REPUBLIC OF KENYA

WILDLIFE RESEARCH & TRAINING INSTITUTE

Discover Beyond

Annual Report 2025

Coordination | Innovation | Partnership | Sustainability

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Did You Know?

Dolphins have names for each other

Dolphins develop unique signature whistles that function like personal names. They use these whistles to call specific individuals.

Cheetahs don't roar

Unlike lions and leopards, cheetahs can't roar? Instead, they chirp, purr, and even make bird-like calls — especially between mothers and cubs.

Ants don't have lungs

Ants breathe through tiny holes along their bodies called spiracles. Oxygen diffuses directly to their tissues — no lungs needed.

Elephants "listen" with their feet

Elephants can detect distant thunderstorms and other elephant calls through vibrations in the ground? Special sensory cells in their feet pick up low-frequency rumbles that travel for kilometers.

Owls have built-in "night vision goggles"

An owl's eyes are so large that they can't move in their sockets. Instead, they rotate their heads up to 270 degrees to scan their surroundings in near total darkness.

Contents

The Institute at a Glance

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

WILDLIFE RESEARCH & TRAINING INSTITUTE
Discover Beyond

Who We Are

We are Kenya's national hub for wildlife research and conservation training—the place where science is tested and results meets policy, where students become professionals, and where evidence shapes how Kenya manages its most valuable natural asset: wildlife that drives billions in tourism revenue and anchors ecosystem services millions depend on.

Established as a State Corporation under the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, we coordinate research across fragmented institutions, translate findings into actionable intelligence for policymakers, and train the professionals who'll manage Kenya's conservation economy for the next decades.

Think of us as: The bridge where wildlife data becomes national strategy, where academic training produces job-ready conservationists, and where Kenya's biodiversity gets the scientific backbone it deserves.

The Institute has five field centres. Centre for Southern Savannah Landscapes with headquarters in Tsavo East National Park; Centre for Northern Savannah Landscapes with headquarters in Meru National Park; Centre for Montane and Forests with headquarters in Nyeri; Centre for Coastal and Marine with the headquarters in Malindi and Centre for Inland Waters and Wetlands with the headquarters in Naivasha.

What We Teach

Our academic programmes produce professionals with competencies that conservation actually requires.

Diploma Programmes

- Wildlife Conservation and Management — For graduates managing protected areas, community conservancies, and conflict mitigation where humans and wildlife compete for space
- Tourism and Hospitality Management — Training the workforce that converts wildlife into revenue sustaining conservation
- Fisheries and Aquaculture — Developing expertise in aquatic resource management and sustainable food production
- Environmental and Natural Resources Management Producing professionals who integrate ecological, economic, and community priorities

Certificate Programmes

- Community Wildlife Management — Equipping community conservancy leaders with tools to manage wildlife as economic asset
- Nature Interpretation and Tour Administration — Training guides and operators who translate ecosystems into experiences that educate and inspire
- Aquaculture — Building capacity for sustainable fish farming and aquatic resource development

Short Professional Courses

Year-round training for working professionals needing specific competencies—from GPS tracking to conflict resolution, from data analysis to ecosystem planning.

The difference? Our graduates don't just understand conservation theory. They can operate the digital systems tourism enterprises need, interpret the data county planners require, and implement the interventions communities will actually support.

Eco-tourism activities

We offer tourism activities at Naivasha Wildlife Sanctuary, where visitors can enjoy biking, cycling, hiking, guided nature walks, and camping within a secure wildlife setting. At Hippo campsite, visitors can enjoy camping and scenic boat rides at Lake Naivasha.

We provide fully equipped conference facilities for meetings, workshops, and seminars. We also have fully furnished guest houses and rooms for residential stays.

We offer a swimming pool, open grounds for skating, and designated areas for camping.

“The Board acknowledges the dedication of management and staff, whose professionalism and commitment underpin the Institute’s achievements.”

Message From The Board Chair

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present the Institute’s Annual Report for the year 2025.

This reporting period reflects a year of consolidation, growth, and increasing institutional visibility, as the Institute continued to anchor science, skills, and innovation at the centre of Kenya’s wildlife conservation and sustainable development agenda.

The year under review was marked by the Institute’s deepened commitment to evidence-based decision-making. Through nationally significant research outputs, including the National Wildlife Census and applied landscape, species, and ecosystem studies, the Institute strengthened the interface between science, policy, and practice. These efforts provided decision-makers with credible data to guide conservation planning, land-use management, and sustainable development interventions at both national and county levels.

Equally important was the Institute’s growing role in capacity development. The rollout of demand-driven training programmes, professional short courses, and specialised interventions in wildlife health, conservation management, and applied research continued to build a skilled workforce capable of responding to emerging conservation challenges. This dual mandate of research and training remains central to the Institute’s value proposition and long-term impact.

At the regional and global levels, the Institute continued to position Kenya as a credible contributor to international conservation discourse. Participation in multilateral processes and technical platforms enhanced institutional learning, strengthened partnerships, and ensured that national experiences inform global policy development.

The Board acknowledges the dedication of management and staff, whose professionalism and commitment underpin the Institute’s achievements. We also appreciate the continued support of the Government of Kenya, strategic partners, collaborating institutions, and stakeholders who have enabled the Institute to fulfil its mandate.

As we look ahead, the Board remains committed to strengthening governance, supporting institutional innovation, and ensuring that the Institute continues to deliver science-driven solutions that safeguard Kenya’s wildlife heritage while contributing to socio-economic development.

Dr. David Nkedianye
Chairman of the Board

From The CEO's Desk

Positioning Science and Skills at the Centre of Kenya's Wildlife Future

Kenya's wildlife is a strategic national asset. Its future will be secured by deliberate intent and by institutions capable of generating authoritative evidence, developing skilled professionals, and shaping policy through credible science. In 2025, the Institute made such deliberate investments to strengthen this role.

The release of the Second National Wildlife Census by His Excellency President William Ruto in December was momentous and significant commitment for conservation planning in Kenya. Covering all conservation areas between June 2024 and August 2025, the Census provides the empirical foundation for national decision-making on wildlife and habitats. This is research as strategic infrastructure—essential for informed policy, effective management, and long-term sustainability.

