Accelerating integrated community-led conservation in the northern rangelands of Kenya and the upper Tana River Basin

Charles L. Oluchina
Country program manager
The Nature Conservancy, Kenya
Kenya Context

- 583,000 sq. km (slightly larger than France)
- 40 million people (8 million in 1960)
- 8% of land under protected areas status
- 2.7% forest cover
- Water-scarce country
- Wildlife-based tourism is 12% of GDP
- Fisheries provide for major nutrition
- 85% of rural people depend on wood fuel
- 70% of electricity generated by hydropower
- Public debt stands at 48.5% (May 2012)
Vision
Build resilient communities better able to adapt to uncertain future of droughts, economic shocks and political change through strengthening governance and social development, diversification of economies, landscape resource management, and building peace and security.

Goals
- Management of terrestrial, freshwater, coastal estuary, and marine ecosystems
- Policy Reform
- Sustainable financing
- Home to important biodiversity pool in globally significant ecosystems
- Large intact landscapes
- Political support for community-led conservation
- Opportunity to replicate success across the landscape
- Extensive pool of analytical and research work within Kenya
- Potential for positive economic impact for local communities
Mosaic of private, government and communally managed lands covering 10 million+ acres; over 150,000 people, mainly pastoralists

- Tana River is southern boundary; 970 km long; one of Africa’s most productive river systems
- 200,000 flood-dependent farmers, pastoralists, and fishermen live along the river
- Seven dams on the Tana provide a majority of Kenya’s electricity & one third of the irrigation potential
Strategies

- Improve policy and legal environment supportive of conservation
- Support livelihoods improvement/diversification actions
- Improve local governance capacity
- Improve land and water resources management
- Create a sustainable financing mechanism to support conservation
- Facilitate restoration of targeted endangered species
Upper Tana- Nairobi Water Fund

Protect the 1.7m Ha Upper Tana Watershed

➢ Provides Water to almost 17m People
➢ Supplies 90% of water for 3.6m people in Nairobi city
➢ 70% of Kenya’s Electricity

Per capita water availability (WRMA)
Community-led Whole of Ecosystem Conservation

**Threats:**
- Population
- Land conversion
- Overstocking
- Limited livelihoods choices
- Poaching
- Climate change

**Strategies:**
- Good governance
- Livelihoods diversification
- Policy environment
- Integrated land use management
- Species management
- Sustainable financing
- Climate adaptation

**Tools:**
- Conservancies
- PES, Trust funds & Endowments
- Carbon Financing
- Development by Design
- Holistic management
- Value-chains development
- Monitoring
- Easements
- Climate vulnerability assessments

**Outcomes:**
- Habitat restoration
- Economic empowerment
- Secure land & resource tenure
- Watershed productivity
- Improved wildlife cover
- Whole-system resilience

Theory of Change Model
Demonstrable Outcomes in Eight Years

- **Policy** - The Kenya National Association of Conservancies is registered; a new Wildlife policy and Community land law
- **Livelihoods** – $2M in capital and 20,000 head of cattle sold; 5,000 community members trained and $3M annual income from conservation businesses
- **Governance** - Grow from 19 to 30 conservancies; 30 conservancies, board members and managers trained
- **Land resources mgt** - 20 conservation action plans; 100,000 hectares under holistic grazing & soil carbon; 50,000 acres of tropical forest improved
- **Sustainable financing** – Govt of Kenya supports up to 30% of conservancy scouts; over $30 m raised to set up an endowment ; private sector driven water fund is capitalized at $7m
- **Endangered spp** - White and black rhino habitat is secured; Hirola population increases by 15%; A reduction in illegal killing of elephant to a PIKE below 40%