species, including the mountain bongo antelope. The proposed road not only threatens these rare species but also endangers the vital water tower function of the Aberdare, which

supplies 80 per cent of the water used by farmers, communities, and Nairobi through Ndakaini and Sasumua dams.

KeNHA's previous proposal in 2009 was to upgrade the Ihithe-Ndunyu Njeru Murram road, which operates within daylight hours. However, concerns about its potential environmental impact led to the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) denial of a licence. Despite this, NEMA later issued a licence for KeNHA to construct a bitumen highway through the park, prompting legal action from a coalition of conservation organisations and lawyer Lempaa Suyanka in 2024.

The latest decision clarifies the role of the Environment and Land Court in addressing constitutional environmental disputes, ensuring that issues related to fundamental rights and environmental protection are given due consideration in judicial proceedings.



# EAWLS Joins March to Celebrate Women in Conservation

The East African Wild Life Society (EAWLS) marked International Women's Day 2025 by participating in the March in March—a 10-kilometre fundraiser walk organised by Intrepid Travel through its charitable arm, the Intrepid Foundation.

Held in Nairobi, the event attracted more than 200 participants, including conservation partners, tourism professionals, and local community members, to support grassroots conservation efforts led by and for women and youth.

The funds raised will support a range of Intrepid's partner organisations implementing transformative conservation programmes. These include EAWLS' Conservancies Rangers Programme, World Bicycle Relief, which provides bicycles to students and healthcare workers, Kilimanjaro Porters Assistance Project, Gorilla Doctors, and Patinaai Osim, a women-led initiative fostering sustainable livelihoods among Maasai women.

Speaking during the event, Theresa Aoko, Policy and Advocacy Officer at the East African Wild Life



**TOP RIGHT: Theresa Aoko in blue cap, Policy and Advocacy Officer joins other participants in the walk**

**BELOW: Participants during the march.**

# 11%

Percentage globally of conservation management roles are held by women.

Society underscored the urgent need to dismantle gender disparities in conservation. "Globally, only 11% of conservation management roles are held by women. In Kenya, the figure stands at a mere 2%," she noted. "Yet when women are meaningfully included, they enhance conservation outcomes and drive stronger, more resilient communities."

Since its launch in 2017, the Conservancies Rangers Programme has

worked to strengthen ranger welfare and support community-led conservation in Suswa, Ol Kinyei, and Enonkishu community conservancies within the Mara ecosystem. The initiative focuses on peer learning, wildlife habitat protection, and community engagement to foster resilient landscapes and local conservation leadership.

With nearly 65% of Kenya's wildlife living outside formal protected areas, community and private conservancies are essential to biodiversity protection. Yet many of these areas face significant challenges, including limited funding, weak governance structures, and increasing climate-related threats.

Support from partners, such as The Intrepid Foundation, is crucial in bridging the resource gap. It ensures that rangers and local communities are equipped with the skills, tools, and support needed to protect wildlife and habitats now and for future generations.





# EAWLS Participates in BIODDEV 2030 Policy Workshop on Biodiversity



**The East African Wild Life Society (EAWLS) participated in the BIODDEV 2030 Workshop on Aligning Sectoral Policies with the Global Biodiversity Framework in Nairobi.**

Organised by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in partnership with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the session brought together stakeholders from government agencies, academia, civil society, and diplomatic missions, including the French Embassy.

The BIODDEV 2030 project empowers governments, the private sector, and civil society to identify development priorities that drive national economic growth and safeguard biodiversity. The Nairobi workshop marked an essential step in reviewing sectoral policies and their alignment with biodiversity objectives under the Global Biodiversity Framework.

Participants examined key policy reforms and challenges across multiple sectors, such as forestry, agriculture, livestock, and pastoralism.

Discussions in the forestry sector highlighted ongoing issues such as unsustainable charcoal production, complexities around the Plantation Establishment and Livelihood



Improvement Scheme (PELIS), the moratorium on logging, gaps in implementing the Forest Conservation and Management Act (FCMA), and limited engagement of Community Forest Associations (CFAs).

Altai Consulting is leading the policy review process. The firm is engaged to carry out a comprehensive policy analysis and develop practical, biodiversity-friendly reform proposals. The firm will also lead follow-up consultations to present draft policy briefs and incorporate further stakeholder feedback.

This initiative presents a timely opportunity for the Kenya Forest Working Group (KFWG) to harmonise its

**TOP: Participants during the workshop.**

**BELOW: Theresa Aoko Left, EAWLS Policy and Advocacy Officer during the workshop.**

research findings on forest biodiversity with the data developed by the Institute for Culture and Ecology (ICE).

EAWLS remains committed to influencing policy processes that promote the sustainable management of natural resources and secure a future where biodiversity thrives alongside development.



# Lake Ol'Bolossat Hosts EAWLS-Led Drive for Forest and Water Conservation

The East African Wild Life Society (EAWLS) commemorated the International Day of Forests and World Water Day 2025 with impactful outreach activities to raise environmental awareness in Lake Ol'Bolossat, Nyandarua County.