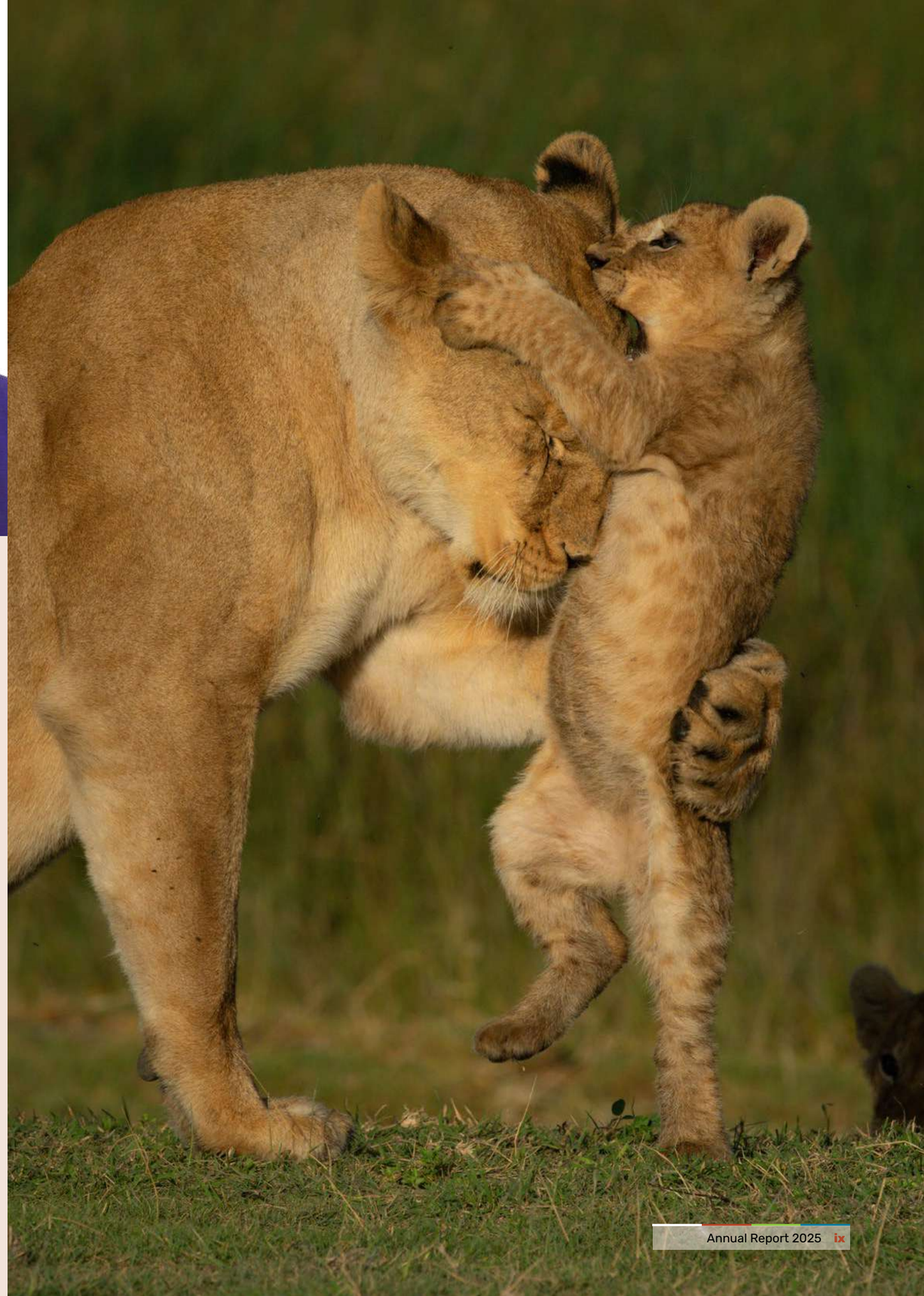
That same commitment informed the expansion of our research and training footprint. The commissioning of centres in Maasai Mara and Malindi by Cabinet Secretary Hon. Rebecca Miano re-positions research within priority ecosystems, strengthening coordination, stakeholder engagement, and applied conservation where it matters most.

Equally core to Kenya's wildlife future is the quality of its conservation workforce. The implementation of the Competency-based Education & Training (CBET-aligned Level 6 curriculum) marked a shift from content delivery to competency development. Graduates now enter the field equipped to conduct research, manage data, engage communities, and create value within the wildlife economy.

Positioning science and skills for impact also requires sharing information among peers, policy formulators and conservation practioners. The Second International Wildlife Scientific Conference, opened by the Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service Hon. Felix Koskei, reinforced the Institute's role at the intersection of research and cross-sector transformations. We witnessed lively and innovative insights into how to address endemic and emerging challenges, and interestingly how to bridge science and policy for significant impact. The future of our wildlife depends on the quality of today's decisions. Those decisions will only be as strong as the science that informs them and the professionals who implement them. Positioning science and skills at the centre of that future is our mandate. With this inspiration, we enter 2026 with great ambition!

Dr. Patrick Omondi, OGW
Director/CEO

> "The future of our wildlife depends on the quality of today's decisions. Those decisions will only be as strong as the science that informs them and the professionals who implement them."



Board Members Profile

Dr. David Nkedianye

Chair of the Board of the Institute

Sylvia Museiya

Principal Secretary, State Department for Wildlife

Dr. Patrick Omondi

Director/CEO and Secretary to the Board of the Institute

Dr. Roselida Owuor

Representative of Principal Secretary, State Department for Science, Research and Innovation

Dr. Albert Longora

Independent Member, Representing Institutions of Higher Learning

Dr. Yusuf Wato

Independent Member Representing Institutions of Higher Learning

Mr. Francis Nkoitoi

Independent Member Representing Communities and Privately Managed Wildlife Areas

Mr. Daniel Letoiye

Independent Member Representing Communities and Privately Managed Wildlife Areas

Mr. Henry Ongicho

Independent Member Representing Persons Qualified and Competent in Wildlife, Natural Resources Management, Biodiveristy and Environmental Economics or Related Disciplines

Ms. Noreen Wambui Kanyua

Representative, Inspectorate of State Corporations

The Year In Highlight

National Wildlife Census

A National Evidence Base

- Comprehensive count of wildlife populations and habitats across all conservation areas
- Provides authoritative data to guide conservation policy and management
- Released by H.E. President William Samoei Ruto

Science–Policy Dialogue

From Research to Decision-Making

- Second International Wildlife Scientific Conference hosted in Kenya
- Convened scientists, practitioners, and policymakers
- Translated research findings into policy-relevant recommendations
- Opened by the Head of Public Service, Hon. Felix Koskei

Research in Priority Ecosystems

Science Where It Matters Most

1. Maasai Mara Research Centre
   - Supports long-term research and conservation planning
   - Strengthens coordination across the Greater Mara ecosystem
2. Partnership with Narok County Government, including a wildlife data portal
   - Coastal & Marine Research and Training Centre – Malindi
   - Expands capacity for coastal and marine research
   - Supports science-based solutions for fragile ecosystems

Skills for the Wildlife Economy

From Training to Practice

- First-ever hosting of the Interventions in Wild Animal Health (IWAH) course in Africa: builds applied skills to address wildlife health and human–wildlife conflict
- Rollout of CBET ensures graduates are job-ready and industry-relevant

Strategic Partnerships

Extending Institutional Impact

- Tsavo Simba Research Project with University of Minnesota & Macalester College, USA
- Combines international expertise with local knowledge
- Builds national research capacity in large carnivore ecology
- County-level collaboration strengthens landscape-scale conservation

Beyond Space and Time

National Wildlife Census 2025

> “... the Census represents the most comprehensive wildlife assessment ever conducted across Kenya’s conservation landscapes.”

