
ACCESS TO INFORMATION POLICY



Wildlife Research and Training Institute

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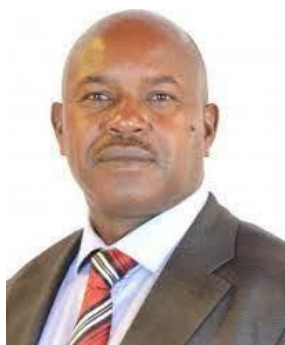
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FOREWORD



This policy marks a significant milestone in our institution's journey towards enhanced transparency, accountability, and public engagement. As a parastatal mandated to conduct wildlife research and training, the Institute operates at the critical nexus of science, policy, and community stewardship. Our work—ranging from conducting national wildlife census to providing cutting-edge training for conservation professionals—relies on robust data collection and dissemination processes.

The introduction of the Access to Information Policy ensures that this data is effectively harnessed and responsibly shared, allowing us to meet the growing demand for open, accurate, and timely information from our stakeholders. Access to Information is a foundational pillar of good governance.

It empowers citizens, enhances institutional accountability, and fosters trust between public institutions and the communities they serve. This policy reinforces our commitment to operating in an open, participatory manner, where stakeholders—including the public, researchers, policymakers, and conservation partners—can access critical information that supports sustainable wildlife management and conservation.

The policy will enable the Institute to play a more proactive role in sharing critical wildlife data, insights, and innovations that can shape evidence-based policymaking and conservation strategies. As an institution, we must ensure that the information shared is accurate, secure, and used for its intended purposes.

To achieve this, the Institute is committed to building the necessary systems and capacities to operationalize the policy effectively. This includes strengthening our data management protocols, training our staff on compliance requirements, and establishing robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Nkedianye', written over a dotted line.

DR DAVID NKEDIANYE
CHAIR, BOARD OF THE INSTITUTE

DATE: 16th May, 2025

PREFACE



This policy represents a significant advancement in our collective efforts to promote transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in the governance and dissemination of information within our institution and across the conservation sector. The Access to Information Policy will enable the Institute to solidify its position as a trusted custodian and disseminator of wildlife data and conservation insights.

The data we generate from national wildlife census, habitat assessments, and human-wildlife conflict studies is invaluable for crafting effective conservation strategies, informing government policies, and fostering partnerships with local and international stakeholders. By ensuring this information is accessible, the policy reinforces the principles of openness and accountability that underpin our work. Transparency is not just a legal obligation; it is a moral imperative for institutions entrusted with public resources and responsibilities. The policy's emphasis on open access aligns with Kenya's Access to Information Act, 2016, and the Constitution of Kenya, which enshrine the right to information as fundamental.

By adopting and implementing this policy, the Institute takes a bold step in advancing the democratic ideals of participation and inclusivity, ensuring that all citizens, researchers, policymakers, and conservationists have equitable access to information critical for decision-making. It will enhance our operational effectiveness by providing a clear framework for managing, storing, and disseminating information.

It will also bolster public trust in our work, demonstrating our commitment to accountability and ethical stewardship of the data we collect. The policy will further enable us to respond efficiently to requests for information, fostering better collaboration with stakeholders and supporting informed public dialogue on wildlife conservation.

Let us embrace this opportunity to build a more informed, engaged, and responsible society.


.....
DR PATRICK OMONDI, OGW
DIRECTOR/CEO

DATE: 16th May, 2025

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ABBREVIATIONS

- WRTI** - Wildlife Research and Training Institute
- CEO** - Chief Executive Officer
- AIO** - Access to Information Officer
- ATI** - Access to Information
- CAJ** - Commission on Administrative Justice
- CHAIC** - Complaints Handling and Access to Information Committee



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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Director - means the Director appointed under section 58(1) of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act (Cap. 376);

Commission - means the Commission on Administrative Justice;

Information – has the meaning assigned to it under section 2 of the Access to Information Act (Cap. 7M);

Exempt information - means information that may be withheld by a public entity or private body in accordance with section 6 of the Access to Information Act (Cap. 7M);

Information Access Officer - means the Director of the Institute or any person delegated to perform functions of an Information Access Officer by the Director;

Edited copy – means in relation to a document, a copy of a document from which exempt information has been deleted;

Information Requestor: an individual, partners, stakeholders, public and private organizations, or the general public, who/which makes an application for an information request;

Public entity- means (a) any public office, as defined in Article 260 of the Constitution; or (b) any entity performing a function within a commission, office, agency or other body established under the Constitution;

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

The Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI) is a State Corporation established under Section 50 of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act. The mandate of the Institute is to provide coordinated wildlife research and comprehensive data to inform scientific based solutions that inform policy decisions, management approaches, and create innovative wildlife-based products and services in the wildlife sector.

