

KWS Wild

M A G A Z I N E

THREE YEARS OF TRANSFORMATION - TOWARDS A HIGH PERFORMING ORGANIZATION





CONTENTS

III Foreword By The Director General

01 Kenya Unveils The World's Largest Rhino Sanctuary

03 A New Generation Of Conservation Leaders Step Forward At Manyani

07 From Conflict To Coexistence

11 Stepping Up Wildlife Translocation

15 New Conservation Fees in Place After 18 Years Of Waiting

19 Capacity Building And Staff Welfare

21 Animal Welfare

23 The Whale That Carried Our Plastic: A Warning From The Ocean's Depths

25 Strategic Partnerships Are Powering Kenya's Wildlife Protection

31 Inspiring Kenya's Future Wildlife Guardians

33 KWS Triumphs in Sport, Service, and Conservation Leadership

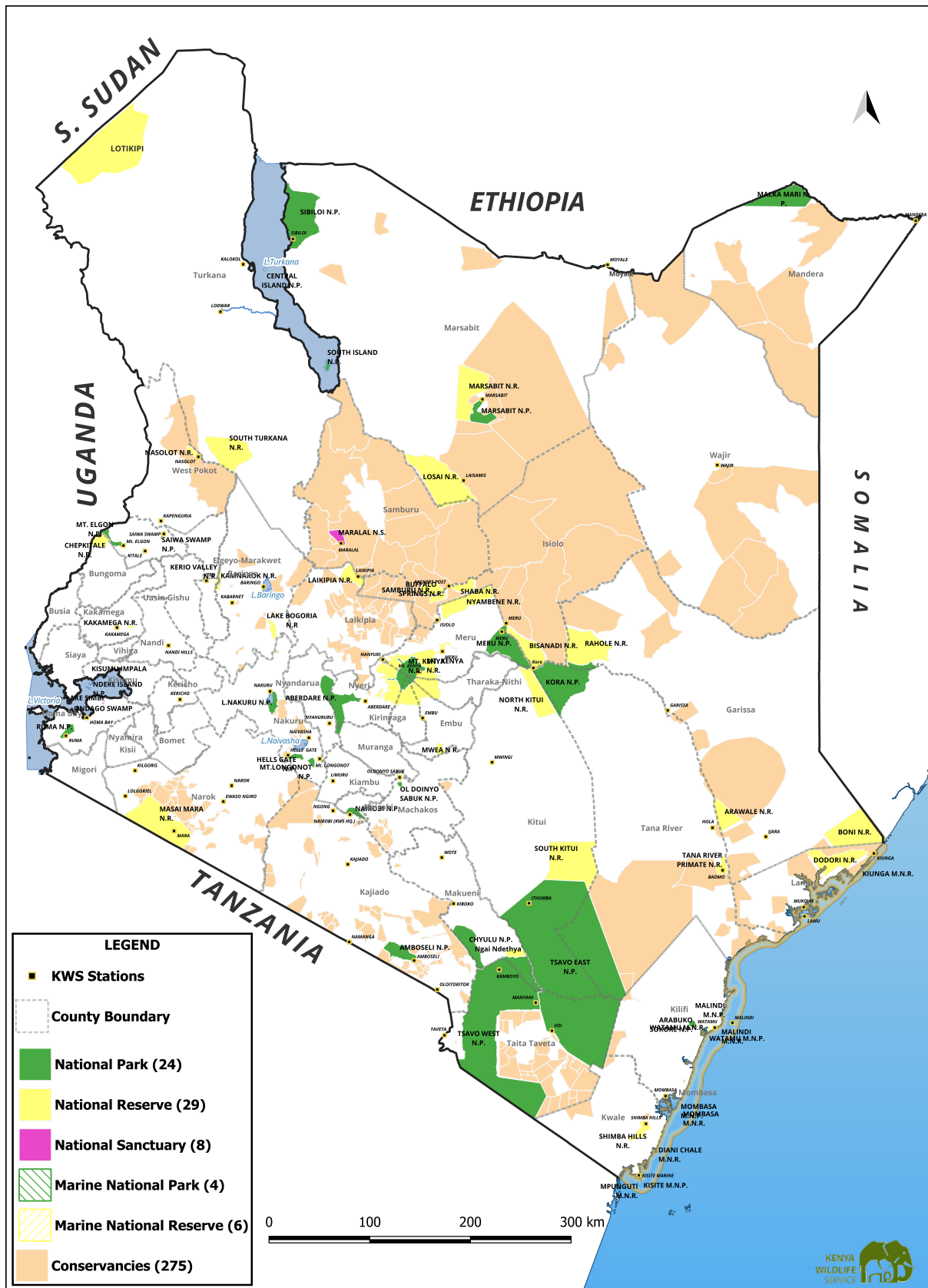
37 The Week That Reimagined Tourism, Wildlife, and the Soul of the Nation

41 Saving The Mountain Bongo From Extinction

45 A Transformative Three Years Scorecard (2023-2025)



KENYA'S PROTECTED AREAS RESERVED FOR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION, TOURIST ATTRACTIONS, JOB CREATION AND LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT



FOREWORD BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL



Prof. Erustus Kanga, PhD, CBS, EBS.

The 5th Edition of the Kenya Wildlife Service Magazine captures a defining moment in Kenya's conservation journey—one where wildlife conservation is firmly positioned as both a national responsibility and a strategic economic pillar. Over the past three years, Kenya Wildlife Service has advanced a clear vision: to secure wildlife, sustain ecosystems, and unlock the full potential of the wildlife economy for present and future generations.

Guided by our Strategic Plan, KWS continues to deliver measurable conservation outcomes through science-led management, institutional reform, and inclusive partnerships. From the rationalization of conservation fees to the strengthened protection of endangered species at the Tsavo West Rhino Sanctuary, and the successful translocation of elephants, bongos, giraffes, rhinos, and buffaloes, these milestones reflect a shift from isolated interventions to integrated, landscape-level conservation. They

affirm that conservation, when well planned and boldly executed, delivers lasting ecological and economic value.

Central to this vision is Human-Wildlife Coexistence. As wildlife spaces increasingly overlap with human livelihoods, KWS has prioritized coexistence as a foundation for sustainable conservation. Targeted elephant drives in Kwale and Kilifi, community-based interventions in Ganze, and the timely disbursement of Human-Wildlife Conflict compensation between July and September 2025 demonstrate a people-centred approach—one that recognizes communities as partners in conservation and beneficiaries of the wildlife economy.

Our progress is anchored in institutional strength and human capital. Investments in ranger and cadets training, canine units, staff wellness, and the operational capacity of the KWS Airwing underscore our commitment to a professional, motivated, and resilient workforce. These men and women remain the first line of defence for our wildlife and the driving force behind a high-performing conservation agency.

This edition also reflects our commitment to compassionate conservation. Swift veterinary responses across the country saving injured, snared, and distressed wildlife—illustrate that effective conservation must be ethical, humane, and grounded in respect for life.

Looking to the future, partnerships remain central to our strategy. Collaboration with communities, counties, development partners, the private sector, and international institutions continues to strengthen wildlife security, mobilize conservation financing, drive innovation, engage youth, and



Central to our conservation journey is Human-Wildlife Coexistence."

expand sustainable livelihoods. These partnerships are unlocking new opportunities within the wildlife economy—where conservation supports tourism growth, job creation, and national prosperity.

We also celebrate the awards and recognitions earned by our teams and partners, which affirm excellence, dedication, and service beyond duty. The week-long Jamhuri Celebrations, which reimaged tourism, wildlife, and national identity, further underscored the sector's strategic contribution to Kenya's socio-economic development.

This magazine is both a reflection on progress made and a statement of intent. It signals KWS's commitment to a future where wildlife conservation is not only protected, but productive; not only preserved, but valued as a national asset. As you turn these pages, may you be inspired to see wildlife not just as heritage to be safeguarded, but as an engine for sustainable growth.

Together, we are building a resilient wildlife economy—where conservation works, because it works for people, nature and the nation.





KENYA UNVEILS THE WORLD'S LARGEST RHINO SANCTUARY

In the early morning light of Tsavo West National Park, a black rhino pauses at the edge of an acacia thicket. Dust clings to its hide as it scans the open plain before moving on, unhurried and unthreatened. For a species once pushed to the brink of extinction, this quiet moment speaks volumes.

From the Brink of Extinction

Kenya has officially unveiled the world's largest rhino sanctuary, a vast 3,200 square kilometre landscape within Tsavo West that now offers black rhinos' space, security, and a future. It is a milestone decade in the making and one rooted in persistence rather than spectacle.

Three Rhinos and a Single Objective

The Tsavo West Rhino Sanctuary was born more than forty years ago during one of the darkest chapters in rhino conservation. Rampant poaching had decimated populations across Africa, and Kenya's black rhinos were disappearing at an alarming rate.

Growth by Design, Not by Chance

Those early years were defined by uncertainty. Resources were scarce, threats were constant, and success was far from guaranteed. But through disciplined protection, strengthening law enforcement, and careful scientific management, the Kenya Wildlife Service began to turn the tide.

A Landscape Reimagined

Under the leadership of His Excellency, The President of Kenya Dr. William Ruto, Kenya has formally expanded the Tsavo West Rhino Sanctuary from a managed 92 square kilometre enclosure into a fully integrated 3,200 square kilometre conservation landscape, the largest of its kind anywhere in the world.

Beyond Fences and Boundaries

The shift marks a new chapter in rhino conservation. Rather than relying on confined sanctuaries, Kenya is embracing landscape scale protection that allows rhinos to range more naturally while strengthening the ecological health of the broader Tsavo ecosystem.

Technology Meets the Wild

Turning such an ambitious idea into reality required innovation on the ground. According to KWS Director General Prof. Erustus Kanga, the expansion has been backed by the largest rhino monitoring initiative ever undertaken in Kenya.

The People Behind the Protection

Behind the technology are the people who make conservation work. KWS rangers and technical teams remain the backbone of Tsavo West, patrolling remote terrain, responding to incidents, and maintaining a constant presence in one of Kenya's most challenging landscapes.

Conservation That Works for Communities

The sanctuary is also a cornerstone of the Kenya Rhino Rangeland Expansion Programme and aligns with the Black Rhino Recovery and Action Plan and the National Wildlife Strategy 2030.