What the Numbers Tell Us—and What They Demand

When President William Ruto released the National Wildlife Census results on Jamhuri Day 2025, the numbers revealed two realities: significant gains in elephant and rhino populations—and alarming declines in some species that may be lost entirely.

Led by the Institute between June 2024 and August 2025 in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, the State Department for Wildlife, Kenya Wildlife Service, and other stakeholders, the Census represents the most comprehensive wildlife assessment ever conducted across Kenya’s conservation landscapes. It establishes, for the first time, a complete national picture of wildlife populations, habitat conditions, and emerging threats.

Kenya’s wildlife sustains a multi-billion-shilling tourism economy, anchors thousands of livelihoods, defines national identity, and maintains the ecological systems that regulate water, climate, and soil fertility. Yet for years, critical decisions about where to build infrastructure, how to allocate land, and where to invest in conservation have proceeded without knowing exactly what wildlife populations exist, where they move, or how quickly they are changing. The Census addresses that gap with nationally authoritative data.

42,072 ↑

Elephants — nearly 6,000 more than in 2021

2,102 ↑

Black & White Rhinos — up from 1,812 in four years

43,002 ↑

Giraffes across varied ecosystems

> “Census findings inform climate adaptation strategies, guide tourism investment, and enable land-use planning that optimizes economic productivity while protecting ecological function.”

Aligning Conservation with Economic Transformation

The Census findings directly support the Government’s Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). Wildlife-based tourism generates substantial revenue and employment across rural economies. Effective wildlife management—grounded in credible population data—strengthens the sector’s contribution to economic growth and foreign exchange earnings.

The Census also provides county governments with spatial intelligence to integrate wildlife corridors into development planning, enabling infrastructure investment and agricultural expansion that minimize conflict while maintaining ecosystem services essential for climate resilience and long-term productivity.

Where Decades of Effort Are Paying Off

The Census confirmed what sustained conservation investment can achieve. Elephant populations climbed to 42,072—nearly 6,000 more than in 2021. After decades of poaching pressure that nearly drove them to extinction, black and white rhinoceros populations now stand at 2,102, up from 1,812 four years ago. Giraffe numbers reached 43,002 across varied ecosystems.

These gains represent the cumulative result of anti-poaching patrols, community conservancy expansion, ranger training, and political commitment to wildlife protection. They demonstrate that when Kenya dedicates resources and resolve to conservation, populations recover—and with them, the tourism economy that depends on wildlife abundance.

Where Kenya Is Losing Ground

The Census also recorded losses that demand immediate attention.

Across 11 major wetlands, waterbird populations have collapsed by 80 per cent. Once-thriving freshwater ecosystems are under severe stress from habitat degradation, water extraction, and climate pressure. Rangeland buffalo declined from 41,659 to 27,389 in just four years—a signal that grassland systems supporting entire food webs are deteriorating.

Large carnivores remain dangerously vulnerable. Kenya now has 2,512 lions, 605 cheetahs, and 310 wild dogs spread across the entire country. For context, a single severe drought, disease outbreak, or land-use decision in a key habitat could destabilize these populations within years.

For some species, the margin between survival and extinction has become alarmingly thin. Kenya has 405 hirola remaining. Just 176 mountain bongo. 40 sable antelope. 21 roan antelope.

Several plains game species showed concerning declines, driven by habitat fragmentation, blocked migration routes, climate variability, and human-wildlife conflict that continues to intensify as land-use pressure grows.

Why These Numbers Carry Weight

Wildlife population data determines which species receive protection funding, which corridors are legally safeguarded before development forecloses them, and how county governments plan infrastructure that will shape landscapes for generations. Census findings inform climate adaptation strategies, guide tourism investment, and enable land-use planning that optimizes economic productivity while protecting ecological function.

> “Wildlife corridor data must be integrated into county spatial planning frameworks now, before incompatible development eliminates movement routes that species depend on for survival.”

Decisions made without accurate data waste resources, miss opportunities to prevent irreversible losses, and allow population crashes to accelerate unnoticed until recovery becomes impossible.

What the Evidence Demands

The Census results identify clear national priorities. Wildlife corridor data must be integrated into county spatial planning frameworks now, before incompatible development eliminates movement routes that species depend on for survival. Priority corridors identified by the Census require immediate legal protection and coordinated management across jurisdictions.

Declining plains game populations need targeted recovery strategies, not just monitoring. Wetland restoration must become urgent, given the scale of waterbird collapse and their role in water security. Species hanging on by single-digit or double-digit populations require intensive intervention.

The report recommends conducting a national wildlife census every three years to keep conservation policy aligned with rapidly changing environmental conditions. Waiting five or ten years between assessments allows crises to develop invisibly until options for response have already narrowed.

Establishing a national repository for wildlife genetic resources will strengthen Kenya’s capacity for long-term species management, conservation breeding, and research innovation—particularly for species approaching critical thresholds.

Choices with Consequences

Where the next county development plan routes a highway. Whether an identified wildlife corridor receives protection or gets subdivided for agriculture. Which ecosystems attract restoration funding. How human-wildlife conflict is addressed in high-pressure zones. These decisions, made across national government, county administrations, conservation institutions, and communities, will determine what wildlife future Kenya’s

children inherit—and what economic opportunities the tourism sector can sustain.

The National Wildlife Census 2025 provides the evidence those decisions require. Whether Kenya acts on that evidence with the urgency the numbers demand will define both conservation outcomes and economic resilience for decades.

Key Species in Numbers

405

Hirola

605

Cheetahs

310

Wild Dogs

27,389

Cape Bufalloes

40

Sable Antelopes

The highlighted figures show population counts for five selected species from the National Wildlife Census 2024/2025 Technical Report. The full report includes data on many additional species.

Strategic Recommendations From the Census

- Integrate wildlife ecosystem plans into county spatial and physical development planning
- Secure and protect identified priority wildlife corridors
- Conduct a national wildlife census every three years in line with ecological cycles
- Address declining plains game populations through targeted recovery strategies
- Establish a national repository for wildlife genetic resources

Full report: www.wrti.go.ke

International Wildlife Scientific Conference: Translating Evidence Into Conservation Action

> “The Conference reinforced conservation as an economic and social development imperative, consistent with Kenya’s Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).”

1,200+

Participants across five continents

In fulfilment of its mandate to generate knowledge, build capacity, and disseminate scientific evidence to stakeholders, the Institute convened the 2nd International Wildlife Scientific Conference in September 2025.