Vision

A globally competitive wildlife research and training centre.

Mission

To conduct and coordinate wildlife research and training through innovation, knowledge and technology transfer for sustainable wildlife conservation and management.

Core values

The Institute is guided by the following core values in its operations:

- 1) **Integrity:** We uphold honesty and transparency in all our operations.
- 2) **Professionalism:** We uphold high standards of conduct, competence and accountability in all activities to foster trust and credibility.
- 3) **Stewardship:** We nurture and foster environmental sustainability and responsible management of public resources.
- 4) **Innovation:** We endeavour to explore and adopt new ideas, approaches and technologies.
- 5) **Partnership:** We create an environment that will deliver competitive scientific output through collaborative research, capacity building and service delivery initiatives.
- 6) **Quality:** We offer excellent research and training outputs and services.
- 7) **Teamwork:** We uphold the spirit of working together to create synergy and cohesiveness towards common goals.
- 8) **Inclusivity:** We embrace gender and social diversity, equity, fairness, respect and community engagement.

1.1 Background

The Access to Information Policy is anchored on the Access to Information Act (Cap. 7M) and Article 35 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. The Commission on Administrative Justice (CAJ) established under the Commission on Administrative Justice Act, (Cap.7J) is an administrative body with powers to tackle maladministration in the Public Sector. The CAJ has the power to investigate complaints of delay, abuse of power, unfair treatment, manifest injustice or discourtesy. Further to this, CAJ oversees and enforces the implementation of the Access to Information Act (Cap. 7M).

In light of the Constitutional obligation under Article 35, the Institute being a government agency has developed this Access to Information Policy.

1.2 Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Enforce Article 35 of the Constitution and give effect to the right of access to information;
2. Create a framework for accessing information held by the Institute in compliance with any right protected by the Constitution and any other law;
3. Create a framework for routine and systematic information disclosure relating to accountability, transparency and public participation;
4. Promote good governance, transparency and accountability; and
5. Comply with all legal requirements on Access to Information.

1.3 Scope of the policy

The Access to Information policy shall apply to staff, trainees, clients, partners, suppliers and members of the public who wish to seek information about the Institute.

1.4 Implementation of the Policy

The Institute is responsible for implementation of this policy and shall ensure the safe keeping of information held by the Institute.

The policy shall:

1. Ensure protection of information against unauthorized access;
2. Ensure integrity of information free from unauthorized modification;
3. Ensure availability of information to eligible persons;
4. Ensure adherence to legal requirements; and
5. Guide the reporting and investigating of suspected breaches of access to information.

1.5 Guiding Principles

Maximum Disclosure: all information held by the Institute are subject to disclosure except as limited by section 6 of the Access to Information Act (Cap.7M).

Transparency: The Institute shall promote transparency in the dissemination of information.

Facilitation to access: Information shall be disseminated taking into consideration the need to reach persons with disabilities, the cost, local language, the most effective method of communication in that local area, and the information shall be easily accessible and available free or at cost taking into account the medium used.

Simple and Easy Access: The Institute shall provide for a framework for access to information that is simple, timely and cost effective.

1.6 Legal Framework

The policy is premised on but not limited to the following legislative framework:

1. The Constitution of Kenya, 2010;
2. Access to information Act, (Cap.7M);
3. Commission on Administrative Justice Act, (Cap. 7J);
4. Records Disposal Act, (Cap.14);
5. Public Archives and Documentation Service Act (Cap 19);
6. Public Officer Ethics Act, (Cap. 185B);
7. Official Secrets Act, (Cap 187);
8. Data Protection Act (Cap. 411 C); and
9. Public Service (Values and Principles) Act (Cap. 185A)

2.0 DISCLOSURE

The Institute shall assess the request of access to information and determine access based on the following criteria:

1. **Proactive Disclosure:** the Institute shall upon assessment and determination, disclose information requested in accordance to section 5 of the Access to Information Act (Cap.7M).
2. **Transfer:** where the Institute does not hold the information requested, the Institute shall refer the requestor to that public institution within five (5) days of its receipt.
3. **Decline:** a request for access to information shall be declined where the information sought is exempt under Section 6 of the Access to Information Act.
4. **On-going:** the request for access to information is undergoing the review process.
5. **Abandon:** where a requestor is required to give further information about the request and fails to do so, the Institute shall abandon the request.

