



STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABLE FOREST GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN KIRISIA/LEROGHI FOREST, KENYA

Kirisia/Leroghi Forest is situated in Samburu County, Kenya. The forest and the ecosystem around the county are widely recognized as critical for maintaining the Samburu heartland as a functioning ecosystem, and particularly its role as a key habitat for wildlife and carbon storage. The population around the forest consists mainly of the pastoralist Samburu community, which has been managing the forest through traditional management systems in the past and uses the forest for wood products, non-timber forest products, and as a grazing fallback zone. However, due to policies of past administrations, the traditional governance system has deteriorated, leading to vast degradation, an influx of people settling within the forest boundaries, wildfires of an anthropological nature, and year-round grazing, thus depressing natural regeneration of the forest. Against this background, the project aimed to strengthen sustainable forest governance and management systems in Kirisia/Leroghi Forest to tackle current and emerging threats.



WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

By prioritizing stakeholder inclusion, participatory decision-making and human rights-based approaches, the project achieved tangible results and built a strong foundation for sustainable forest management in Kirisia Forest. Through community-led natural regeneration and the designation of Kirisia/Leroghi forest as an Important Bird Area, the project enhanced conservation efforts, promoted awareness of threatened species and attracted tourism. The successful implementation of nature-positive livelihood interventions, such as honey and poultry value chains, agroforestry and sustainable grazing management, reduced dependency on the forest and fostered environmental sustainability. In addition, county policies were developed through the project to give the county a long-term sustainable forest sector for both protected and commercial forestry. The project also used a diverse range of communication methodologies to ensure stakeholder inclusion and participation. Advanced forest monitoring and mapping drones were employed to enhance forest surveillance and fire detection. Successful voluntary community relocations enabled natural regeneration and ecosystem restoration.

KEY FACTS

Latest Approved Budget
USD 2 823 439

Duration
January 2017–March 2023

Resource Partner
Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Partners
Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry; County Government of Samburu; Kenya Forest Service; Kenya Water Towers Agency (KWTA); Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS); Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI); Suyian Trust; Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT); East African Wildlife Society (EAWLS); Nailepunyie Community Forest Association; Naramat Community Forest Association; Nkarro Community Forest Association; Forest Society of Kenya

Beneficiaries
Farmers, herders and households in Samburu County; Samburu County Government; Samburu Community Forest Association (CFA); national government agencies

IMPACT

The project achieved efficient conservation of the forest, resulting in a total reduction in emissions caused by deforestation and forest degradation. The increased legitimacy of the three CFAs enabled them to successfully manage grazing within the forest and allowed for the natural regeneration of over 12 000 ha to occur, as well as for pastures, glades, water springs and rivers within the forest to regenerate, enabling the community to utilize the forest as a fallback grazing zone during the severe 2020-2022 droughts, as well as resulting in minimal loss of livestock; thereby contributing to enhanced climate change resilience, food security and improved livelihoods.

ACTIVITIES

- Participatory Forest Management Plan and Forest Management Agreement developed, endorsed and signed, and their implementation initiated, providing legal framework for community to co-manage and utilize Kirisia Forest.
- Kirisia Ecosystem Restoration Strategy (2023-2032) developed and implemented, identifying degraded areas in Nkarro, Naramat and Nailepunyie forest blocks respectively.
- Agroforestry campaign in Kirisia Ecosystem conducted, comprising training of 1 669 farmers on improved agroforestry practices and seedlings delivered to 1 190 farmers, including 85 939 fuel, timber and fodder and 17 692 fruit tree seedlings.
- Two critical wildlife migratory corridors linking Kirisia Forest and other ecosystems identified, mapped and established.
- Support provided to CFAs to undertake livelihood activities, including honey production and processing, poultry and kitchen garden interventions.
- Samburu Climate Change Policy and Samburu County Sustainable Forest Management and Tree Growing Policy developed and related bills passed and enacted into Act of the County Assembly.
- Samburu County 2022-2031 Tourism Strategic Plan developed, ratified and launched.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Project Title

Capacity, Policy and Financial Incentives for PFM in Kirisia Forest and integrated Rangelands Management (Previously Name Development of SFM and Support to REDD for Dryland Forests)

Project Code

FAO: GCP/KEN/073/GFF
Donor: 5083

Contact

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