The conference was deliberately structured as a research engagement platform—bringing together established experts and emerging scientists, researchers and practitioners, policymakers, industry actors, and private-sector partners—to interrogate key research findings, innovations, challenges, business models, and financing opportunities shaping contemporary conservation.

The Institute regards this convening role as the fuel that enliven its mandate. It invested significant resources in collaboration with partners, to ensure diversity in skills, experience, discipline, culture, and sectors were present and represented, and that engagments were meaningful, to generate susbstantial recommendations.

Held under the theme “Innovations in Wildlife Science and Practice for Sustainable Biodiversity Conservation and Socio-economic Development,” the conference aligned scientific discourse with national development priorities and global conservation agendas. It reinforced conservation as an economic and social development imperative, consistent with Kenya’s Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

The conference convened over 1,200 participants from across Africa, Europe, Asia, North America, and Australia, enabling cross-regional comparison, interdisciplinary exchange, and collaboration across ecosystems and governance contexts.

Scientific deliberations were structured around nine thematic areas, including wildlife health, climate change, aquatic ecosystems, policy and governance, technology and innovation, and combating illegal wildlife trade. Through keynote sessions, symposia, and technical presentations, participants examined escalating pressures on wildlife—habitat fragmentation, climate change, infrastructure expansion, poaching, zoonotic diseases, and complex human–wildlife interactions.

Across these discussions, the conference crystallised **three unifying challenges** identified as momentous threats to conservation gains and requiring concerted, multi-sectoral responses:

- **Landscape connectivity,** critical to ecological resilience;
- **Human–wildlife coexistence,** essential for social legitimacy and sustainability; and
- **The wildlife economy,** central to linking conservation outcomes with livelihoods and national development.

These challenges now form a strategic organising framework for the Institute’s post-conference engagement.

> “... the Institute will actively pursue strategic partnerships aligned to mitigating the three unifying challenges—mobilising research, training, innovation, and investment around shared priorities.”

The conference generated 23 key messages and a set of actionable recommendations, including:

- strengthening science-to-policy communication,
- securing wildlife corridors,
- operationalising national wildlife data systems,
- institutionalising One Health approaches, and
- expanding applied training in emerging conservation technologies.

Beyond these recommendations, the Institute will actively pursue strategic partnerships aligned to mitigating the three unifying challenges—mobilising research, training, innovation, and investment around shared priorities.

Beyond the Plenary: Science in Practice

An accompanying exhibition showcased applied research, technologies, and conservation solutions, reinforcing the conference as a platform for collaboration rather than a standalone academic event. Direct engagement among scientists, decision-makers, and implementers catalysed new partnerships and strengthened pathways from data generation to decision-making.

Strategic Value

By convening evidence, policy, and practice around clearly defined conservation challenges, the conference strengthened the Institute’s role as a national and regional hub for wildlife science, strategic dialogue, and partnership building—ensuring that research informs the decisions and investments shaping the future of conservation and socio-economic development.

Expansion for Resilience

Safeguarding the Greater Mara–Serengeti Ecosystem Through Science

Few landscapes on Earth carry the ecological, economic, and symbolic weight of the Greater Mara–Serengeti ecosystem. As one of the planet's last intact large-mammal migration systems, its survival depends on precision, vigilance, and leadership.

> "The goal is to provide integrated data that supports protected area planning and wildlife management.

The commissioning of the Maasai Mara Research Centre on 28 February 2025 marked a significant re-positiong in how Kenya safeguards this global conservation asset. Presided over by the Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife, Hon. Rebecca Miano, alongside the Principal Secretary for Wildlife, Ms. Silvia Museiya, and the Governor of Narok County, H.E. Patrick Ole Ntutu, the moment signalled a clear message: **the future of the Mara will be guided by science, strategic leadership and community dialogue**

The purpose of the commissioning was threefold - enhance research capacity and leadership; entrench collaboration and coordination and

enhance research and community knowldege,

The goal is to provide integrated data that supports protected area planning and wildlife management. In the Maasai Mara, researchers are working closely with local communities, conservancies, and Narok county to integrate indigenous knowledge with scientific research to improve conservation outcomes.

Soon after the commissioning in December, the center begun its coordinating work by coordianting the Mara- Ecosystem Research Symposium. The participants included Kenya Wildlife Service, County Government of Narok, Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association (MMWCA), Conservation organizations, academic and research institutions.

Discussions centred on; Integration of ongoing research and monitoring data into coordinated, ecosystem-wide information systems; Identification, mapping, and protection of critical wildlife corridors and dispersal areas; Enhanced cross-border research and monitoring collaboration within the Greater Mara–Serengeti ecosystem.

Coastal and Marine Research and Training Centre: Harmonizing Science and the Blue Economy

Kenya's coastal and marine ecosystems are unparalleled economic engine, supporting tourism, fisheries, climate resilience, and globally unique biodiversity.

Ensuring their sustainable management requires timely, coordinated, and evidence-based decision-making across multiple agencies and communities.

The commissioning of the Coastal and Marine Research and Training Centre in Malindi in November 2025, presided over by Cabinet Secretary Hon. Rebecca Miano, alongside Principal Secretary Silvia Museiya, Board Chair Dr. David Nkedianye, and Malindi MP Hon. Mnyazi Amina Laura signals a new beggining of Instituionalizing conservation research and data that is within reach to policy and decisions regarding conservation and utilization of these ecosystem resources.

Beyond advanced research on coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds, marine mammals, and endangered species, the Centre's strategic mandate is to harmonize data, coordinate research among institutions, and translate science into actionable insights in pertnership with stakeholders.

By combining rigorous research with indigenous ecological knowledge, the Centre is poised to host ecosystem-wide intelligence that informs spatial planning, resource management, and climate adaptation strategies.

The Centre also will be focused on building capacity for resilience, by training scientists, officers, conservancy managers, and community leaders to interpret evidence, design interventions, and implement adaptive management.

> "... the Centre is poised to host ecosystem-wide intelligence that informs spatial planning, resource management, and climate adaptation strategies."

Intelligence for Co-existence

Tsavo Lions: Translating Behavior Into Conservation Strategy

Lions are the most attractive large predators of the Savanna. Many tourists and photographers have observed their hunting, walking and often-lazy mid-day naps. Little is known of their other lives, beyond the hand cameras, behind the bushes, and interstengly their night-life.

The Institute in collaboration with University of Minnesota, initated a bold research that aims to gather intelligence about these Tsavo predators, and to use those intelligence to inform their conservation and co-exisstence options.

By combining GPS-satellite collars with intensive ground-based behavioral observations, the project captures real-time spatial movements, social interactions, feeding behavior, mating, and denning patterns. Each collared lion provides hourly location data, while field teams document hundreds of hours of direct observations, creating a robust, multi-dimensional dataset that illuminates both individual and pride-level dynamics.