A Model for the Future of Conservation

Globally, black rhinos remain among the most threatened large mammals on the planet. Against a backdrop of accelerating biodiversity loss, the Tsavo West expansion offers a rare example of long-term, large-scale conservation done right.





A NEW GENERATION OF CONSERVATION LEADERS STEP FORWARD AT MANYANI

The vast plains of Manyani, long a crucible of discipline and national duty, marked a defining moment in Kenya's conservation journey on 19 December 2025, as the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) passed out a new generation of cadet and junior officers at the KWS Law Enforcement Academy.

The ceremony saw 250 officers—147 newly recruited cadets and 103 serving junior officers—successfully complete rigorous nine-month and six-month paramilitary and leadership training programmes respectively. Their graduation represents a major milestone in rebuilding KWS human capital after a prolonged recruitment gap and signals the

rollout of the first phase of staff capacity development under the KWS Strategic Plan 2024–2028.

The colourful parade was witnessed by parents and families of the graduating officers, conservation partners, community representatives, stakeholders, and senior government officials, reflecting the broad national

interest and shared responsibility in safeguarding Kenya's wildlife heritage.

A Historic Parade with National Significance

The parade was presided over by H.E. Prof. Kithure Kindiki, EGH, Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya, who served

as the Chief Guest, underscoring the Government's recognition of wildlife conservation as a matter of national security, economic transformation, and sovereignty.

Addressing the graduates, Prof. Kindiki described the occasion as historic, noting that the cadets—drawn from every corner of the country—had endured one of the most demanding paramilitary training programmes in Africa and now stood ready to serve the nation with courage, discipline, and honour.

He reaffirmed that wildlife is not only Kenya's heritage, but a symbol of national identity, a pillar of global reputation, and a powerful engine of the economy.

Transforming Conservation Delivery

The Deputy President highlighted that over the past three years, the Government—through the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife and KWS—has undertaken some of the most ambitious, science-led and community-centred reforms in Kenya's conservation history.

These include strengthening wildlife security through

recruitment of elite ranger units, expanding the conservation workforce, and modernising surveillance using AI-enabled systems, drones, satellite-linked patrol tools, and modern digital radio networks. Rapid-response and intelligence-led operations have been significantly enhanced to counter increasingly sophisticated wildlife crime.

At the same time, investments in community livelihoods and awareness programmes have reduced human-wildlife conflict and strengthened local ownership of conservation. Service modernisation through the eCitizen payment platform has improved transparency, efficiency, and visitor experience—boosting revenue and enabling reinvestment in frontline conservation and tourism infrastructure.

Leadership Reflections: People at the Centre

In his remarks, the Director General of KWS, Dr. Erustus Kanga, emphasised that the graduating officers symbolise a renewed and strengthened Service.

"This passing-out parade marks a deliberate renewal of our operational capacity. These officers are joining a Service that is increasingly professional, technology-enabled, and community-focused. The future of conservation in Kenya will be secured by disciplined, skilled, and values-driven people."

Dr. Kanga reminded the graduates that their authority must be exercised with integrity and restraint, noting that trust with communities remains the foundation of sustainable conservation and peaceful coexistence.

The Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife, Hon. Rebecca Miano, lauded the graduates for their resilience and commitment, and reaffirmed Government support for KWS reforms.

"The officers passing out today are central to our national vision of conservation that works for both people and nature. By strengthening ranger capacity, improving welfare, and modernising operations, we are safeguarding tourism, community livelihoods, and Kenya's standing as a global conservation leader."





A New Generation for a New Conservation Era

The recruitment and training of the new cadets, Prof. Kindiki noted, reflects a deliberate investment in the future, unveiling a younger, more agile, and more capable conservation force.

These officers will secure landscapes, protect communities and visitors, respond swiftly to human-wildlife conflict, and support protected areas and conservancies nationwide—efforts central to the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

When we secure our parks, we secure our economy. When conservation works for communities, the nation prospers, the Deputy President observed.

Security, Tourism, and Economic Growth

Kenya's conservation gains are already translating into economic results. Tourism revenue recorded strong growth in 2024, restoring global confidence in Kenya as a safe and competitive destination. With a national target of five million visitors by 2027, the Government is diversifying tourism into culture, sports, adventure,

events, and MICE tourism, ensuring inclusive growth.

However, Prof. Kindiki cautioned that tourism depends on security and stability. Without safety for wildlife, visitors, and communities, progress cannot be sustained.

Modern, Science-Based, People-Centred Conservation

Guided by BETA, Kenya's new wildlife philosophy is bold, modern, and people-centred—anchored on coexistence, sustainability, and shared prosperity.

For the first time, KWS cadets also underwent management and leadership training by the Kenya School of Government, equipping them with governance and leadership skills alongside operational competence.

The Deputy President further outlined how conservation financing is being strengthened through green financing, climate funds, carbon markets such as REDD+, conservation bonds, public-private partnerships, and multilateral financing, ensuring sustainable capital for wildlife protection while reducing pressure on the Exchequer.

Expanding Space for Wildlife

A key pillar of the Government's agenda is restoring ecological space and connectivity. Recent milestones include approval of the Nairobi National Park-Kapiti Wildlife Corridor, advanced work on other corridors such as Lake Elementaita-Nakuru, and the landmark expansion of the Tsavo West Rhino Sanctuary from 92 to 3,200 square kilometres, making it the largest rhino sanctuary in the world.

A Call to Service

Addressing the 147 cadet officers, the Deputy President reminded them that they now join a noble tradition of service.

Serve with integrity. Protect our wildlife. Support our communities. Defend our natural heritage.

As the final salute echoed across the Manyani plains—watched proudly by parents, partners, conservationists, and government leaders—one message stood clear: the future of conservation in Kenya rests on people. With disciplined, skilled, and values-driven officers stepping forward, Kenya is securing not only its wildlife, but its economy, identity, and shared future where conservation works for both people and nature





FROM CONFLICT TO COEXISTENCE

Every morning across Kenya, long before the sun washes the savannah in gold, the first calls begin to filter into Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) control rooms. A herd edging too close to a school compound. A farmer discovering a night's worth of crops trampled. A family mourning a loved one lost to an unexpected encounter.

Between July 2023 and June 2025, these moments added up at a startling pace—an average of 36 human-wildlife conflict incidents every single day, resulting in 255 deaths, 725 injuries, and thousands of disrupted livelihoods.

Yet, at the 2nd International Wildlife Scientific Conference in Naivasha, where global conservationists, scientists and policymakers gathered, the atmosphere was not one of despair. It was one of momentum.

With Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service Mr. Felix Koskei and Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife Hon. Rebecca Miano opening the conference, the message was unmistakable: human-wildlife conflict has become a national frontier challenge—and Kenya intends to take it head on.

New Vision Emerges

In his keynote address, KWS Director General Prof. Erustus Kanga took the stage with a mixture of clarity and conviction. He did not downplay the crisis. “These numbers reflect a crisis impacting lives, livelihoods, and the future of conservation,” he said.

But he quickly moved to a new framework that is beginning to reshape Kenya’s response—a bold blueprint anchored in habitat security, community empowerment, and innovation.

This three-part strategy, he explained, acknowledges a simple truth: wildlife and people both need space, dignity, and safety. Co-existence is no longer just a conservation ideal. It has become a national imperative.

Where Space Is Shared, Conflict Grows

HWC in Kenya is rooted in shrinking habitats and growing wildlife populations. KWS is now

moving aggressively to address the first pillar of its strategy: securing and restoring critical habitats.

This means reclaiming degraded landscapes, reopening ancient migratory corridors, and strengthening protections across wildlife estates. As habitats rebound, the likelihood of wildlife ending up in farms and homesteads begins to fall.

But securing land is only half the battle.

Across Kenya, communities living closest to wildlife carry the weight of conflict. Prof. Kanga’s second pillar—empowerment—is about shifting the relationship from one of burden to one of shared stewardship. Strengthened compensation, a revived wildlife economy, and deeper community representation are transforming how these frontline communities experience conservation.

Technology Joins the Fight

The third pillar—innovation—is perhaps the most transformative.

KWS is rolling out real-time monitoring systems, smart barriers, drone and AI-supported surveillance, and nature-based deterrents. These technological tools help predict conflict before it erupts, creating a new era of fast, informed, and precise response.

It is a shift from reactive firefighting to proactive protection.

On the Ground: Ranger Stories From the Frontlines

The impact of this new strategy is already being felt across the country.

In July, a surge in elephant activity in Kwale and Kilifi counties saw KWS mount an intense operation with Tsavo Trust and Pinal Air Ltd. Rangers from Silaloni, Mackinnon and Bamba sections—supported

by aerial teams—managed to guide over 200 elephants away from community farms in Ndatani and Mwangoloto.

In Vitengeni, when 11 elephants blocked access to the vital Mwahera Dam, the KWS Rapid Response team was airborne and on the ground within hours, escorting the herd back to safer rangelands near Milore.

Such operations are ongoing in hotspots like Mariakani Barracks and the open rangelands of Kwale. Many herds include calves, requiring gentle pacing and extraordinary patience.

Ganze: A Community at the Heart of a New Approach

Nowhere is Kenya’s new HWC strategy more visible than Ganze Sub-County in Kilifi, a region where expanding elephant populations—ironically a conservation success story—have pushed deeper into farmlands.

At a packed mid-year public baraza in Midoina, Prof. Kanga stood alongside area MP Hon. Kenneth Kazungu, community elders, and hundreds of residents. The discussions were candid and collaborative. Beneath a blistering sun, KWS also delivered twelve 10,000-litre water tanks to schools, reinforcing the connection between conservation and community welfare.

Here, KWS has deployed a layered approach:

- Long-term solutions, such as the Mackinnon-Sala Gate fence, designed to redirect elephant movements
- Specialized Problem Animal Management Units (PAMU) and aerial elephant drives
- Predator deterrent lights to keep livestock safe



- ➔ School escorts and protective fencing for vulnerable institutions
- ➔ Bee-fencing and chili-based deterrents, cost-effective techniques driven by community innovators

This is what co-existence looks like when it is built collaboratively, from the ground up.

Across Kenya: A Tapestry of Interventions

The scale of HWC interventions nationwide is immense.

- ➔ A total of 4,781 HWC incidents were reported outside protected areas over the period.
- ➔ The most common were human threats (1,727 cases) and crop destruction (1,613 acres).

