



WHAT WAS YOUR BEST CEPA INTERVENTION IN THIS TRIENNIUM?

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Jane MACHARIA
CEPA Government Focal Point, Kenya



What was your key message?

Informed community makes wise use of wetlands and associated resources because they are aware of the consequences of their activities.

Your Position/Role and Country:

Research scientist, National Museums of Kenya

Title of your CEPA activity/product

Baseline study of the wetlands followed by Seminars and Workshops that changed the local community perception on wetlands and embarked on eco-tourism work to conserve them

Other collaborators – please identify other organizations that assisted you or were your partners

Kenya Wild Life Service, Limuru and Kikuyu county councils and the local community groups Manguo Ecotourism and the Conservation group (MECONG) and Friends of Ondiri Swamp

Key stakeholder group(s) targeted by your product/activity (e.g. decision-makers, teachers, families, journalists etc.)

Local community who occupy the riparian land of the two wetlands and who were responsible for the threats that were facing the wetlands.

When did this event take place/when was your product launched?

It was a process that took place in 2006 through to 2008

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Brief description of your product/ activity / material you used

A pilot study was conducted in two highland wetlands in central Kenya to compile baseline data through the use of field survey, questionnaire and subsequent seminars. The study showed that wetlands offer ecological, social and economic benefits that are not fully appreciated and hence there is a lack of concerted efforts to advocate for their sustainable use. Initial findings showed that both wetlands were rich in biodiversity, especially birds. However, these ecosystems were experiencing environmental problems such as dumping of solid waste, over abstraction of water, encroachment for commercial and residential use, wetland agriculture, overgrazing, improper land use practices on the watershed and wildlife poaching. A follow-up series of public awareness and education campaigns to sensitize the local communities to the importance of the two ecosystems helped change attitudes and perceptions. As a result, the local community organized themselves, revived a dormant community group, and created an eco-tourism venture that has helped address many of the above threats. Other products that were a result of the activity included a video documentary, posters and brochures all aimed at enhancing awareness.

What was your intended outcome from this product/activity? (e.g. change in behaviour of target group; volunteer help with a wetland project; newspaper article)

Change the community perception that wetlands are wastelands. Stop the dumping, encroachment and poaching of birds and eggs which threatened the birds' population and promote eco-tourism, with avian tourism as the main attraction.

What kind of impact did this activity/product have on the target audience?

The Public Education and Awareness (PEA) campaign provided a unique platform for all major stakeholders to interact, and exchange ideas and experiences on the best way to restore and conserve the swamps. The PEA process involved seminars, carried out in three phases. During Phase One and Two, the local communities appreciated the importance of the swamps and identified environmental problems. In Phase Three alternative sustainable use practices were deliberated upon. A major impact is that the group through their own leadership have propelled the initiative and even got funding from their own efforts. More information http://www.ruffordsmallgrants.org/rsg/projects/naftali_mungai_

Is there a follow-up activity/product planned, if yes briefly describe

Yes there is a follow up activity to establish a nature trail and a resource centre.

Why do you identify this as your best CEPA intervention? What makes it stand out?

Managing to convince the community that wetlands can have non-consumptive use that brings income and they embrace it and progress is fulfilling. It stands out because the wetlands have recovered and the groups have future plans. http://www.ruffordsmallgrants.org/rsg/projects/naftali_mungai_

What was the source of your funding?

Royal Netherlands Embassy Small Grant Fund (KNIP) in Nairobi in 2006 & 2007, the Ecosystem Grant Prog. (IUCN Netherlands) under Eco-tourism and Biodiversity Fund 2008



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Manguo Swamp - Limuru

A Multi-Use Wetland - Privately Owned

Avian tourism site
a community project
combining conservation and livelihood options



Local use

Ecosystems Grants Programme

EGP

THE NETHERLANDS



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF KENYA

WILDLIFE DIVISION

....a visit is worth while

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CONVENTION ON WETLANDS
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)