Some of the early, and amazing findings, reveal that female prides can traverse nearly 300 square kilometers, while male coalitions cover more than 600 square kilometers—challenging assumptions of fixed territories and highlighting extensive overlap between neighboring groups. These patterns underscore the importance of ecosystem-wide planning, including wildlife corridors, protected habitat designation, and conflict mitigation strategies with communities living adjacent to lion ranges.

Within this broader dataset, individual case studies provide critical behavioral insights. For instance, a lioness, Malkia, demonstrates the strategic decision-making required for survival and reproduction in the wild. She selected a remote, inaccessible den atop a hillock, balancing

INTELLIGENCE FOR CO-EXISTENCE

> **By connecting individual behaviors with ecosystem-level patterns, the research informs habitat protection, land-use planning, and corridor design, while providing evidence for policies that safeguard biodiversity and maintain ecosystem integrity.”**

safety with access to prey. During periods of scarcity, she temporarily left her cubs to hunt, ensuring their survival. Notably, this den has been reused by other lionesses, suggesting the transfer of spatial knowledge across generations, a previously underappreciated mechanism for population resilience. Observations such as these allow conservationists to identify critical breeding refuges, prioritize protection measures, and understand the ecological drivers of survival.

The Tsavo Simba Project exemplifies innovative research integration. Satellite collars provide continuous monitoring, while direct field observation validates behavioral patterns and captures subtle interactions invisible to remote sensors. This synergy produces high-quality evidence that is directly translatable into conservation action. Spatial intelligence from GPS data informs habitat management, predicts potential human-wildlife conflict zones, and supports adaptive interventions that promote coexistence.

Ultimately, the project moves beyond documenting lion behavior to transforming knowledge into strategic solutions. By connecting individual behaviors with ecosystem-level patterns, the research informs habitat protection, land-use planning, and corridor design, while providing evidence for policies that safeguard biodiversity and maintain ecosystem integrity.

Through sustained, field-based monitoring and analysis, the Tsavo Simba Research Project strengthens Kenya’s capacity to manage iconic wildlife species, ensuring that conservation decisions are grounded in empirical evidence, responsive to ecological realities, and aligned with long-term sustainability goals.

When Research Reveals Crisis: Protecting Tsavo's Remaining Big Tuskers

> **By aligning long-term monitoring with research insights, the Institute ensures that elephant conservation is guided by evidence, measured through outcomes, and responsive to the risks its own science has identified."**

In 2015, Institute's researchers published an article in *Ecology and Evolution* documenting a critical shift in tusk size of African elephants: *illegal ivory harvest was driving a measurable decline in tusk size.*

The findings showed that poaching was exerting selective pressure on elephant populations, disproportionately removing large-tusked individuals and reducing the prevalence of genetic traits associated with large ivory.

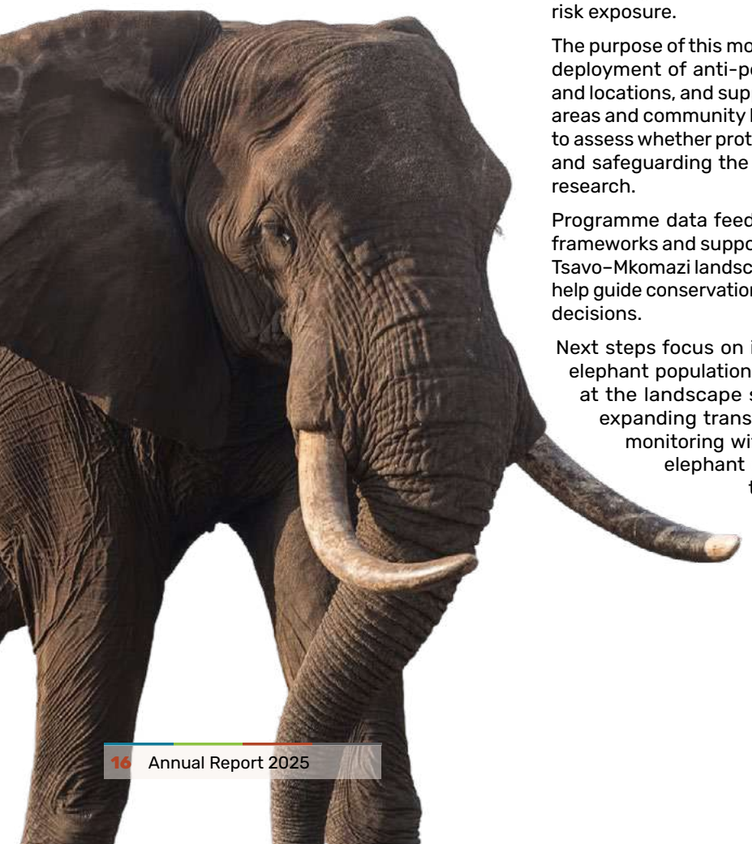
This evidence reframed the conservation challenge. The loss of big tuskers was not only a population concern, but a genetic and ecological one, with long-term implications for elephant resilience and ecosystem function. The study established a clear institutional priority: safeguarding remaining large-tusked elephants required targeted, intelligence-led intervention.

Building on these findings, the Institute partnered with Tsavo Trust and Kenya Wildlife Service to support a structured big tusker monitoring programme within the Tsavo Conservation Area, Kenya's most important refuge for these elephants. Selected individuals are monitored through GPS tracking, ranger-based surveillance, and health assessments, generating continuous data on movement patterns, habitat use, and risk exposure.

The purpose of this monitoring is strategic. Movement data informs the deployment of anti-poaching resources, identifies high-risk periods and locations, and supports landscape-level planning across protected areas and community lands. Long-term monitoring allows the Institute to assess whether protection efforts are stabilising population structure and safeguarding the genetic traits identified as vulnerable in earlier research.

Programme data feeds directly into national elephant management frameworks and supports cross-border coordination within the greater Tsavo–Mkomazi landscape. Trends emerging from monitored individuals help guide conservation investment priorities and adaptive management decisions.

Next steps focus on integrating big tusker monitoring with broader elephant population surveys to assess recovery of large-tusk traits at the landscape scale, strengthening analytical capacity, and expanding transboundary data sharing. By aligning long-term monitoring with research insights, the Institute ensures that elephant conservation is guided by evidence, measured through outcomes, and responsive to the risks its own science has identified.



Designs for Co-Existence: Using Research to Safeguard Raptors in a Developing Landscape

> **Beyond Kipeto, the programme advances the Institute's broader mandate to generate standards for wildlife-sensitive infrastructure planning."**

As Kenya accelerates its transition to renewable energy, wind power is reshaping high-altitude landscapes that are also critical airspace for vultures and other large raptors.