- ➔ Communities in Kilifi received over KSh. 60 million in compensation in early July.
- ➔ In Meru, a crop-raiding elephant notorious for breaching fences was safely relocated from Kithoka Village to Tsavo East.
- ➔ More than 2,000 kilometres of new electric fencing is being erected nationwide.
- ➔ 435 ground wildlife drives were conducted in just 8 conservation areas.
- ➔ 24 conservation education outreaches reached thousands in Marsabit, Meru, Samburu, Tsavo West, Malindi, Kiunga, and the Aberdares.
- ➔ The Community Consolation Scheme provided KSh. 570,000 (KSh. 30,000 each) to 19 bereaved families.

None of this happens alone. KWS is supported by partners such as Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, World Wildlife Fund, Space for Giants, county governments, Kenya Wildlife Trust, and the Mara Predator Conservation Programme—an ecosystem of organizations working in concert.

Silent Threat: Confronting the Invasive Indian House Crow

While the struggles with elephants, lions, and buffaloes often dominate headlines, another crisis is unfolding above Kenya's coastal skies.

The Indian House Crow, an invasive bird species, has spread aggressively, attacking native birds, ravaging food scraps, and creating unhygienic conditions in tourist hotspots. The socio-economic impact is severe—tourism experts warn that up to 60% of women's livelihoods in coastal tourism

chains could be jeopardized if the crow is not controlled.

To confront this, KWS convened a high-level forum in Mombasa, chaired by Prof. Kanga, bringing together government agencies, researchers, hoteliers, and community leaders.

The result: a unified national action plan to eradicate the crow using science-driven methods, coupled with a regional strategy to prevent recolonization.

Kenya is treating this invasive species with the seriousness it

deserves: as a national threat to biodiversity, the economy, and community wellbeing.

New Era of Co-Existence

Kenya's human-wildlife conflict story is no longer just about tragedy. It is increasingly about transformation.

From the plains of Kilifi to the forests of Meru, from high-level policy rooms in Naivasha to the frontline rangers guiding frightened elephants back to the

bush, a new vision is taking hold—one where conservation and community welfare move together.

It is a future where technology meets traditional knowledge, where compensation brings dignity, where deterrents are smarter, and where communities become co-authors of conservation success.

Kenya is proving that co-existence is not only possible—it is already under way, shaped daily by thousands of hands, wings, hooves, and hopes.





STEPPING UP WILDLIFE TRANSLOCATION

Kenya's conservation landscape is undergoing a profound transition as rapid development, changing land use patterns, and growing wildlife populations reshape the relationship between people and wildlife. .

In response, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) has escalated its translocation operations across the country—moving giraffes, rhinos, elephants, and buffaloes to safer, well-managed habitats. These interventions are not just emergency responses; they are part of a long-term strategy to safeguard biodiversity, expand protected areas, ease pressure on communities, and secure Kenya's iconic wildlife heritage for future generations.

From the Rift Valley escarpments to the plains of Marsabit and the vastness of Tsavo, these relocations reveal a country mobilizing its best science, partners, and expertise to keep wildlife on the landscape while strengthening human-wildlife co-existence.

Giraffes on the Move: Securing a Vanishing Rift Valley Corridor

In November, KWS—working with Giraffe Manor and Save

Giraffes Now—launched the second phase of an ambitious herbivore relocation from Kedong Ranch. This followed a successful operation two months earlier that saw over 240 animals moved to protected habitats.

Once a thriving natural corridor linking Mount Longonot and Hell's Gate National Park, Kedong Ranch is now under intense pressure from fencing, road construction, and accelerating land sales. The ecological window is closing fast.



The joint relocation effort became a race against time: a final opportunity to secure wildlife before development permanently seals one of the Rift Valley's most important migratory pathways.

Through meticulous planning, darting, transport, veterinary care, and community engagement, the teams moved giraffes and other herbivores to habitats where they can continue to survive and reproduce safely.

New Hope for a Species: Southern White Rhinos Arrive at Naserian

A milestone moment unfolded in Laikipia when six southern white rhinos were translocated from Solio Game Ranch to Naserian Wildlife Conservancy, making it Kenya's 19th rhino sanctuary.

This move is part of KWS's broader strategic plan (2024–2028) to expand habitat, strengthen species recovery programs, and enhance partnerships that support wildlife conservation.

Formerly known as Tundra Farm, Naserian sits in the scenic Naibor area near Jua Kali in Laikipia County. Surrounded by wildlife-rich

landscapes—including Mogwooni, Segera, and El Karama—Naserian offers a spacious, secure, and well-managed habitat ideal for rhino growth.

The site is not new to rewilding. KWS previously relocated giraffes and impalas to strengthen the ecological base of the conservancy. Welcoming the rhinos were community leaders, local administration officials, and the Naserian management—underscoring the importance of community involvement in species recovery.

Translocation, KWS noted, is not only about protecting a species; it also addresses human-wildlife conflict, reduces poaching risk, and complements the nationwide Tunza Mali Yako conservation awareness campaign that promotes peaceful coexistence.

Preventing Conflict: Bull Elephants Relocated from Marsabit to Meru

In Marsabit County, a rising wave of human-wildlife conflict prompted KWS to carry out a highly coordinated operation involving the Northern Mobile

Veterinary Unit and the KWS Marsabit team.

Two adult bull elephants, identified as the main drivers of escalating tensions in the Karare area, were captured and safely translocated to Meru National Park.

The exercise drew valuable support from conservation partners including:

- Mara Elephant Project
- Ewaso Lions
- Grevy's Zebra Trust
- Save the Elephants
- Local community elders and youth groups

Both bulls were immobilized safely, with one fitted with a tracking collar to allow long-term monitoring of its movements in Meru.

Their relocation ensures the elephants can thrive in a more suitable and spacious habitat—while providing immediate relief and enhanced safety for the residents of Marsabit.

This operation reflects KWS's commitment to science-led, preventative conservation, reducing tensions before they escalate into crisis.

A Close Call in Tsavo: Buffaloes Guided Away from a Primary School

In Tsavo East, an urgent situation arose when eight buffaloes strayed from the park and wandered near Iviani Primary School, posing a serious risk to children and neighbouring households.

KWS teams mounted a rapid and coordinated response, supported by aerial surveillance from the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust.

Navigating through densely populated areas, rangers skillfully guided the herd two kilometres back into the safety of the national park.

The swift action not only protected the community but also ensured the buffaloes returned unharmed—proof of the skill and readiness of KWS teams who work daily to prevent tragedy while keeping wildlife alive and safe.

A Nation Mobilized for Wildlife and Communities

From relocating rhinos to expanding habitat, from averting danger in Tsavo to resolving conflict in Marsabit, KWS's recent

translocation operations highlight a country at work—protecting its wildlife heritage while responding to the needs of communities on the frontline of conservation.

These interventions show a growing momentum in Kenya's conservation story—one defined by science, partnerships, and the unwavering commitment to a future where wildlife and people can thrive together.







NEW CONSERVATION FEES IN PLACE AFTER 18 YEARS OF WAITING

Early this year, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) embarked on one of the most significant undertakings in its history a comprehensive review of conservation fees across all national parks, reserves, and sanctuaries. It was the first such review in nearly two decades, marking a bold and necessary step toward safeguarding the sustainability of Kenya's globally admired wildlife heritage.

For a nation whose identity is inseparable from wildlife safari, this exercise was never just about numbers or tariffs. It was about redefining how Kenyans and the

world value, protect, and invest in the ecosystems that shape the country's natural and economic identity.

The previous conservation fee structure had remained unchanged since 2007 — a period during which both Kenya and the global conservation environment

had transformed dramatically. Rising inflation, mounting climate pressures, rapid habitat loss, and increasing costs of securing endangered species had placed unprecedented strain on KWS.

“Over 90 percent of our internally generated revenue comes from conservation fees,” explained KWS Director General, Prof. Erustus Kanga, during a media roundtable with editors in Nairobi. “These fees fund over 70 percent of our total budget, yet only 28 percent goes directly to conservation work. This is not sustainable.”

Currently, KWS manages 154 stations across the country. Yet five flagship parks — Amboseli, Nakuru, Nairobi, Tsavo East, and Tsavo West — generate nearly three quarters of its total revenue. This imbalance, combined with reduced government subventions and stagnating tourism numbers,

underscored the urgency of reform.

In the 2024/2025 financial year, KWS raised Ksh7.9 billion against a requirement of KSH 19.7 billion, leaving a funding deficit of more than Ksh 12 billion. A fee review was therefore not only timely — it was unavoidable.

A Nationwide Conversation

The process began in January with a high-level consultative meeting at Nairobi National Park. Representatives from the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, county governments, the private sector, conservation NGOs, and community leaders convened to chart a shared path toward sustainable conservation financing.

Opening the forum, Prof. Kanga reminded participants that the responsibility for conservation rests with all stakeholders:

“Conservation fees are not merely costs but strategic investments in the preservation of Kenya’s unparalleled wildlife heritage.”

This session set the tone for a wide-ranging public participation exercise that spanned 20 counties. KWS received written memoranda and oral submissions from tour operators, researchers, youth organizations, scientists, conservationists, and community groups — ensuring that voices from all corners of the country were reflected.

While participants acknowledged the necessity of revising fees, they also urged KWS to ensure the increased revenue directly enhances visitor experiences, modernizes park infrastructure, and strengthens benefit-sharing with host communities.

Evidence-Based Reform





Before drafting the Wildlife Conservation and Management (Access and Conservation) (Fees) Regulations, 2025, KWS commissioned a comprehensive pricing study and Regulatory Impact Assessment. The study benchmarked Kenya's model against global peers and examined visitor trends, willingness to pay, and the true cost drivers of conservation.

Findings revealed a stark truth: Kenya, despite offering one of the world's best wildlife experiences, charged relatively modest entry fees. For example, Rwanda's gorilla permits stand at US\$1,500, while Tanzania's Serengeti charges between US\$80–US\$100. In comparison, Kenya's top-tier parks cost between US\$60–US\$80, with heavily subsidized citizen and resident rates starting at Ksh 600.