3.0. PROACTIVE DISCLOSURE

The Institute shall disclose information in compliance with the provisions of the Access to Information Act, (Cap.7M). The information shall be disclosed or availed for inspection at no cost.

The information includes;

1. Particulars of the Institute, functions and mandate
2. Powers and duties of employees
3. Salary scales of officers by grade
4. Procedure for decision making (Service charter, policies, manuals)
5. Contacts and physical location of the Institute
6. Procurement information (contracts, services contracted)
7. Financial records related to public spending
8. Environmental impact assessments/ research reports
9. Internal procedures and operational guidelines unless classified.

4.0 NON-DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Pursuant to Article 24 of the Constitution, the right of access to information under Article 35 of the Constitution shall be limited in respect of information whose disclosure is likely to;

1. Undermine the national security of the country;
2. Impede the due process of law;
3. Endanger the safety, health or life of any person;
4. Involve the unwarranted invasion of the privacy of an individual, other than the Information Requestor or the person on whose behalf an application has, with proper authority, been made;
5. Substantially prejudice the commercial interests, including intellectual property rights, of that entity or third party from whom information was obtained;
6. Cause substantial harm to the ability of the Government to manage the economy of Kenya;
7. Significantly undermine a public or private entity's ability to give adequate and judicious consideration to a matter concerning which no final decision has been taken and which remains the subject of active consideration;
8. Damage a public entity position in any actual or contemplated legal proceedings;
9. Infringe professional confidentiality as recognized in law or by the rules of a registered association of a profession; or
10. Data on critically endangered species and their ecosystem.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Information Requestor

The Information Requestor shall:

- (a) Provide a clear request in the prescribed form;
- (b) Provide additional information as maybe required by the Institute; and
- (c) Adhere to timelines provided by the Institute.

5.2 The Board

The Board shall:

- (a) Approve the policy.
- (b) Approve the requisite budget for implementation of Access to Information Act, (Cap.7M).

5.3 Director

The Director shall:

- (a) The Director/CEO is the information Access Officer under Access to Information Act (Cap.7M).
- (b) The Director/CEO may delegate the performance of his/her duties as an Information Access Officer to any officer in the Institute.

5.4 Staff of the Institute

The staff shall:

- (a) Ensure adherence to the provisions of this policy.

6.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION APPLICATION PROCESS

1. An application to access information shall be made in writing in English or Kiswahili through a prescribed form (Form A).
2. All Information requests shall be directed to;

The Director/CEO
Wildlife Research and Training Institute
P.O. Box 842-20117,
Naivasha, Kenya.
Email director@wrti.go.ke/wrti@wrti.go.ke

3. Where an Information Requestor is unable to make a written request due to illiteracy or disability, the Institute's Information Access Officer shall take the necessary steps to ensure that the Information Requestor makes the request in a manner that meets his/her needs. The officer shall, on their behalf, fill in the details in the prescribed form (Form A) and then furnish the Information Requestor with a copy of the written request.

7.0 PROCESS OF APPLICATION AND RESPONSE TIMELINES

1. The Institute's Information Access Officer shall make a decision on an application within twenty-one (21) days of receipt of the application.
2. Where the information sought concerns the life or liberty of a person, the Information Access Officer shall provide the information within forty-eight (48) hours of the receipt of the application.
3. The Information Access Officer to whom a request is made may extend the period for response on a single occasion for a period of not more than fourteen (14) days if:
 - (a) The request is for a large amount of information or requires a search through a large amount of information and meeting the stipulated time would unreasonably interfere with the activities of the information holder; or
 - (b) Consultations are necessary so as to comply with the request and the consultations cannot be reasonably completed within the stipulated time.
4. Once the Information Access Officer makes a decision as to whether to provide access to information, he or she shall immediately communicate the decision to the requestor, indicating: whether or not the Institute holds the information sought; whether the request for information is approved.