Ensuring that energy infrastructure expands without increasing wildlife mortality requires evidence-based planning informed by real flight behaviour, not assumptions.

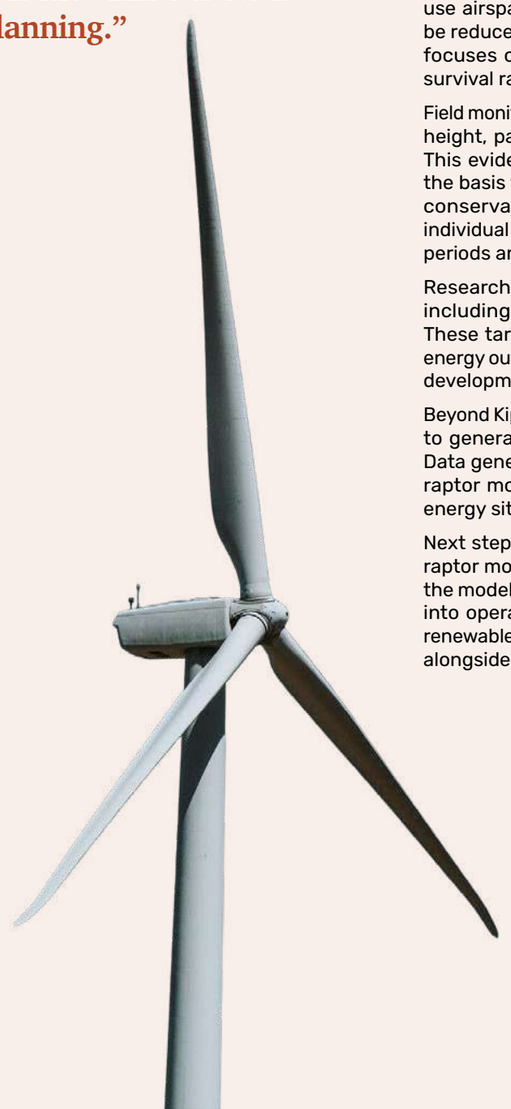
Through a Framework of Collaboration with Kipeto Energy PLC, the Institute is implementing applied research to understand how raptors use airspace around wind energy facilities and how collision risk can be reduced without compromising energy generation. The programme focuses on quantifying flight height, seasonal movement patterns, survival rates, and responses to turbines across the Kipeto landscape.

Field monitoring shows that vultures regularly pass through turbine-sweep height, particularly during specific weather and seasonal conditions. This evidence allows risk to be predicted, not inferred, and provides the basis for operational decisions. Satellite tracking, undertaken with conservation partners, complements ground surveys by mapping individual movement patterns over large distances, identifying high-risk periods and informing adaptive management.

Research findings are translated directly into mitigation measures, including temporary turbine shutdowns during peak risk windows. These targeted interventions reduce collision risk while maintaining energy output, demonstrating that wildlife protection and infrastructure development can be jointly managed through science.

Beyond Kipeto, the programme advances the Institute's broader mandate to generate standards for wildlife-sensitive infrastructure planning. Data generated through this work contributes to national guidance on raptor monitoring, environmental impact mitigation, and renewable energy siting.

Next steps focus on strengthening long-term monitoring, integrating raptor movement data into national planning frameworks, and scaling the model to other wind energy developments. By embedding research into operational decision-making, the Institute ensures that Kenya's renewable energy future is shaped by evidence that protects biodiversity alongside development.



Roads and Wildlife: Turning Data Into Smarter Infrastructure Planning

Kenya's expanding road and rail networks are central to economic growth and regional connectivity.

Yet infrastructure can fragment habitats, disrupt wildlife movement, and threaten biodiversity, particularly in key landscapes like Tsavo. The Institute is leading research that ensures development decisions are grounded in science.

A recent study published in Scientific Reports—Influence of infrastructure, ecology, and underpass dimensions on multi-year use of Standard Gauge Railway underpasses by mammals in Tsavo, Kenya—quantified how species interact with rail underpasses over multiple years. Findings show that while predators such as hyenas and leopards use crossings extensively, herbivores like giraffes and antelopes underutilize them, underscoring the critical influence of underpass design and landscape context on wildlife movement.

These insights translate into actionable intelligence. Data-driven recommendations inform the placement, dimensions, and orientation of underpasses, fences, and signage to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. Seasonal and spatial movement patterns allow planners to anticipate high-risk periods, enhancing mitigation effectiveness. Continuous monitoring ensures adaptive management as both infrastructure and animal behavior evolve.

The research extends beyond conservation. Integrating ecological intelligence into transport planning safeguards ecosystem services that support agriculture, tourism, and community livelihoods.

It also informs national policy, contributing evidence for cross-sectoral coordination between infrastructure, environment, and wildlife agencies. At the regional level, the approach offers a model for harmonizing infrastructure and conservation planning across the East African Community.

By combining rigorous field research, multi-year monitoring, and applied policy translation, the Institute demonstrates that infrastructure can coexist with wildlife while supporting sustainable development. Roads and railways, guided by science, become instruments of smarter, more resilient growth—balancing mobility, economic priorities, and ecological integrity.

> “By combining rigorous field research, multi-year monitoring, and applied policy translation, the Institute demonstrates that infrastructure can coexist with wildlife while supporting sustainable development.”

Tracking the Marine Mammals

Marine megafauna — including dolphins, whales, dugongs and sea turtles — play a critical role in maintaining the balance of the country's coastal and marine ecosystems.

As top predators, grazers, and nutrient recyclers, they regulate food webs, control algal growth on coral reefs, and enhance ecosystem resilience. Their presence is therefore a direct indicator of ocean health and the sustainability of coastal livelihoods.

Aerial marine surveys conducted by the Institute across Kenya's maritime domain reveal clear seasonal shifts in the distribution of these species, driven by monsoon-influenced oceanographic changes.

During the South-East Monsoon, nutrient-rich upwellings increase plankton productivity, supporting higher concentrations of marine mammals and seabirds, particularly in Ungwana Bay and Lamu waters. The Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin emerged as the most consistently observed species, reflecting its ecological adaptability and role as a mid-level predator that helps structure marine food webs.

Large whales — including humpback, sperm, Bryde's, and killer whales — were recorded in productive offshore waters, demonstrating the importance of Kenyan seas as feeding and migratory habitat within the Western Indian Ocean. These species contribute to nutrient cycling through the "whale pump," redistributing nutrients that stimulate marine productivity.

Dugongs, however, were recorded in low numbers and remain the most threatened marine mammal observed. As specialist grazers of seagrass, dugongs maintain healthy seagrass meadows that support fisheries, store carbon, and protect shorelines. Their dependence on shallow coastal habitats makes them highly vulnerable to gillnet bycatch and habitat degradation from destructive fishing practices.