Guided by these insights, the proposed fee review was built on four pillars:

1. **Financial Sustainability** – aligning fees with the actual cost of conservation;
2. **Conservation Imperatives** – securing resources for habitat restoration and species recovery;
3. **Equity and Inclusion** – keeping parks accessible to Kenyans, particularly vulnerable groups;
4. **Global Benchmarking** – positioning Kenya competitively in the global tourism market.

Under this refined framework, KWS projects internally generated revenue to grow from Ksh 7.9 billion in 2024 to Ksh 16.5 billion by 2028. The additional income will support ranger welfare, fund human-wildlife conflict mitigation, enhance infrastructure, restore degraded landscapes, and strengthen community benefit-sharing.

Protecting Access and Expanding Experiences

True to its commitment to inclusion, the fee review maintains free entry for children under five, senior citizens over seventy, and Persons with Disabilities. Accredited guides, drivers, and porters will also continue to enter parks at no cost — acknowledging their critical role in the tourism value chain.

At the same time, KWS is diversifying tourism products to enrich visitor experiences and spread economic benefits to communities. New offerings include biking trails, cultural exhibitions, marine adventures, nature education circuits, and community-based tourism experiences designed to extend visitor stays and boost local economies.

A digital payment system — already piloted in 15 parks — is

being rolled out nationwide to increase convenience, enhance transparency, and streamline management of visitor data.

Throughout the consultations, KWS maintained a consistent message: this review was not about raising prices, but about protecting value. It was an invitation to Kenyans and the world to participate in securing the country's ecological future.

"Paying a little more today ensures that our children will still see elephants roam freely, lions roar across the plains, and turtles return to Watamu's shores," said Prof. Kanga. "This review is not a burden — it is an act of collective courage and foresight."

As the process edges toward its final stages, one thing is clear: KWS has done more than revise a tariff structure. It has rekindled a national conversation on the true cost of conservation — and the shared responsibility of ensuring that Kenya's majestic wildlife endures for future generations.

Highlights of the 2025 Conservation Fee Review

- ➔ First comprehensive review in 18 years (previously done in 2007)
- ➔ Revenue target: Ksh 7.9B (2024) □ Ksh 16.5B (2028)

- ➔ Four guiding pillars: Sustainability, Conservation, Equity, Competitiveness
- ➔ Stakeholder consultations held across 20 counties
- ➔ Free access retained for children under 5, seniors over 70, Persons with Disabilities, and TRA accredited drivers, porters, and guides
- ➔ Digital payment system piloted in 15 parks
- ➔ Revenue to support: ranger welfare, conflict mitigation, habitat restoration, infrastructure upgrades, and community benefit-sharing





CAPACITY BUILDING AND STAFF WELFARE

Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) has embarked on an ambitious internal transformation drive, strengthening the skills, resilience, and leadership of its frontline personnel.

Through advanced ranger training, a pioneering canine program, and a new staff wellness initiative, the Service is reinforcing its commitment to protecting Kenya's wildlife and supporting the officers who stand at the heart of this mission.

The following developments, rolled out between July and October, underscore a renewed focus on professionalism, integrity, and human-centered conservation.

Forging Kenya's Next Generation of Conservation Leaders

In July, KWS Director General, Prof. Erustus Kanga, officially inaugurated two major ranger training programs at the KWS Law Enforcement Academy (LEA) in Manyani — a defining step in shaping Kenya's next cohort of conservation leaders.

Setting the tone for the 2025 curriculum, Prof. Kanga reminded officers of the weight of their calling: "Kenya's wildlife is not just a source of pride — it is the lifeblood of our ecological security and cultural identity."

He stressed the need for advanced, modern training to counter mounting pressures, including human encroachment, habitat loss, climate change, and increasingly sophisticated poaching networks.

Reaffirming that promotion is a call to higher responsibility rather than a privilege, he urged officers to embrace discipline, leadership, and integrity as the cornerstone of their service.

The launched programs included:

- NCO Promotion Course 1/2025 (17 July – 10 October), with 176 officers

➤ Junior Officers' Course 1/2025 (4 July – 19 December), with 103 officers

These intensive courses go far beyond classroom instruction. They are designed as transformative experiences that build decisive field leadership through modules on command, legal enforcement, climate-aware conservation, field operations, and physical endurance.

Prof. Kanga concluded by reminding participants that upon graduation, they would emerge not only with new insignia but as trusted leaders — equipped to guide teams with courage, clarity, and unwavering integrity.

A New Era in Wildlife Protection as KWS Graduates First Elite Canine Unit

July also marked a breakthrough in conservation security as 21 KWS rangers graduated from the inaugural Basic Canine Handling Course, held at the National Police Dog Unit in Lang'ata.

The two-month intensive program culminated in a high-level demonstration of vehicle and luggage search techniques, showcasing the teams' precision, discipline, and readiness for deployment. The

ceremony drew dignitaries from national security agencies and conservation partners, including the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), highlighting the strategic importance of canine units in modern wildlife protection.

KWS Deputy Director for Security, Mr. Dickson Ritan, described the new teams as "force multipliers in wildlife protection," noting that their specialized skills will significantly elevate anti-poaching operations.

AWF Vice President, Dr. Phillip Muruthi, applauded the trainees as "the best class we have ever trained," emphasizing that the success of canine units hinges on "teamwork, intuition, and trust."

National Police Dog Unit Commandant, Mr. Isaac Kiptebis, highlighted the superiority of well-trained working dogs, calling them "incorruptible — loyal, accurate, and unyielding." He further proposed establishing a National Police Dog Facility to deepen inter-agency cooperation.

Armed with expertise in wildlife detection, canine health, tracking, and field operations, these new handler-canine teams are now poised to tackle real-

world conservation challenges — marking a powerful new chapter in Kenya's security and wildlife protection landscape.

KWS Launches Frontline Wellness Initiative

In October, KWS strengthened its investment in staff welfare with the launch of an induction training program for counsellors and chaplains. This initiative is a key pillar of the KWS Strategic Plan 2024–2028, which prioritizes building a resilient, high-performance workforce.

Competitively selected staff members from across all cadres underwent specialized training and will now be deployed to conservation areas nationwide. Their mission is to offer essential psychosocial and spiritual support to rangers and field personnel who face intense physical and emotional pressures in the line of duty.

By integrating wellness into frontline operations, KWS is acknowledging that conservation success relies not only on skills and equipment but also on the mental and emotional wellbeing of its people.





ANIMAL WELFARE

From the savannas of Kajiado to the wetlands of Meru and the plains of Garissa, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) veterinary teams have been on the frontlines of wildlife rescue and treatment.

In recent months, the Service has responded to a surge in emergency cases—from snared buffaloes and giraffes to stranded lion cubs—highlighting both the resilience of Kenya’s wildlife and the growing pressures they face. What follows is a roundup of recent interventions that reflect KWS’s unwavering commitment

to animal welfare, rapid response, and cross-partner collaboration.

Swift Response Brings Relief to Distressed Elephant in Kajiado West

In Emukutan Village, Kajiado West, a swift and coordinated rescue effort saved the life of an adult elephant bull found limping and

unable to rest its front leg. The elephant, visibly distressed, was diagnosed with a painful abscess requiring immediate intervention.

With rapid air support from the Mara Elephant Project and ground assistance from rangers of the South Rift Association of Land Owners (SORALO), the KWS

veterinary team lanced, drained, and treated the abscess on site.

The intervention provided instant relief, and the elephant's recovery was closely monitored. The effort underscored the value of well-coordinated, multi-agency collaboration in safeguarding Kenya's wildlife.

Lone, Starving Lion Cub Rescued in Nairobi National Park

In another dramatic rescue, KWS vets saved a four-month-old lion cub found weak, abandoned, and starving in Block 16 of Nairobi National Park. The cub is believed to have been left behind by its pride due to its inability to keep up.

The team transferred the cub to the Nairobi Animal Orphanage Nursery, where it received antibiotics, IV fluids, specialized feeding, and round-the-clock monitoring. Plans are underway to rewild the cub once it fully recovers.

This rescue was the fourth cub intervention in three weeks, revealing a troubling trend during the rainy season, when tall grass and shifting herbivore movements make hunting difficult for lion prides.

Of the four rescues:

- ➊ Two cubs were in critical condition; one did not survive.
- ➋ One cub has since become a permanent Orphanage resident.
- ➌ The latest rescue was triggered by alert nature enthusiasts who spotted the struggling cub.

To ease pressure on the pride's survival, KWS introduced a targeted feeding intervention, providing daily meat to stabilize the adult lions and support the cub rewilding plan.

Buffalo Saved from Deadly Snare in Meru

A distress call from Elsa's Kopje Meru set off an urgent rescue operation after a young female buffalo was spotted dragging a heavy log attached to a wire snare in the Lower Mughwango Swamp.

The KWS/SWT Meru Mobile Veterinary Unit reached the animal just as daylight was fading and located her within a herd of more than 200 buffalo. With remarkable patience and skill, the team darted and immobilized the injured buffalo while the herd calmly remained nearby—almost as if keeping vigil.

The snare had cut deeply into her hind leg, but the wound had not yet caused irreversible damage. Veterinarians removed the wire, cleaned the wound, and administered antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medication.

The buffalo rose before darkness and successfully rejoined her herd, a testament to the power of timely intervention.

Translocation Teams Remove 26 Snares in Kedong

During a major wildlife translocation in Kedong, KWS veterinary teams paused their work to respond to an immediate threat: a surge of wire snares along a critical wildlife path. More than 26 snares were discovered after a hartebeest was found struggling in one of them.

The increase in snaring is linked to accelerating land development, shrinking wildlife corridors, and heightened vulnerability of animals. These indiscriminate traps not only cause immense suffering but also fuel the illegal bush-meat trade—posing risks to both wildlife and human health.

Even as translocations continued, intensified patrols and snare removal efforts helped make the area safer for migrating species and reduced opportunities for poaching.

Snared Giraffe Rescued in Garissa

In the Raya area of Garissa, a vigilant scout team from the Somali Giraffe Project spotted a reticulated giraffe in distress, prompting yet another life-saving mission.

The KWS Meru Mobile Veterinary Unit, led by Dr. Aminga and supported by the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, responded swiftly. They found the giraffe struggling to walk—its hind leg tightly bound by a wire snare that had inflicted deep, painful wounds.

After careful immobilization, the team cleaned and debrided the wounds, flushed them with antiseptics, and packed them with healing green clay. The giraffe also received antibiotics and anti-inflammatory drugs to support healing.