8.0 TRANSFER OF APPLICATION

The Institute's Information Access Officer shall not later than five days from the date of receipt of an application, transfer the Information Requestor, to another public entity, if the information requested is held by another public entity. In the event that the information requested is confidential in nature, the Information Requestor will be required to sign the confidentiality agreement form.

9.0 PROVISION OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The Institute's Information Access Officer shall send to the Information Requestor a written response within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the request, advising:

- (a) that the request has been granted;
- (b) that the information will be contained in an edited copy, where applicable;
- (c) the details of any fees or further fees to be paid for access, together with the calculations made to arrive at the amount of the fee;
- (d) the method of payment of such fees, if any;
- (e) the proposed process of accessing the information once the payment is made; and
- (f) That an appeal may be made to the commission in respect of the amount of fees required or the form of access proposed to be provided.

10.0 CHARGES

- a) No fee may be levied in relation to the submission of an application to access information that is allowed in the Access to Information Act (Cap.7M).
- b) In case of any fee is to be charged, the Information Requestor shall be informed.

11.0 CORRECTION OF INFORMATION

- a) At the request of the Information Requestor, the Institute shall within reasonable time, at its own expense, correct, update or annotate any personal information held by it relating to the Information Requestor, which is out of date, inaccurate or incomplete.
- b) A request under this section shall be made in writing to the Institute containing the information to be corrected and shall state that it is a request to amend certain personal information relating to the Information Requestor.
- c) Specify the personal information that is to be amended indicating how such information is out of date, inaccurate or incomplete.
- d) Specify the remedy sought by the Information Requestor.

12.0 MANAGEMENT OF RECORDS

The Institute shall keep and maintain:

- i. Records that are accurate, authentic, have integrity and useable; and
- ii. Records in a manner which facilitates the right of access to information.

In order to comply with the duty to keep and maintain records, the Institute shall:

- i. Create and preserve records as are necessary to document its policies, decisions, procedures, transactions and other activities it undertakes pertinent to the implementation of its mandate;
- ii. Ensure that records in its custody, including those held in electronic form, are maintained in good order and condition; and
- iii. Computerize its records and information management systems in order to facilitate more efficient access to information.

13.0 FILLING OF APPEAL WITH CAJ

An Information Requestor has the right to review the decision of the Institute through the Commission on Administrative Justice (CAJ) in relation to:

- (a) a decision refusing to grant access to the information applied for;
- (b) a decision granting access to information in edited form;
- (c) a decision purporting to grant access, but not actually granting the access in accordance with an application;
- (d) a decision to defer providing the access to information;
- (e) a decision to impose a fee or the amount of the fee;
- (f) a decision to remit a prescribed application fee;
- (g) a decision to grant access to information only to a specified person; and
- (h) a decision refusing to correct, update or annotate a record of personal information in accordance with an application made.

CAJ address is as follows

The Commission on Administrative Justice (CAJ)

2nd Floor, West End Towers, Off Waiyaki Way – Westlands

P.O. Box 20414 –00200

NAIROBI.

Tel: +254-20-2270000/2303000/2603765/2441211/8030666

Email: info@ombudsman.go.ke

14.0 REPORTING

- a) The Information Access Officer shall prepare a report and submit quarterly reports to the Commission on Administrative Justice to CAJ within fourteen (14) days at the end of each quarter as per the CAJ reporting framework.
- b) Reports shall be submitted via e-mail in PDF format (CAJ's provided templates) or through the Commission's system. The dedicated e-mail address for submission is certificationpc@ombudsman.go.ke.

15.0 REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed after 3 years.



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FORM A: Access to Information Form



**WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE
ACCESS TO INFORMATION REQUEST FORM**

INFORMATION REQUESTOR

Name.....

Contact details

P.O. Box.....

Tel:

Email address.....

Requested Information

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Does the information concern the life or liberty of a person –YES/NO

If **Yes**, Provide details.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Information Requestor signature

Date

For Official Use:

Received by the Information Access Officer on this.....day of.....20.....