On March 20, 2025, EAWLS kicked off the celebrations by engaging students in activities at Makereka Comprehensive School, located on the Kirima-Muruai escarpment, where the lake catchment has been converted into farmland.

The activities included school tournaments featuring volleyball and football and a thought-provoking debate competition themed "The Role of Forests and Water in Food Security and Climate Resilience."

The event brought together 152 students from Makereka Comprehensive School and Ngurumo Comprehensive School, sparking critical discussions on the interconnectedness of forests, water, and food security. The debate also underscored their role in fostering climate resilience, emphasizing the need for integrated approaches to environmental conservation.

The main celebrations on March 21 at Makereka Springs, Lake Ol'Bolossat saw a diverse group of stakeholders in attendance, including community members, teachers, parents, civil society organisations, conservation groups, and



officials from the Nyandarua County Government.

Samuel Wachira Mugo, the County Executive Committee Member for Water, Sanitation, Environment, Tourism, Natural Resources, and Climate Change, emphasised the county's commitment to increasing forest cover from 27 per cent. He stressed that this effort was key to combating climate change and preserving biodiversity. He also noted that Nyandarua had planted 3 million trees over the past year, contributing to the county's ambitious annual target of 17.8 million trees.

**TOP: Samuel Wachira Mugo, Nyandarua County Executive Committee Member for Water, Sanitation, Environment, Tourism, Natural Resources, and Climate Change, joins partners in planting a tree to commemorate the International Day of Forests and World Water Day 2025.**

**BELOW: Students in action during the debate competition.**



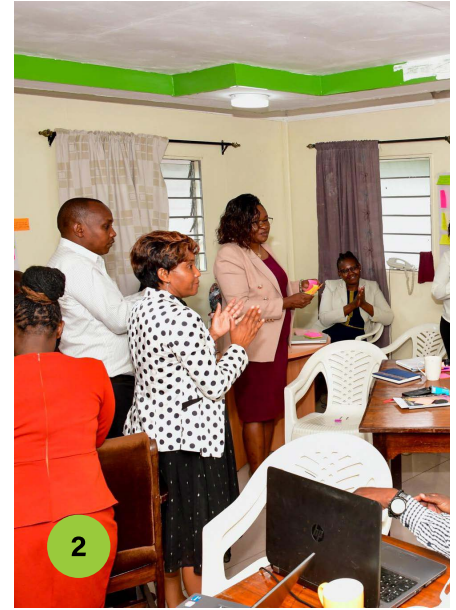
Mr. Mugo urged residents to actively participate in forest protection, particularly in preventing forest fires, which have severely affected large areas of the county's woodlands. Additionally, he announced a Ksh 7.5 million allocation to support the conservation of Lake Ol'Bolossat, a critical water resource for the region.

The event culminated in a tree planting ceremony at A.I.C Makereka Church, symbolising the community's commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable resource management.

Through these efforts, EAWLS is laying the groundwork for future generations to engage in conservation, ensuring the protection of forests and water resources for sustainable development in Nyandarua County.



# PICTORIALS



1/2. The East African Wild Life Society team, led by Executive Director Nancy Ogonje, gathers for the annual review and planning session at the Society's boardroom setting the course for another impactful year in conservation.

3. Programs and Advocacy Manager Jabes Okumu plants a tree to commemorate International Day of Forests and World Water Day 2025 at Makereka Springs, Lake Ol'Bo-lossat.

4. The East African Wild Life Society's marketing team at our exhibition booth during the *Holidays Tourism Fair 2025* at Sarit Expo Centre, Nairobi, showcasing our latest branded merchandise. Visitors also had the opportunity to renew or sign up for membership and learn more about our ongoing conservation initiatives across the region.

5. Executive Director Nancy Ogonje, Programs and Advocacy Manager Jabes Okumu, and Marine Officer Kevin Lunzalu represent the East African Wild Life Society at the Consortium for the Conservation of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO-C) meeting held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

6. Samuel Karani, Country General Manager at Intrepid Travel-East Africa (centre), joins East African Wild Life Society staff during a march in support of Intrepid's initiative to raise funds for underfunded conservation projects and support for women.



## Become a Member

The East African Wild Life Society (EAWLS) is the oldest conservation organisation in East Africa working towards enhancing the conservation and wise use of the environment and natural resources for the benefits of current and future generations. By supporting EAWLS, you will be supporting our conservation and advocacy teams' mission to safeguard, protect and conserve the habitat and wildlife. As a member of EAWLS you will be part of an organisation that uses its experience, influence, reputation and respected voice to ensure that there is sound governance of our natural heritage for the good of all.

## Categories of Membership & Annual Rates

EAWLS Membership is available for both corporates and individuals and we have special rates for families and students. As a member of EAWLS you are entitled to free copies of the Swara Magazine and discounted rates on events and merchandise. The different categories of membership have different annual rates.