Sea turtles were widely distributed within the 20-metre depth zone, closely associated with seagrass beds and coral reefs. Green turtles — the dominant species — function as key herbivores, preventing algal overgrowth that can smother corals. Higher sightings near Marine Protected Areas highlight the conservation value of these zones.

Human activity, particularly fishing, remains the most significant pressure across habitats critical to turtles and dugongs. The overlap between productive fishing grounds and megafauna foraging areas underscores the need for spatial planning that supports both biodiversity and community livelihoods.

These findings strengthen the scientific basis for marine spatial planning, protected area management, and sustainable Blue Economy development.

Continued seasonal surveys are essential for tracking migration trends, identifying critical habitats, and ensuring Kenya's ocean development pathway safeguards the species that keep marine ecosystems and coastal communities thriving.

> “The overlap between productive fishing grounds and megafauna foraging areas underscores the need for spatial planning that supports both biodiversity and community livelihoods.”

Conserving with Communities

> By combining research, design, and co-created enterprise, the project exemplifies how science-driven innovation can translate into sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem protection. ”

Along River Mwachema, coastal communities have long relied on fishing and seasonal tourism, but climate change, environmental degradation, and limited livelihood options have strained these traditional ways of life.

Recognizing both the ecological and socio-economic challenges, the Institute partnered with the UNEP/SAPPHIRE Project to co-create a community-led conservation and enterprise model.

Research played a central role from the outset. The Institute assessed local ecosystems, mapped mangrove coverage, documented bird and wildlife patterns, and studied seasonal river dynamics to ensure any intervention would be ecologically viable.

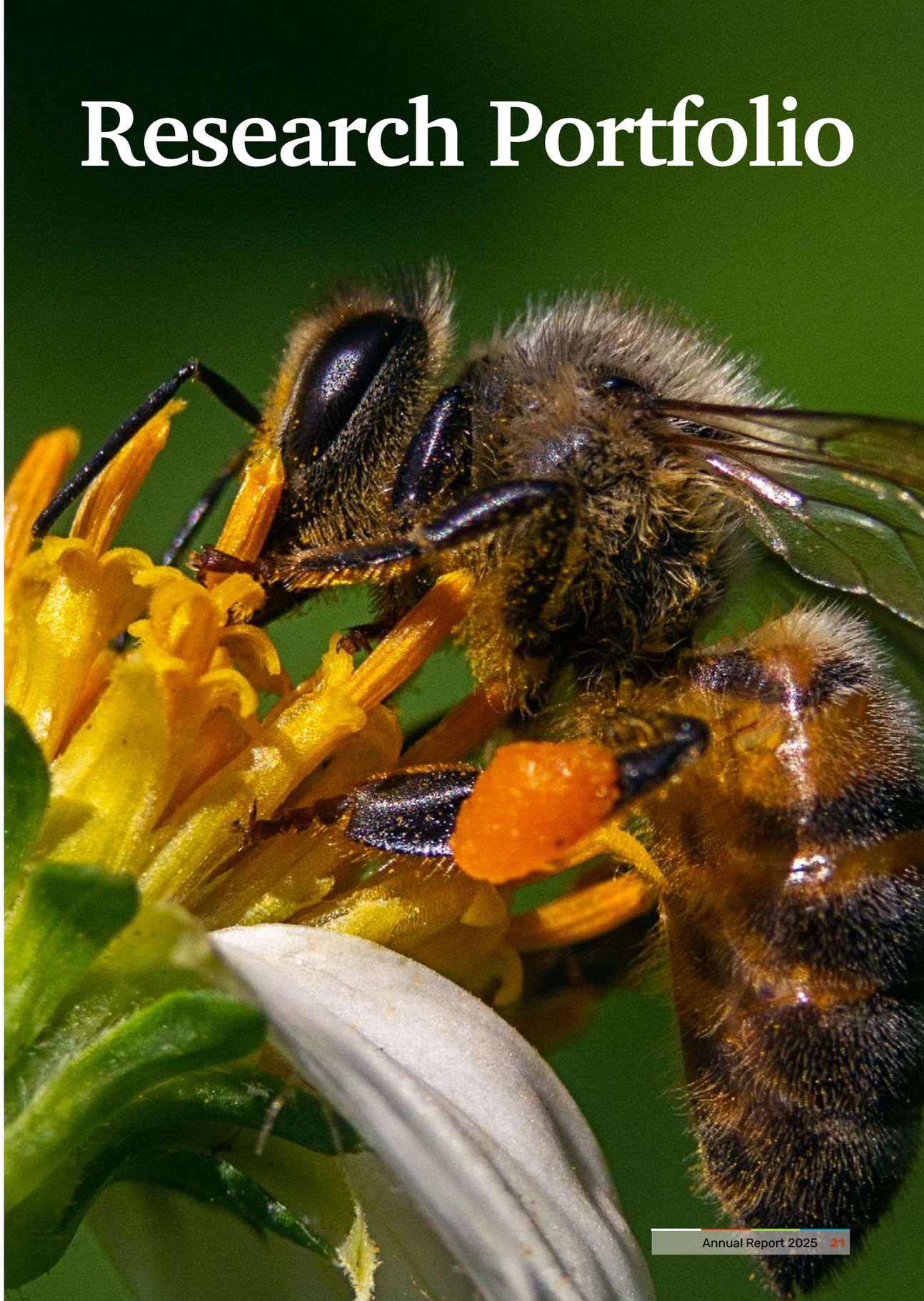
This evidence guided the design of the Mwachema EcoBoat—an innovative, shallow-draft vessel tailored for mangrove waterways, minimizing disturbance while maximizing access for eco-tourism and environmental education.

The project’s co-creation approach ensured that community knowledge shaped every stage: routes, interpretation, and activities were planned with local fishers, guides, and elders. The Institute provided technical oversight, safety verification, and capacity-building, integrating research with hands-on training in navigation, conservation interpretation, and enterprise management.

The results demonstrate measurable impact. The EcoBoat now supports guided river tours, birdwatching, and conservation education, diversifying income sources for local families. It strengthens community stewardship of mangroves and riverine wildlife while providing youth with employment as guides and environmental monitors. Importantly, the initiative builds adaptive capacity: residents gain skills, ecological awareness, and enterprise experience that enhance resilience to environmental and economic pressures.

By combining research, design, and co-created enterprise, the project exemplifies how science-driven innovation can translate into sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem protection. The Mwachema EcoBoat is more than a vessel—it is a proof point that resilient communities emerge when local knowledge, evidence-based planning, and nature-aligned design converge.

Research Portfolio



Publications Shaping Kenya's Wildlife Future

In 2025, the Institute's research advanced knowledge that directly shapes conservation policy, wildlife management, and ecosystem stewardship across Kenya and beyond. From terrestrial landscapes to coastal reefs, our scientists tackled challenges ranging from human–wildlife conflict to emerging zoonotic threats, producing evidence that informs decisions, builds capacity, and positions Kenya as a leader in global conservation science.

