

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2022

Project reference	28-017
Project title	Establishing a Biocultural Heritage Territory to Protect Kenya's Kaya Forests
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Kenya
Lead partner	IIED
Partner(s)	KEFRI
Project leader	Krystyna Swiderska
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	31 st October 2022; Year 2, HYR1 (Yr 1 report submitted in April 2022, covering 1 st 6 months of the project)
Project website/blog/social media	Establishing a biocultural heritage territory to protect Kenya's Kaya forests International Institute for Environment and Development (iied.org)

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

The project started on 1st October 2021 (the project agreement was received later than expected so the start date was moved forward and the implementation timetable was revised).

Output 1: Establishing a BCHT

1.1 Following the Project Launch Workshop in February 2022, a detailed report of the workshop was prepared by IIED and KEFRI. It was published on the IIED website and project page, sent to all workshop participants, and promoted through social media (eg. Twitter) and IIED's biodiversity newsletter. See: [Establishing a Biocultural Heritage Territory to protect Kenya's Kaya forests - project launch workshop report | Publications Library \(iied.org\)](#)

1.2 FPIC process & M&E surveys (by Year 1 Qtr 4): The FPIC process began with the project launch workshop, which presented the proposed project to a number of Kaya elders and village elders. This was followed by a meeting in April 2022 to present the project to all Area Chiefs in Rabai, to get buy-in and support from the local government (as only 1 Area Chief had participated in the launch workshop). The meeting included a presentation on the Potato Park biocultural heritage territory by Alejandro Argumedo from the Indigenous NGO ANDES (Peru) (a project advisor). Area Chiefs expressed their support for the project. Meetings were then held with all 10 villages in Rabai from May-June 2022 to present the project to village elders, Kaya elders and village members, and allow them to decide whether or not to participate in the project and to provide feedback on the objectives and approach. Such a Free, Prior, Informed Consent process is an important power-equalising step in a community-led process as it allows communities to deny consent or place conditions.

In May 2022, an M&E planning meeting was held in Rabai, bringing together community researchers, village elders, Kaya elders, Wazee ya Nyumba Kumi (village authorities in charge of 10 clustered households) and 20 community representatives: male and female elders, middle

aged men and women, opinion leaders, male and female youth. The socio-economic and gender baseline surveys (including focus groups on gender) were conducted from June to August 2022. We originally hoped to conduct these surveys by March (as per the timeline) – the delay was due to COVID which delayed the launch workshop and the start of the project, the need to resolve a community conflict in March/April, and the difficulty of engaging communities during the pre-election period from June to August. The forest and tree surveys were conducted in March-April 2022 when trees were planted in Kayas and on-farm. The elephant shrew and butterfly surveys will be conducted by end of October (they were delayed due to the recent election in Kenya). The participatory M&E ‘Most Significant Change’ approach was discussed at the meetings with the 10 villages held from May to June, where key areas in which to monitor change and report ‘stories of change’ were agreed.

1.3 Village and intervillage meetings on BCHT (By Year 2, Qtr 2): Village meetings were held with 10 villages (5 meetings, each combining 2 adjacent villages) from May to June, to discuss the idea of establishing a collectively governed biocultural heritage territory (BCHT) in Rabai, and develop a common vision (objectives, governance system). The idea was well received – communities said they want to establish a BCHT to protect traditional foods, indigenous tree species, Rabai culture and traditions, and to protect their land rights. Each village will select a representative to engage in further discussions about common goals and governance system, and an inter-village meeting will be held in early November.

1.4 Project advisory group meetings (By Year 2, Qtr 2): The launch workshop agreed to establish a project advisory community bringing together key KEFRI scientists, government agencies, Kaya elders and IIED. The first meeting will be held on 16 November (slightly later than planned due to the need to prioritise completion of the M&E baseline survey).

1.5 BCHT registration explored & submitted (By Year 2, Qtr 3): Development of by-laws for community land registration under the Community Lands Act and Museums and Heritage Act (for Kaya forests) was explored during the launch workshop; however, registration under the Community Lands Act may be challenging as most land in Rabai (outside Kaya forests) is privately owned. It may be easier to establish a Rabai Biocultural Territory Association (comprising leaders and Kaya elders from each village) and register it under the Societies Act. Bylaws for sustainable land use would still need to be developed by the communities to register the Association. The options will be further explored in consultation with legal experts in November, and the process to develop bylaws will then be initiated in December. It will take time to build consensus amongst the 10 villages, so we expect application for registration to be submitted by Year 3 Qtr 2. The delay is due to the need for a BCHT visioning process in Year 2 which only became apparent during the launch workshop (this was an important step in establishing the Potato Park BCHT in Peru); and because the election process hampered fieldwork from June-August. We will submit a change request to change the timeline and the Log Frame accordingly.