Thanks to community vigilance and expert veterinary care, the iconic giraffe is now on the path to recovery—an encouraging outcome in the ongoing fight against the silent menace of snares.



THE WHALE THAT CARRIED OUR PLASTIC: A WARNING FROM THE OCEAN'S DEPTHS

As the year 2025 drew quietly to a close, the tide at Leopard Beach in Kwale County delivered a sight that would linger long after the waves retreated. Lying motionless on the sand was a whale—one of the ocean's most majestic and gentle giants.

Its massive body, built to travel thousands of kilometres across open seas, had been stilled not by age, predators, or nature's harshness, but by something far smaller and far more familiar to us: plastic.

Postmortem conducted by Kenya Wildlife Service veterinarian Dr. Asuka Takita revealed the cause of death. Lodged in the whale's intestine was a plastic container. The animal had not died by

chance. It died as a direct result of human pollution.

This single discovery tells a much larger story—one about our relationship with the ocean, the silent suffering of marine life, and

the consequences of treating the sea as a dumping ground.

The Gentle Giants That Hold the Ocean Together

Whales are more than awe-inspiring creatures that breach dramatically against the horizon. They are architects of ocean health. Scientists often refer to whales as “ecosystem engineers” because of the critical roles they play in maintaining marine balance.

Through a process known as the whale pump, whales feed in deep waters and release nutrient-rich waste near the surface. These nutrients fertilise phytoplankton—microscopic plants that form the foundation of the marine food web. Phytoplankton not only support fish populations but also produce more than half of the oxygen we breathe and absorb vast amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

In life, whales help regulate climate, sustain fisheries, and keep oceans productive. In death, especially deaths caused by pollution, their absence leaves an ecological gap that reverberates through the entire marine system. When a whale dies unnaturally, the ocean loses one of its most powerful allies.

Plastic: A Silent, Persistent Killer

Plastic waste does not belong in the ocean, yet millions of tonnes enter it every year. Bottles, bags, food containers, fishing gear—items designed for convenience

on land become deadly hazards at sea. Unlike organic materials, plastic does not biodegrade. It breaks down into smaller and smaller fragments, persisting for decades or even centuries.

Marine animals often mistake plastic for food. Whales, which feed by filtering massive volumes of water, are especially vulnerable. A single piece of plastic can block intestines, cause internal injuries, or create a false sense of fullness that leads to starvation. Many animals suffer slowly, out of sight, beneath the waves.

The whale at Leopard Beach is not an isolated case. Around the world, whales, dolphins, turtles, seabirds, and fish are being found with stomachs full of plastic. Each discovery is a grim reminder that what we discard does not disappear—it travels.

From Our Hands to the Open Sea

Litter dropped on streets, beaches, and riverbanks often finds its way to the ocean through drainage systems and rivers. Coastal communities see the impact first, but the responsibility is shared by everyone, whether they live near the sea or far inland.

In Kenya, the ocean supports tourism, fisheries, and livelihoods for thousands of families. Healthy seas mean food on tables, jobs for communities, and natural heritage for future generations. Polluted seas threaten all of this.

When we litter, we are not just creating an eyesore—we are setting in motion a chain of harm that can end in the death of a creature that took decades to grow and migrate across entire oceans.

Choosing Responsibility in the New Year

The death of this whale is a tragedy, but it is also a call to action. As we look to the New Year, we are faced with a choice: continue on a path of convenience and neglect, or choose responsibility.

Stopping littering is a powerful first step. Proper waste disposal, reducing single-use plastics, reusing and recycling where possible, and supporting clean-up initiatives all make a difference. Small individual actions, multiplied across communities, can protect entire ecosystems.

Protecting the ocean is not an abstract environmental cause—it is about protecting life, climate stability, and our own future.

The whale at Leopard Beach cannot be saved. But its story can still matter.

If we listen, truly listen, it tells us this: the ocean remembers everything we throw into it. And sooner or later, it sends a message back to the shore.

Let this loss be that message. Let the New Year be a turning point.

Stop littering. Protect our oceans.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS ARE POWERING KENYA'S WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Kenya's conservation landscape continues to evolve through strong partnerships, cutting-edge technology, and community-driven strategies that foster coexistence.

Recent field operations and collaborative initiatives across the country show how inter-agency cooperation remains central to mitigating human-wildlife conflict, strengthening wildlife security, advancing scientific management, and promoting Kenya's status as a premier global tourism destination. From the plains of Tsavo to the shores of Lake Turkana, a shared commitment

is powering Kenya's conservation journey.

Tracking Giants, Protecting Communities: Tracking Lololtoo: Securing a Lone Bull Elephant's Future

At Kwa Leakey Farm in Rongai Sub-County, KWS and the Mara Elephant Project (MEP) successfully renewed the tracking collar on Lololtoo, a lone bull

elephant renowned for his periodic movements between Marmanet Forest and Nakuru County. Elephant collaring remains a vital component of modern conservation, offering real-time GPS satellite data that helps teams anticipate elephant movements, deploy rapid response units, and prevent conflict before it occurs.

Lololtoo often navigates mixed land-use areas—ranches, farms,

and natural rangelands—where encounters with communities can easily escalate, particularly during dry seasons. The collar renewal involved a carefully coordinated operation: the elephant was darted safely, the old collar removed, diagnostics taken, and a new collar fitted within a controlled timeframe to minimize distress. The procedure also contributed important biological and behavioural data for scientists studying elephant habitat use, dispersal patterns, and long-term ecosystem trends.

This operation underscores KWS's mission to promote peaceful coexistence between communities and elephants while ensuring the safety of both. It also highlights the critical role of partnerships—showing how government, conservation organizations, and communities collaborate to secure a harmonious future.

Adapting Conservation Strategies for Tsavo's Elephants

For generations, Tsavo's elephants have traversed a vast traditional migratory network linking Tsavo National Parks, the coastal forests of Kilifi and Kwale, and Tanzania's Mkomazi National Park.

But ecological changes have altered these ancient patterns, with some herds establishing new ranges and maternity areas outside historic corridors. While a testament to their resilience, this shift has increased human–elephant conflict where people and wildlife now share the same spaces.

KWS, working alongside communities and partners such as the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and Tsavo Trust, implemented a multifaceted strategy that includes robust community sensitisation and proactive, hands-on management of elephant movements. This approach maintains a dual mandate: safeguarding communities and livelihoods, while guiding elephants safely away from settlements.

Cross-Border and Regional Alliances: Kenya and Tanzania Strengthen Transboundary Conservation Partnership

KWS hosted a high-level technical delegation from the Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA) in a bilateral meeting led by Director General Prof. Erustus Kanga. The discussions centred on strengthening cross-

border cooperation, enhancing wildlife security, coordinating investigations, and developing formal evidence-sharing protocols.

The renewed partnership is essential for effectively combating illegal wildlife activities across the shared Kenya–Tanzania transboundary ecosystem and reflects a mutual commitment to preserving regional biodiversity.

New Patrol Boat Strengthens Conservation in Sibiloi National Park

In August, conservation efforts around Lake Turkana received a major boost when KWS acquired a modern patrol boat for Sibiloi National Park. The vessel—funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and facilitated through HoAREC&N and SORALO—was part of a comprehensive support package that included ranger training, housing improvements, clean water access, and solar installations. The initiative aims to strengthen the transboundary ecosystem linking Kenya and Ethiopia, improve community livelihoods, and unlock eco-tourism potential in this remote region. The project is directly





aligned with the KWS Strategic Plan 2024–2028, which emphasizes partnerships, community empowerment, and enhanced security.

Tourism, Technology and Sports Diplomacy: KWS Engages Tour Operators on New e-Wallet to Enhance KWSPay

To improve visitor experiences and streamline park payments, KWS met with tour operators in July to discuss a proposed e-Wallet feature for the KWSPay system.

The discussions focused on refining the current pilot by addressing challenges such as multiple bookings and processing delays. Valuable operator feedback is being used to optimise the platform ahead of its full-scale national launch.

Sports Diplomacy: Angola National Football Team Visits Nairobi National Park

KWS hosted the Angola National Football Team at Nairobi National

Park in a groundbreaking fusion of sports diplomacy and destination marketing. The international team enjoyed an immersive experience at the world’s only wildlife park within a capital city—an extraordinary showcase of Kenya’s biodiversity and urban natural heritage.

The initiative illustrate how strategic partnerships beyond traditional tourism can amplify Kenya’s global brand while supporting national tourism goals.

In two other high-profile events, KWS and Magical Kenya welcomed:

- International referees officiating the upcoming CHAN 2025 tournament
- Global journalists participating in a media showcase

The guests enjoyed spectacular wildlife sightings, including lions, rhinos, giraffes—and in one rare moment, a lion on the hunt. These events highlighted Kenya’s competitive advantage where

world-class business, sport, and leisure converge with breathtaking natural beauty.

Science, Governance and Integrity: KWS and WRTI Renew MoU

KWS renewed its Memorandum of Understanding with the Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI) in a ceremony witnessed by the Principal Secretary for Wildlife, Hon. Silvia Museiya. The three-year agreement establishes a governance framework to eliminate duplication, ensure science informs management, enhance climate change readiness, and strengthen coordinated responses to human-wildlife conflict.

“Conservation and research are inseparable,” said Prof. Kanga, affirming a new era of science-driven, law-guided wildlife management.

KWS’s governance leadership also drew international attention as delegations from Sierra Leone,

Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda visited under an EACC–UNODC benchmarking programme to study the Service’s Corruption Risk and Mitigation Matrix—a globally recognized model for combating wildlife crime.

The visit reaffirmed KWS’s reputation as a regional leader in integrity-based conservation governance.

Celebrating Milestones: KWS Honours Ol Pejeta Conservancy’s 20-Year Legacy

At the Nairobi National Museum, KWS joined commemorations for the 20th anniversary of Ol Pejeta Conservancy. Prof. Kanga praised the conservancy as a premier model of effective wildlife protection, community development, and sustainable tourism.

He lauded Ol Pejeta as “living proof that when people, wildlife, and institutions unite, conservation thrives”—a philosophy central to the KWS Strategic Plan 2024–2028.