For more information visit:

[www.eawildlife.org](http://www.eawildlife.org) or write to our membership officer at:

[Rose.chemweno@eawildlife.org](mailto:Rose.chemweno@eawildlife.org)

**Mob: +254 (0) 722 202 473 / +254 (0) 734 600632**

**Tel: +254 20 3874145 / +254 20 3871437**

REGION	INDIVIDUAL	INDIVIDUAL SILVER	INDIVIDUAL GOLD	INDIVIDUAL PLATINUM	FAMILY	E-SWARA
EAST AFRICA	KSHS: 5000 USD: 55	KSHS: 10,000 USD: 100	KSHS: 15,000 USD: 150	KSHS: 30,000 USD: 300	KSHS: 10,000 USD: 100	KSHS: 1,000 USD: 20
REST OF AFRICA	USD 75	USD 100	USD 150	USD 300	USD 100	USD 20
OUTSIDE AFRICA	USD: 100 GBP:80 EUR: 85	USD: 150 GBP:120 EUR: 130	USD: 200 GBP:150 EUR: 170	USD: 350 GBP:270 EUR: 300	USD: 150 GBP:120 EUR: 130	USD: 20
	<b>CORPORATE BRONZE</b>	<b>CORPORATE SILVER</b>	<b>CORPORATE GOLD</b>	<b>CORPORATE PLATINUM</b>		
EAST AFRICA	KSHS: 25000 USD: 300	KSHS: 50000 USD: 550	KSHS: 100,000 USD: 1,000	KSHS: 200,000 USD: 2,000		
OUTSIDE AFRICA	USD: 350 GBP:300 EUR: 370	USD: 600 GBP:500 EUR: 550	USD: 1,000 GBP:1,000 EUR:1,000	USD: 2,000 GBP:2,000 EUR:2,000		



Please make me a member of the EAST AFRICAN WILD LIFE SOCIETY today and send me copies of SWARA magazine every quarter

My Membership category: (Tick box)

Corporate

☐

Bronze

☐

Silver

☐

Gold

☐

Platinum

Individual

☐

Bronze

☐

Silver

☐

Gold

☐

Platinum

Student

☐

My location: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal code: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Enclosed is my cheque for \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to the EAST AFRICAN WILD LIFE SOCIETY

☐ Please debit my credit card for \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD  \*CARD CODE!!

No.

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please quote seven (7) digit security number at the back of your card

FOR ONLINE PAYMENTS: Use this link: [www.eawildlife.org/join/payonline](http://www.eawildlife.org/join/payonline)

MPESA: Pay bill Number: 502300, Enter "NEW" for new members under the account number on the paybill option

Cheques: Be made payable to: East African Wild Life Society

Completed forms with cheque payments to be made to East African Wild Life Society, P.O.Box 20110, 00200, Nairobi, Kenya

Important for overseas members: Completed forms with payments must for security reasons be sent c/o one of these representatives: USA: EAWLS c/o Harry and Carol Ewel, 200 Lyell Avenue - Speeport NY 14559 - 1839 USA EUROPE: EUROPE: c/o Fauna & Flora International, The David Attenborough Building, Pembroke Street, Cambridge CB2 3QZ

THE NETHERLANDS: EAWLS c/o Johan Elzenga Stichting EAWLS Nederland Ridderhoflaan 372396 CJ Koudekerk a/d Rijn



# Make Conservation in East Africa your legacy



THE EAST AFRICAN  
WILD LIFE SOCIETY

We at the East Africa Wild Life (EAWLS) appreciate your continued material and moral support, which has enabled us to champion the cause of the conservation of our natural environment. When you leave a legacy gift to EAWLS, you will be investing in an East Africa where all people enjoy the full diversity, beauty and richness of nature.

Donate towards the protection of the natural environment you would like the next generation to inherit by remembering EAWLS in your Will.



## Legacy pledge form

If you decide to leave a legacy gift to EAWLS, kindly complete the pledge form below, cut and send or scan to the address given below. The pledge you make using this form is confidential and is not legally binding.

Full Name

Address

## Tick the appropriate box

- ☐ I have remembered East African Wild Life Society in my Will
- ☐ I am considering leaving a legacy gift to the East Africa Wild Life Society. Please send me more information
- ☐ I enclose a donation of \_\_\_\_\_ to the East African Wild Life Society

## PLEASE RETURN FORM TO

The Executive Director

East African Wild Life Society, Riara Road, Off Ngong Road, Kilimani | P.O. Box 20110 - 00200 Nairobi, Kenya

Scan and email to: [info@eawildlife.org](mailto:info@eawildlife.org) | Visit our donation page on: [www.eawildlife.org](http://www.eawildlife.org)

For more details call us on: + 254 (0) 722 202 473 / + 254 (0) 734 600 632

***"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children"***  
(Native American saying)