Output 2: Cultural Villages / Sustainable livelihoods

We had planned to complete the following activities by Year 2 Qtr 1 or Qtr 2:

- 2.1 - Establishing Cultural Village enterprises & houses – by Qtr 1
- 2.2 - Training workshops for beehives & honey – by Qtr 1
- 2.3 - Training workshops for brooms, baskets, oil – by Qtr 2

However, these activities were delayed due to the delay with completing the baseline livelihoods survey (August). It has also been difficult to procure some of the equipment and prices have risen significantly – but the community-level activities are expected to start in late October and will be completed by February or March 2023 (Yr 2 Qtr 4).

Output 3: Fuel efficient stoves & briquette presses - Planned activities for Year 2:

- 3.1 - Training to produce stoves – by Qtr 1
- 3.2 - Stoves installed – by Qtr 2
- 3.3 - Installing briquette presses & training – by Qtr 1

The election period delayed these activities - the campaigns which started in April and continued until August 9th 2022 disrupted the implementation of these activities in Rabai. Community members were busy attending campaign meetings, and the anxiety created by

electioneering period did not provide a conducive environment for the project. Once the election was over, completing the M&E baseline had to be prioritised. However all the equipment has now been purchased and training and installation activities will be completed in November 2022 (Qtr 3).

Output 4 – Tree restoration – by Year 2 Qtr 2

Activities to restore native trees in Kayas and on-farm have been completed – seedlings have been planted (4.1 – 4.3) and conservation and management plans have been agreed by Kaya elders and farmers (4.4). Monitoring (monthly) and maintenance (quarterly) has begun and is ongoing.

Output 5 – Agrobiodiversity restoration

5.1. Awareness raising meetings by Year 2 Qtr 2: Awareness raising was conducted through the meetings with 10 villages from May-June (Qtr 1), and this is part of all project meetings with communities.

5.2. Farmer Field Schools by Year 2 Qtr 3: This was to be supported by co-funding from AHRC but the proposal was not funded, so the FFS will be conducted in Year 3 Qtr 1 with co-funding from IIED (“frame funds”).

5.3. Biocultural Festival by Year 2 Qtr 4: The biocultural festival is being held as part of Rabai’s annual New Year festival in late October (Qtr 3) – this will be an opportunity to raise awareness about the project and the importance of Rabai’s biocultural heritage and share progress with establishing a biocultural territory with Rabai villages and other Mijikenda communities. The festival will include exchanges of traditional seeds, foods and cultural and spiritual values relating to Kaya forests.

5.4. Community seed bank & register expanded by Year 2 Qtr 2: Traditional seeds gathered through the seed exchanges at the Biocultural Festival in late October will be added to Rabai’s community seed bank and register by November (Qtr 3).

Progress towards Outcome level Indicators (requested in Year 1 Annual report)

0.1 By 2024, forest degradation is significantly reduced or halted in Kaya Bomu, Fimboni, Mudzi Muvya and Mudzi Mwiru, as indicated by little or no reduction in the density and diversity of endangered or threatened trees (excluding restored trees), and an increase in elephant shrew and butterfly populations, compared to baselines in 2021.

Progress: Awareness has been created through the launch workshop and the community meetings in May-June on the importance of conserving Kaya forests for biodiversity benefits, climate resilience and livelihood improvement – the level of awareness in the Rabai community on the importance of conserving Kaya forests has increased.

0.2 By 2024, 4 endangered endemic and 2 threatened native tree species, c.15 associated species, and small native palm (elephant-shrew habitat), are restored in a total area of 50 ha of degraded forest in 4 Kayas; and 10 native fuelwood/multi-purpose tree species are restored on 400 surrounding farms (100 farms/ Kaya), covering 80 ha in total (0.2 ha per farm) – with at least 75% survival rate.

Progress: Fast growing threatened fuelwood/multi-purpose tree species have been planted in farmlands to provide firewood and other wood products; 300 farmers have so far benefited from the planting. 42 ha of degraded areas have been planted in the four Kayas. Maintenance of the planted trees is being undertaken by community members in collaboration with community researchers, village elders and Kaya elders.

0.3 Sustainable products increase incomes of 3200 forest-dependent women and youth (1600 households) from 2021 baseline of \$30-40/month to \$65/month by 2023 and \$100/month by 2024 (ie. \$3.3/day).