Equity Bank and KWS Forge Strategic Partnership

In September, Equity Bank and KWS formalised a partnership designed to create shared value through:

- ➔ Staff empowerment and financial literacy,
- ➔ Support to public conservation programmes such as Animal Adoption and Adopt-a-Park,
- ➔ Community engagement, and
- ➔ Coordinated co-branded marketing initiatives.

The partnership aligns corporate leadership with environmental stewardship, demonstrating the power of cross-sector collaboration.

Strengthening Conservation Infrastructure: KWS Bolsters Operational Capacity in Lewa and Samburu

In September, two major developments underscored KWS’s commitment to wildlife security:

- **Safeguarding a Critical Hub in Lewa**

Prof. Kanga and Cabinet Secretary Hon. Rebecca Miano visited the Joint Operations and Communications Centre (JOCC) at Lewa Conservancy, operated by NRT. Established in 2017, the JOCC is vital for regional security and emergency response but now faces operational challenges due to funding shortfalls—grounded aircraft, limited mobility, and reduced staffing.

The visit highlighted the delicate balance between conservation funding and operational resilience.

- **A New Era Launches in Samburu**

KWS, the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, and Samburu County commissioned a new state-of-the-art JOCC in Samburu National Reserve—an investment set to transform conservation, uplift community livelihoods, enhance visitor experiences, and stimulate regional economic growth.

The delegation also toured the new Soroi Samburu Lodge, signalling aligned investments in sustainable tourism infrastructure.

Community Engagement and Eco-Tourism Growth: KWS Champions Eco-Tourism at Tharaka Nithi Expo

At the KNCCI Tharaka Nithi Chapter Expo, held at Chuka University, KWS advanced the theme “Where Tourism Meets Enterprise: Reimagining Regional Prosperity through Conservation.”

The event promoted:

- ➔ Conservation education,
- ➔ Tourism investment,
- ➔ Public awareness, and
- ➔ Capacity building.

It showcased conservation as a driver of sustainable enterprise and regional economic development.

Boosting Wildlife Security: Strategic Vehicle Donation Strengthens Tsavo Field Operations

WildLandscapes International and Rewild, supported by Tsavo Trust, donated five custom-built Toyota Land Cruisers to KWS. These specialised vehicles enhance ranger mobility, allowing for more frequent patrols, improved response to threats, and better coverage of Tsavo’s vast terrain—home to endangered black rhinos and elephants.

KWS and Kitui County Advance Plans for South Kitui National Reserve

In a key milestone, KWS Director General Prof. Kanga and Governor Dr. Julius Malombe advanced efforts to operationalize the South Kitui National Reserve, a vital corridor connecting Amboseli to Mwingi.

Once launched, the reserve is expected to create over 1,000 direct and indirect jobs, supporting the national Bottom-Up Economic Agenda and expanding Kenya’s conservation footprint.

84,000 Kenyans Celebrate Their Natural Heritage

During World Tourism Day, KWS opened park gates free of charge, attracting 83,932 visitors nationwide. The Nairobi Animal Orphanage welcomed 21,485 guests, Nairobi Safari Walk 20,818, Kisumu Impala Sanctuary 14,435,

Nairobi National Park 6,431, and Hell's Gate National Park 3,077.

The initiative deepened national pride, strengthened conservation awareness, and boosted local economies—showcasing Kenya's wildlife as a shared national treasure.

Wildlife Security Boosted by New K9 Tracker Dogs

KWS received four advanced tracker dogs—two Belgian Malinois and two Springer Spaniels—from

the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF). Specially trained to combat illegal trafficking, the dogs will enhance surveillance at critical national entry and exit points. The initiative directly supports the KWS Strategic Plan and strengthens Kenya's frontline protection capabilities.

Forging the Future: A Shared Journey

Across Kenya's diverse landscapes, conservation triumphs continue to emerge from shared purpose,

innovation, and partnership. From collaring lone bulls like Lololtoo to securing transboundary ecosystems, from empowering communities to strengthening tourism and governance, the message is clear: Kenya's conservation success is collective.

As pressures mount—from climate change to human-wildlife conflict—these partnerships remain Kenya's greatest asset in safeguarding its natural heritage for generations to come.







INSPIRING KENYA'S FUTURE WILDLIFE GUARDIANS

At the intersection of adventure, technology, and wildlife protection, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) Airwing is not only safeguarding the skies—it's inspiring the hearts and minds of tomorrow's conservation leaders.

Based at Wilson Airport, the Airwing forms the operational backbone of KWS, performing critical tasks such as emergency wildlife rescues, wildfire control, anti-poaching surveillance, and tracking endangered species. In every flight, it extends KWS's mission to protect Kenya's natural heritage from above.

But the Airwing's impact goes far beyond operational excellence.

Recognizing that the future of conservation lies in the hands of young Kenyans, KWS has embraced a robust Corporate Social Investment (CSI) programme that brings students face-to-face with the power of aviation in wildlife protection.

In August, 138 students from King's Made Junior School and Oloika Osyamalili Mixed School visited the Airwing. The students

witnessed firsthand how aircraft support wildlife rescues, monitor endangered species, and even assist in emergency responses for communities. The visit sparked awe and curiosity, leaving many children envisioning themselves as "flying wildlife warriors," ready to defend Kenya's biodiversity.

With 15–20 educational visits every month, the Airwing has become a dynamic classroom

in the sky. Students learn practical conservation lessons while experiencing the thrill of aviation, merging inspiration with education. Through this programme, KWS directly advances its 2024–2028

Strategic Plan, nurturing a new generation of conservationists who are equipped, motivated, and empowered to carry forward Kenya's legacy of wildlife protection.

At KWS, safeguarding today's wildlife goes hand in hand with cultivating the guardians of tomorrow—and the Airwing is a soaring symbol of that vision.





KWS TRIUMPHS IN SPORT, SERVICE, AND CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP

In 2025, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) celebrated a season of remarkable achievements that underscored the organization's commitment to excellence—not only in wildlife protection but also in staff development, public engagement, and global conservation leadership.

Across sports arenas, trade fairs, and international platforms, KWS staff and teams exhibited skill, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to the Service's

mission: safeguarding Kenya's wildlife while empowering communities and inspiring future generations.

Sporting Spirit: Champions Beyond the Field

The KWS Sports Team soared to victory, claiming the Half Marathon Corporate Team Championship at the 25th edition of the Lewa Safari Marathon. Competing in one of Kenya's most iconic and challenging sporting events,

the team showcased resilience, stamina, and teamwork.

This victory showed the KWS commitment to fostering holistic staff well-being and nurturing talent beyond the workplace. Through the dedicated efforts of the Sports and Recreation Office, the Service promotes a culture of health, teamwork, and excellence, empowering employees to thrive in all aspects of life. The win at Lewa highlighted the same passion, purpose, and



pursuit of excellence that KWS brings to wildlife conservation and community engagement every day.

Leadership in Exhibitions: Showcasing Conservation Excellence

KWS displayed its leadership in conservation and sustainable tourism at two major regional Agricultural Society of Kenya (ASK) Shows, earning prestigious awards and high-level recognition.

At the Kisumu ASK Show held at Mamboleo Showground, KWS was honoured with:

- ➔ **1st Place:** Best Tourism, Tours & Travel Stand
- ➔ **1st Place:** Best Energy Services & Conservation Sector Stand
- ➔ **2nd Place:** Best Interpretation of the Show Theme

The success continued at the Mombasa ASK Show 2025, where President H.E. Dr. William Ruto personally recognized KWS's performance. Awards included:

- ➔ **1st Place:** Best Stand in Tourism, Tours & Travel
- ➔ **2nd Place:** 2nd Place Energy Services & Conservation
- ➔ **2nd Place:** Best Stand Demonstrating Environmental Quality Standards

Aligned with the national theme, "Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture and Trade Initiatives for Sustainable Economic Growth," the KWS stand served as a dynamic hub, effectively highlighting the Service's pivotal role in integrating conservation with sustainable economic development, showcasing innovation, climate-smart solutions, and community engagement. These accolades reinforced KWS's mission to

protect wildlife while fostering livelihoods and prosperity.

Nairobi International Trade Fair: Best Stand in Tourism

At the 2025 Nairobi International Trade Fair, KWS was crowned Best Stand in Tourism, Tours & Travel, while also securing second-place honours for Best Non-Agricultural Statutory Board and Energy Services & Conservation. This recognition symbolized public endorsement of KWS's vision: creating a model where both people and nature thrive together.

Kiunga Marine Rangers Win IUCN International Ranger Award

In a moment of great national pride, the Kiunga Marine National Reserve ranger team received the prestigious International Ranger Award from the IUCN. This global accolade recognized their extraordinary courage and resilience in protecting one

of Kenya's most remote and challenging marine frontiers.

The rangers showed unwavering commitment by:

- Conserving vital coral reefs, mangroves, and endangered species such as turtles and dugongs
- Undertaking dangerous patrols
- Rescuing stranded fishermen

Their achievement underscores the skill, bravery, and dedication of KWS personnel in safeguarding both terrestrial and marine biodiversity.

Ms. Asha Muktar Mohammed: CX Warrior of the Year

In November, Ms. Asha Muktar Mohammed, Head of KWS Customer Service, was honoured

with the CX Warrior of the Year Award. Her transformative leadership has driven a customer-centric culture within KWS, implementing strategic initiatives such as enhanced service protocols and inspiring her team to consistently go above and beyond.

Ms. Asha's success exemplifies:

- Strategic alignment with KWS's 2024–2028 Strategic Plan
- Tangible improvements in customer satisfaction
- The vital role of women in conservation leadership

Her achievement serves as a beacon for young women and girls across Kenya, demonstrating that dedication, vision, and service excellence are powerful forces in shaping the future of wildlife protection.

A Year of Excellence and Inspiration

From sporting triumphs to regional and international accolades, KWS's 2025 achievements celebrated both people and purpose. Each award highlights a different dimension of the Service's mission: the drive for excellence, commitment to innovation, dedication to wildlife protection, and empowerment of communities and staff.

As KWS continues its work protecting Kenya's natural heritage, these milestones serve as a powerful reminder that conservation success is built on talent, teamwork, courage, and vision—qualities that inspire the nation and set a global benchmark for excellence in wildlife management.







THE WEEK THAT REIMAGINED TOURISM, WILDLIFE, AND THE SOUL OF THE NATION

As the morning sun spilled across Nairobi's skyline, streams of Kenyans made their way toward the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC). Inside the iconic landmark, the air pulsed with colour, culture, innovation,

and conversation. Kenya was not merely opening an exhibition—it was opening a new chapter in how it tells its story to itself and to the world.

