

## **Eco-Clubs Mark World Wetlands Day, 2012**

By Eco-Ethics Intl., Kenya

Eco-Ethics International Kenya (EEI-K) is an environmental and community development non-governmental organization, working in Kenya's coast, based in Mombasa. It is working towards the sustainable management of natural resources, with an intention of safeguarding the ecosystem integrity for both the present and the future generations. EEI-K is running the Eco-club Program which is a school-based initiative that organizes pupils to meet regularly and undertake environmentally friendly activities in the school and the community where they live. With over 60 schools participating and more expected to join, the program addresses one of EEI-K's primary mandates on environmental education and awareness creation to enhance sustainable development in coastal region of Kenya. This has formed a platform of including pupils and students in marking of several days of importance in the conservation of the environment such as the World Wetlands Day, World Ocean Day and the World Environment Day the among many others.

In preparations for this year's World Wetlands Day, the Eco-club Program circulated the World Wetlands Day posters to Eco-club schools within Mombasa County, informing them of this important day. Notes on the importance of wetlands and how to conserve them were also circulated. Additionally, a talk on World Wetlands Day, customized for primary school pupils in Kenya, at Star of the Sea Primary School in Mombasa was organized during the day itself. Here, the Project Officer involved took the pupils through the history of World Wetlands Day, the importance of wetlands with special emphasis on tourism and how the pupils can participate in conservation of wetlands and the environment in general. The small event received much publicity and it was highlighted in a local newspaper, the 'Weekend Star' on its Saturday/Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> of February, 2012 edition.

During next year's World Wetland day, The Eco-club Program is planning to involve more eco-club schools in similar talks and organize educational school trips to wetlands around Mombasa specifically the Gazi mangrove forest in the south coast of Kenya for the pupils to learn more on wetlands.