Progress: All equipment to facilitate the development and production of sustainable nature-based products have been purchased, training is planned for November 2022.

0.4. By 2024, 800 forest dependent farmers (at least 50% women) have restored 4 traditional crops and domesticated 4 indigenous vegetables on-farm compared to a baseline in 2021.

Progress: Measures to restore 4 traditional crops (sorghum, millet and maize and cassava landraces) have been initiated through community meetings during which the most resilient crop varieties have been identified. Seeds have been sourced and stored and are awaiting planting at onset of rains which are late. Four indigenous vegetables (*Mnavu*, *Tsalakushe*, *Tsaphe* and *Mtsunga*) have been domesticated (ie. planted on-farm) and are being grown for both domestic use and local markets.

0.5 By 2024, Kaya elders are better respected by youth and relations between them improve; the number of conservation resolutions passed by Kaya Elder's Council being successfully implemented increases by 50%; and 50 women have taken on leadership roles in Kaya Elders' Council, BCHAT institution, Cultural Villages and micro-enterprises and as community researchers, compared to baselines in 2021.

Progress: Youth and women have been integrated into the Kaya elders' council. Community researchers who comprise both male youth (40%) and female youth (60%) are working in collaboration with Kaya elders in project initiatives – this has made the Kaya council of elders more inclusive hence earning them greater respect from youth. Currently, women are providing leadership in establishing and expanding nature-based micro-enterprises such as coconut processing, broom making and basketry. Moreover, plans are underway to establish village committees bringing together Kaya elders, village elders, community researchers, youth and women to oversee management of the BCHAT at village level in December 2022. It is expected that once the village committees are institutionalised, women, youth and Kaya elders will take leadership roles in Kaya Elders' Council, BCHAT institution, Cultural Villages and micro-enterprises.

The County government of Kilifi and KEFRI reaffirmed their commitment to mainstream the project activities in their annual work plans during the project launch and inception workshop. The activities have since been mainstreamed in Kilifi County integrated development plan and KEFRI annual plans.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The main issue has been a few months' delay in some activities:

M&E – we had hoped to complete the whole baseline survey by Year 1 Qtr 4 (ie. by March 2022) – the forest and tree survey was completed by April 2022, but the socio-economic survey was completed by August 2022, and the wildlife survey was completed by October 2022 (Year 2 Qtr 3). This is because COVID-19 and the omicron outbreak in December 2021 delayed the launch workshop, and a community conflict came to light during the launch workshop which had to be resolved through village meetings in March-April, and because of disruption caused by the pre-election period from April to August. For these reasons, and due to the need to engage the wildlife departments, the elephant shrew and butterfly surveys is being completed by end of October (ie. just after the end of Year 1). This should not affect the project outcomes as there are still 2 years left of the project which should be enough time to see changes in elephant shrew and butterfly populations as trees/habitats are restored and degradation is reduced (tree planting and installing fuel efficient stoves and briquette presses were completed by Year 2 Qtr 2 as per the timeline). Agrobiodiversity restoration through FFS has been delayed by 2 quarters as co-funding did not come through, but will be completed by Year 3 Qtr 1, which should allow enough time for seed sharing amongst farmers and increases in butterfly numbers and diversity before the final M&E survey.

Submitting BCHAT registration – has been delayed for the above reasons, and because we realised the importance of supporting a community-led visioning process to establish a BCHAT, building on the successful Potato Park. This in-depth social process is important to get strong

community buy-in and build lasting institutions for landscape conservation, resulting in more robust and sustainable outcomes.

Livelihoods activities have been delayed due to the delay with the M&E survey, but will be completed by Year 2 Qtr 4 (February 2023). The project will still have 19 months' duration left so this should be enough time to reduce pressure on Kaya forests and enhance wildlife.

We are assessing whether these changes will affect the budget for Year 2. The costs of equipment for sustainable livelihoods have also risen sharply due to inflation (associated with the war in Ukraine and rising fuel prices), so our assessment will take this into account. If we cannot resolve/accommodate the changes within the existing annual budget, we will submit a budget change request in Qtr 3. We will try to find savings in other parts of the KEFRI or IIED budget to make up for the rising costs. Regardless of budgetary changes, we will submit a change request in November for the changes in the timetable for some activities and consequent changes to the Log Frame (Indicators 1.1 and 1.2).

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS-LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS:	No - but the log frame changes were highlighted in the Year 1 annual report.
Formal Change Request submitted:	No - Not yet for Year 2 – this will be done in November
Received confirmation of change acceptance	N/A
Change request reference if known:	N/A

4a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend:

[REDACTED]

4b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

None