For five days, Nairobi became the beating heart of the country's tourism and conservation narrative during the Kenya Tourism, Wildlife and Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) Week. Timed deliberately



ahead of Jamhuri Day, the showcase blended policy, private sector innovation, youth creativity, technology, and heritage into a national celebration of identity and opportunity. This celebration rested on two foundational pillars: the innovators who drive the industry and the natural heritage that inspires it.

Tourism's Unsung Architects: The Private Sector

Opening the week, Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife, Hon. Rebecca Miano, delivered a clear message: tourism's growth story is anchored in partnership.

"The private sector is the true owner of tourism in Kenya. Without their investment, innovation, and resilience, tourism in Kenya would simply not thrive," CS Miano said.

She emphasized that it is the privately owned lodges, hotels,

tour companies, airlines, attractions, and experiences that shape Kenya's appeal—locally and globally.

"As Government, we shall continue to create an enabling environment and support the growth of this vital sector. We will continue riding on strong collaborations with county governments and industry players to unlock even greater opportunities for our destinations."

CS Miano revealed that Kenya recorded 5.1 million domestic bed-nights in 2024, excluding homestays and the short-stay Airbnb facilities—clear evidence that the domestic market remains a powerful anchor of the sector. She urged Kenyans to actively participate in the week's activities and to celebrate tourism as a shared national asset.

"Jamhuri Week is not just an exhibition; it is an invitation for every Kenyan to discover the

immense potential tourism holds for our nation's future. Tourism touches every aspect of our economy—from the smallholder farmer supplying hotels to the tech innovator creating virtual safari experiences."

The President Returns to His Roots

The highlight of the closing ceremony was the arrival of His Excellency President Dr. William Samoei Ruto. For the President, the moment carried personal significance.

Long before his political ascent, his connection to wildlife began as a tour guide, interpreting animal behaviour and ecosystems for visitors. His academic grounding in Zoology was evident as he officially launched the National Wildlife Census, a landmark scientific initiative that will guide Kenya's conservation planning for decades.

As the President toured the exhibition halls, observers noted his keen interest in the technical details—asking about migration routes, wildlife corridors, fencing systems, and community integration. As always, the President remained a conservationist at heart. This hands-on, scientific approach was embodied in one of the week's most compelling attractions: the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) Model Park.

KWS Model Park: Conservation Comes Alive

The Model Park was a high-tech, immersive reimagining of Nairobi National Park. The installation featured:

- ➔ Savanna and forested habitats, with live wildlife and expertly curated taxidermy
- ➔ Conservation technology in action, including EarthRanger systems, drones, and gyrocopters
- ➔ Human-wildlife conflict mitigation, demonstrated through live electric fencing and corridor planning

At the centre of this experience was a clear message: conservation is no longer abstract—it is scientific, technological, and deeply human.

KWS Director General Prof. Erustus Kanga underscored this reality: “Wildlife conservation is the foundation upon which Kenya’s tourism success is built. Our mandate goes beyond protecting animals and habitats—we are securing livelihoods, strengthening community resilience, and safeguarding a heritage that defines us as a nation. Through science, technology, and partnerships with communities and the private sector, we are ensuring that this mission delivers real value for both present and future generations.”

Living Park in the Heart of the City

Throughout the week, KICC itself was transformed into a “Living Park.” The Immersive Maze (AR/VR) allowed visitors to journey through Kenya’s marine, mountain, and terrestrial ecosystems using augmented and virtual reality. More than 3,500 visitors

experienced virtual safaris—without leaving Nairobi!

Live streaming from Nairobi National Park connected global audiences to real-time wildlife experiences, while the “Wild Urban Street” pop-up brought the sounds and rhythms of the savanna into the city centre—blurring the boundary between metropolis and wilderness.

Youth, Innovation, and the Future of Safari

The Youth in Tourism and Conservation Innovation Expo showcased the future of the sector. Young Kenyans demonstrated how AI, digital storytelling, virtual reality, and creative technologies are reshaping the safari experience for a new generation of global travelers.

This spirit of innovation aligned seamlessly with the economic vision articulated by the Principal Secretary for Tourism, Mr John Olotuaa.

“Our goal is to unite all Kenyans in celebrating our sovereignty and the power of tourism to elevate



this country,” PS Oloftuaa said. “As we work toward welcoming 5.5 million international visitors by 2027, tourism has the potential to generate Ksh1.1 trillion for our economy.”

Culture, Cuisine, and Celebration

As evening fell, heritage took centre stage. The KWS Band filled the Tsavo Ballroom with rhythm and pride, while the Kenya Culinary Festival celebrated gastronomy tourism—telling Kenya’s story through flavour, creativity, and community.

The week featured exhibitions by government and private enterprises, investment forums showcasing projects from all 47 counties, cultural performances, and wildlife documentary screenings.

A key milestone was the launch of strategic tourism and wildlife policies, reinforcing Kenya’s commitment to sustainability, investment, innovation, and conservation-led growth. This was complemented by virtual reality installations covering Kenya’s nine tourism circuits and tourism excellence awards recognizing outstanding achievement.

More Than a Week—A National Statement

As the showcase drew to a close and the nation transitioned into Jamhuri Day, one message resonated clearly: tourism and wildlife conservation are not peripheral sectors—they are central to Kenya’s sovereignty, identity, and shared future.

Kenya’s wildlife is more than a national treasure. It is a living symbol of resilience, pride, and future prosperity.





SAVING THE MOUNTAIN BONGO FROM EXTINCTION

At dawn in Kenya's mist-laden montane forests, the world moves softly. Giant bamboo sways in the highland breeze, dew clings to moss-covered trunks, and shafts of pale light filter through towering podocarp and cedar trees.

For decades, this forest carried an eerie silence where one of Africa's most beautiful antelopes once roamed. The Mountain Bongo—

shy, striped and almost mythical—had nearly vanished.

Today, however, that silence is beginning to break.

Deep within the conservation landscape surrounding Mount Kenya, a quiet triumph is unfolding. The birth of the 100th Mountain Bongo at the Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy

(MKWC) is more than a conservation milestone. It is a symbol of resilience, scientific innovation and a national conservation strategy determined to pull a species back from extinction.

Behind this achievement stands the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), whose Strategic Plan 2024–2028 places species recovery at

the centre of Kenya's wildlife protection mission. The Mountain Bongo has become one of its most compelling success stories—proof that extinction can be reversed when science, policy and partnerships move together.

The Antelope That Slipped Away

The Mountain Bongo (*Tragelaphus eurycerus isaaci*) exists nowhere else on Earth except in Kenya's high-altitude forests. Cloaked in deep chestnut fur streaked with bold white stripes and crowned with spiralling horns, the bongo is both majestic and elusive. Forest rangers often call it the "ghost of the canopy," seen only by the most patient observers.

Yet despite its beauty, the Mountain Bongo spent much of the last century disappearing quietly. Expanding agriculture carved forests into fragments. Poaching increased. Diseases transmitted from livestock crept deeper into wildlife habitats. Slowly, almost unnoticed, the species collapsed.

By the early 2000s, fewer than one hundred individuals survived in the wild. The number was so low that natural recovery was no longer possible. Without intervention, Kenya faced losing one of its most iconic forest species forever.

A New Conservation Mindset

Faced with this reality, Kenya shifted its conservation approach. Rather than simply protecting wildlife from threats, the Kenya Wildlife Service began actively rebuilding endangered populations. The KWS Strategic Plan 2024–2028 now places species recovery at the heart of conservation planning, combining science, habitat restoration, veterinary medicine and community engagement into one coordinated effort.

Few species embody this strategy more powerfully than the Mountain Bongo.

The recovery journey began more than two decades ago when Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy partnered with global conservation organizations to build a controlled

breeding population. Eighteen Mountain Bongos were repatriated from zoological institutions in North America, joining animals already living at the conservancy. Together, they formed a genetic lifeline for a species on the edge.

Breeding Hope

Conservation breeding is neither simple nor quick—especially for Mountain Bongos. Females produce only one calf after a gestation period of roughly nine months, and calf survival depends heavily on environmental stability and careful veterinary oversight.

Inside the conservancy, every birth represents months of monitoring and preparation. Scientists track genetic compatibility using pedigree analysis and genomic research, ensuring the growing population maintains enough diversity to remain healthy. Veterinary teams monitor reproductive health, nutrition and disease prevention with meticulous precision.

Over time, these efforts began to show results. Calves survived



in greater numbers. Behavioural understanding improved. The herd slowly expanded.

When the 100th calf was born, it marked a moment conservationists had spent decades working toward. Today, approximately 100 Mountain Bongos live within the breeding programme—more than the estimated population remaining in the wild.

The reversal is striking. For the first time in generations, the future of the species is being rebuilt.

Preparing for the Wild

But raising animals in managed care is only the beginning. The ultimate goal is to return bongos to the forests where they belong.

To bridge this gap, conservationists created the Mawingu Mountain Bongo Sanctuary, a semi-wild habitat nestled within natural forest. Here, bongos transition from protected environments to landscapes that mirror true wilderness conditions.

Within Mawingu, the animals learn survival skills that cannot be taught in enclosures. They forage among native vegetation, navigate rugged terrain and interact within natural herd structures. Human contact is deliberately minimized. Researchers quietly observe feeding patterns, social behaviors and stress responses, searching for signs that an animal is ready to live independently.

Rewilding, conservationists emphasize, is not a single event. It is a gradual, years-long process built on patience and data.

Health checks remain crucial. Introducing disease into fragile wild populations could erase decades of conservation gains. Each potential release candidate undergoes extensive screening,

genetic evaluation and behavioral assessment.

The Science Guiding Survival

Research continues to shape every stage of the programme. Studies show that Mountain Bongos suffer from low genetic diversity due to historical population declines. Maintaining genetic health requires careful pairing of breeding animals and, potentially, integrating additional founder individuals from international conservation populations.

Ecological research has also revealed new insights into the species' diet, movement patterns and reproductive behaviour. These discoveries help conservationists restore suitable habitats and improve survival prospects for reintroduced animals.

Conservation Beyond Wildlife

Saving the Mountain Bongo is not only about protecting an antelope. It is also about protecting people's relationship with forests.

Kenya's montane forests support water catchments, agriculture and local livelihoods. The KWS Strategic Plan recognises that long-term conservation must involve communities living alongside these ecosystems.

Education programmes, conservation jobs and sustainable livelihood initiatives linked to the bongo recovery project are helping transform local attitudes toward wildlife protection. Where communities see tangible benefits, forest conservation becomes a shared responsibility rather than an imposed regulation.

Looking Toward 2050

Kenya's National Mountain Bongo Recovery and Action Plan sets a bold vision: 750 individuals by the year 2050. Scientists believe a population of this size would

ensure genetic resilience and allow bongos to thrive without intensive management.

Achieving this target will demand sustained habitat restoration, continued breeding and rewilding, and long-term investment. Challenges remain. Forest fragmentation continues. Climate change threatens montane ecosystems. Disease risks persist at the boundary between wildlife and livestock.

Yet progress already achieved offers cautious optimism.

A Symbol of What Conservation Can Achieve

The birth of the 100th Mountain Bongo stands as both celebration and responsibility. It represents decades of collaboration between Kenya Wildlife Service, Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy, Kenya Forest Service, international conservation partners and local communities.

More importantly, it signals a shift in how conservation is approached in Kenya—from crisis response to deliberate species recovery.

In the misty forests of Mount Kenya and the Aberdares, conservationists are quietly rebuilding a future once thought lost. The Mountain Bongo's return is still unfolding, fragile yet promising.

And somewhere within those shadowed forest trails, striped calves now step cautiously beside their mothers—living reminders that extinction is not always final when a nation chooses to act, persist and believe in recovery.







A TRANSFORMATIVE THREE YEARS SCORECARD (2023-2025)

The first sound is not the roar. It is the low rustle of grass brushing against the legs of an elephant herd as dawn unfolds across Tsavo's vast wilderness. A calf nudges close to its mother while, a short distance away, a ranger watches quietly—binoculars steady, radio crackling softly with updates from a patrol team miles away.



Above them, a drone hums almost invisibly against the pale morning sky, mapping movements across terrain that stretches far beyond the horizon.

This is conservation in Kenya today—ancient wilderness protected by modern science, community partnership, and one of Africa’s most ambitious wildlife agencies: the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS).

Between 2022 and 2025, Kenya’s conservation landscape has undergone a profound transformation. In a period when global wildlife populations are declining at alarming rates, Kenya has moved in the opposite direction—strengthening protection, expanding habitats, stabilising funding, and rebuilding trust with communities. Collectively, these gains have repositioned KWS as a leading global conservation agency and a regional benchmark for technology-driven, community-supported conservation.

This transformation has been underpinned by strong national

leadership. Sustained support from H.E. President Dr William Samoei Ruto—particularly through prioritisation of conservation security, youth employment and institutional reform—has provided the political will necessary to scale ambition into action. Complementing this has been the clear policy direction of the Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife, Hon. Rebecca Miano, whose stewardship has aligned conservation with national economic growth, tourism recovery and climate resilience. County governments, development partners and communities have played an equally decisive role in translating policy into impact on the ground.

Reinventing Conservation for a Changing World

Kenya’s ecosystems—stretching from coral reefs along the Indian Ocean to alpine moorlands atop Mount Kenya—support over 25,000 species of plants and animals, making the country one of Africa’s most biodiverse nations. Yet these landscapes face intensifying pressures: climate

variability, habitat fragmentation, expanding human settlements and transnational wildlife crime.

For KWS, meeting these challenges required not incremental reform, but reinvention.

That reinvention is anchored in the KWS Strategic Plan 2024–2028, aligned with global biodiversity frameworks, regional conservation commitments and national development priorities. The plan outlines transformative medium-term interventions designed to secure wildlife populations while building a sustainable wildlife economy—one that integrates ecological protection, tourism growth and community livelihoods.

Its implementation has been strengthened through close collaboration with county governments, particularly in wildlife dispersal areas and conflict hotspots, where land-use planning, infrastructure development and community engagement are essential to conservation success.

Tourism Growth, Revenue Recovery and Financial Independence

Few indicators demonstrate the impact of these reforms more clearly than tourism and revenue performance.

Between 2022 and 2025, visits to Kenya's national parks rose from 2.36 million to 3.38 million, a 43 percent increase. Importantly, nearly 70 percent of all visitors are now domestic tourists, reflecting the success of targeted conservation education, pricing reforms and national pride in wildlife heritage.

Over the same period, conservation revenue climbed from Sh4.0 billion to a historic Sh7.98 billion, nearly doubling in just three years. Today, almost 90 percent of KWS operations are funded internally, a structural shift that has significantly reduced dependence on the Exchequer and donor funding

while strengthening operational autonomy.

Development partners have complemented this growth through targeted investments in conservation technology, ranger training, habitat restoration and community livelihoods—ensuring that rising revenue translates into lasting ecological impact.

Technology, Connectivity and a Modern Conservation Force

Across Kenya's protected areas, conservation is now powered by connectivity.

KWS has installed satellite internet in all national parks and 71 revenue collection gates, enabling real-time communication, seamless digital payments and faster operational decision-making in areas once completely cut off. This has improved visitor experience, strengthened security coordination and boosted revenue accountability.

Advanced technologies—EarthRanger, thermal imaging cameras, drones, GPS satellite collars and LoRaWAN networks—now guide patrol deployment, wildlife tracking and conservation intelligence across millions of hectares.

At the heart of this system are people. In line with a Presidential Directive, KWS recruited 1,274 rangers across all 47 counties, with 147 cadet officers all deployed. This expansion enabled the formation of seven ranger companies and a specialised unit, strengthened Problem Animal Control teams, established new rapid-response outposts and improved response speed to human-wildlife conflict incidents nationwide.

These efforts have been reinforced by the acquisition of 103 vehicles, four boats, two drones and specialised translocation equipment, significantly improving patrol coverage, surveillance and wildlife management capacity.



Return of the Rhino

Kenya's rhino recovery is among the most statistically compelling conservation success stories in Africa. In the 2024/2025 financial year, Kenya recorded zero rhino deaths from poaching—a rare global achievement. National rhino numbers increased from 1,890 in 2022 to 2,102 in 2024, representing a 12 percent growth driven by intensive protection, habitat expansion and coordinated surveillance.

New sanctuaries at Loisaba and Segera, alongside the 3,200 km² Tsavo West Rhino Range Expansion, are easing pressure on overcrowded reserves while anchoring conservation-led economic development. When completed, Tsavo will host one of the largest rhino sanctuaries in the world.

These gains reflect deep collaboration between KWS, private and community conservancies, county governments, development partners and communities—each playing a defined role in securing space for species recovery.

Moving Wildlife at Scale

Over the past three years, KWS has undertaken more than 3,600

wildlife translocations nationwide to restore ecological balance and reduce pressure on farmlands.

Among the most significant operations was the relocation of 53 elephants from Mwea National Reserve to the Aberdare ecosystem. In a world-first conservation milestone, 10 mountain bongos were released into the Mawingu Sanctuary on Mt. Kenya, while 43 black rhinos were translocated to Loisaba and Segera.

Behind these operations are KWS veterinary teams, now conducting over 1,500 wildlife treatments and rescues annually, including emergency interventions, disease management and rehabilitation.

From Conflict to Coexistence

Human-wildlife conflict remains one of Kenya's most complex conservation challenges—but the response is increasingly data-driven.

Across 11 counties, KWS has constructed 250 km of solar-powered wildlife barriers and rehabilitated an additional 170 km, alongside the installation of 3,500 predator-deterrent lights in 16 counties. Annually, the Service conducts over 10,000 Problem

Animal Control patrols and 3,000 elephant drives.

These interventions have significantly reduced fatalities and property losses in conflict-prone counties such as Kericho, Nyeri, Nakuru, Laikipia, Kwale and Taita Taveta.

Beyond infrastructure, more than 15 community support projects—including water schemes, classrooms, bursaries, predator-proof bomas, beehive installations and youth sports initiatives—are strengthening trust and cooperation between KWS and communities living alongside wildlife.

Conservancies, Climate Action and Landscape Resilience

KWS has supported the development and gazettement of 20 conservancy management plans across six counties, safeguarding approximately 735,000 acres of wildlife habitat in Laikipia, Taita Taveta, Narok, Kwale, Machakos and Nakuru.

In response to climate change, the Service has constructed over 1,500 km of firebreaks, enhanced marine monitoring in five protected areas, and developed new water pans and boreholes in Tsavo and Kora to support wildlife during drought.





Tourism and security access has also improved through sustained maintenance of park roads and airstrips, reducing patrol response times and improving visitor safety.

Investing in People

Between 2023 and 2025, KWS trained 5,315 staff—1,251 in 2023, 1,969 in 2024 and 2,095 in 2025—strengthening skills in conservation management, veterinary care, digital systems and visitor services.

At the same time, over 2,600 young Kenyans joined the Service through internships and industrial attachments,

gaining practical experience in wildlife management, tourism operations, veterinary services and digital content creation. These programmes are building a sustainable talent pipeline for Kenya's wildlife sector.

Collective National Achievement

Kenya's conservation resurgence is not the story of a single institution. It is the outcome of visionary national leadership, clear policy direction, committed county governments, strategic development partners, and—most critically—communities who live with wildlife every day.

As evening settles over Amboseli, Mount Kilimanjaro glows pink beneath drifting clouds. Elephants move slowly toward a watering hole while rangers log their movements on digital tracking devices—quietly, confidently.

In these moments, Kenya's conservation future is already visible: a living partnership between people, wildlife and landscape.

Through leadership, science and collaboration, the Kenya Wildlife Service is ensuring that the promise of the wild endures—not only for Kenya, but for the world.



KENYA
WILDLIFE
SERVICE



Conservation Support is Now **Digital.**



Scan



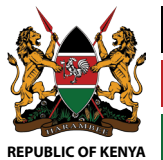
Support



Conserve

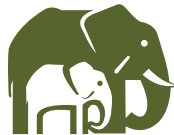






REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**KENYA
WILDLIFE
SERVICE**



Kenya Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 40241 - 00100
Nairobi



+254 (0) 775 680 888
+254 (0) 113856 883
Toll free: 0800597000
WhatsApp: +254726610509



customerservice@kws.go.ke
www.kws.go.ke