Publication Themes

Human–Wildlife Coexistence & Landscape Pressures

Research informing conflict mitigation, land-use planning, and infrastructure decisions

Johansson, Tino; **Munyao, Martha;** Pellikka, Petri K. E.; Äärilä, Sakari**; Omondi, Patrick;** Siljander, Mika. **(2025).** *Addressing human–elephant conflicts in Taita Taveta County, Kenya: Integrating species distribution modeling into targeted conservation strategies.* **Global Ecology and Conservation**, e03604.

Lala, F.; Bump, J. K. **(2025).** *Megaherbivores and mega-infrastructure in East Africa.* **Conservation Letters**, 18(2), e13096.

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Wildlife Health, Disease & One Health Risk

Strengthening national surveillance, outbreak preparedness, and zoonotic risk reduction

Hassell, James M.; Angwenyi, S.; VanAcker, C. M.; Adan, A.; Bargoiyet, N.; Bundotich, G.; Edebe, J.; Fèvre, Eric M.; Gichecha, P.; Kamau, J.; Lekenit, E.; Lekopien, A.; Leseeto, Julius L.; Lupempe Koisinget, G.; Mathenge, J.; Manini, D.; Muasa, B.; Muturi, M.; Ndanyi, R.; Ndia, M.; Ndung'u, K.; Nyaga, N.; Rono, B.; Murray, S.; Worsley-Tonks, Katherine E. L.; **Gakuya, Francis;** Lekolool, I.; Kahariri, S.; Chege, S. **(2025).** *A framework for ecologically and socially informed risk reduction before and after outbreaks of wildlife-borne zoonoses.* **The Lancet Planetary Health**, 9(1), e41–e52.

Wambua, L.; Bett, B.; Abkallo, H. M.; Muturi, M.; Nthiwa, D.; Nyamota, R.; Kiprono, E.; Kirwa, L.; **Gakuya, F.;** Bartlow, A. W.; Middlebrook, E. A. **(2025).** *National serosurvey and risk mapping reveal widespread distribution of Coxiella burnetii in Kenya.* **Scientific Reports**, 15(1), 9706.

Kock, R.; Fine, A.; Caron, A.; Bataille, A.; Willett, B. J.; Keyyu, J.; Misinzo, G.; Mdetele, D.; **Gakuya, F.;** Ferouidini, S.; Benfield, C**. (2025).** *PPR infection crossing between domestic and wild hoofed mammals: Does this matter for virus eradication?* In **Peste des Petits Ruminants Virus** (pp. 99–127). Springer Nature Switzerland.

Nawenja, C. V.; Ochola, G. O.; **Obanda, V.;** Ommeh, S.; Yang, X. L.; Zhu, Y.; Li, B.; et al. **(2025).** *Genomic characterization of novel orthohepeviruses in shrews and rats from Kenya.* **Microbial Genomics**, 11(12), 001538.

Wildlife Microbiomes, Pathogens & Physiological Stress

Revealing hidden biological pressures shaping survival and resilience

Nyamota, R.; Middlebrook, E. A.; Abkallo, H. M.; Akoko, J.; **Gakuya, F.;** Wambua, L.; Ronoh, B.; Lekolool, I.; Mwatondo, A.; Muturi, M.; Bett, B.; Fair, J. M.; Bartlow, A. W. (2025). *The bacterial and pathogenic landscape of African buffalo (Syncerus caffer) whole blood and serum from Kenya.* **Animal Microbiome**, 7(1), 6. DOI: 10.1186/s42523-024-00374-9

Oduor, S.; Lekolool, I.; Mutinda, M. N.; Mulindi, S.; Poghon, J. K.; Weeks, S.; Ochieng, E.; Brown, J. L.; Murray, Suzan; Parker, J. M.; Ihwagi, F.; Pope, F.; Kariuki, L.; **Gakuya, F.;** Musyoki, C.; Wittemyer, G. **(2025).** *Physiological and nutritional stress response of African elephants within the lantana-dominated Lower Imenti Forest Reserve in Kenya.* **Conservation Physiology**, 13(1). https://doi.org/10.1093/conphys/coaf060

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Genetics, Population Structure & Species Adaptation

Evidence guiding long-term conservation planning

Karanja, P.; Kinyua, J.; Kingori, E.; Chiyo, P.; **Obanda, V.;** Lwande, O. W. (2025). *Incipient genetic differentiation of the African buffalo (Syncerus caffer) populations: Is fencing playing a role?* **Ecology and Evolution**, 15(8), e71879.

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Science supporting fisheries management and global biodiversity commitments

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Knowledge, Skills And Innovation

The Institute Designated Africa's First Training Centre for the Global Wildlife Health Course

> "By combining research, design, and co-created enterprise, the project exemplifies how science-driven innovation can translate into sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem protection."

In March 2025, the Institute hosted the Intervention in Wild Animal Health (IWAH) course for the first time on the African continent, following its designation as Africa's first and only training centre within the globally delivered programme.

The IWAH course is an intensive professional programme for practising wildlife veterinarians, focused on applied skills in conservation medicine, disease surveillance, and wildlife health management—particularly for species with ecological significance and public health relevance. The programme continues to be delivered globally; the Institute now joins a select group of accredited centres offering the course.

The inaugural African delivery brought together 27 wildlife veterinarians from 13 countries—Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, India, Nepal, Hungary, Australia, Canada, Belgium, the United Kingdom, China, Spain, and Finland—reflecting the programme's international standing and the Institute's convening reach.

Designation of the Institute as a training centre recognised its capacity as both a research institution and a professional training platform, with access to diverse ecosystems, specialised facilities, and technical expertise required for immersive field instruction. Practical modules were conducted at Naivasha Wildlife Sanctuary and Hell's Gate National Park, where participants undertook hands-on training in wildlife capture and restraint, disease outbreak investigation, and population monitoring in high-biodiversity landscapes.

Faculty were drawn from leading regional and international institutions, including the Institute, Kenya Wildlife Service, Wildlife Institute of India, University of Edinburgh, Royal Veterinary College, Zoological Society of London, University of Melbourne, and Toronto Zoo—positioning the Institute as a convening node for global expertise in wildlife health and One Health practice.

Through this designation, the Institute strengthens Kenya's standing in wildlife health and conservation science, while advancing its strategic role as Africa's continental hub for advanced professional training within global conservation programmes.

27

Wildlife veterinarians convened

13

Countries represented

Industry-Grade Training for Tourism Professionals

> "This practical exposure strengthens the relevance and applicability of the Institute's training programmes."

20

Scholarship recipients certified in advanced Amadeus System training.

The Institute's training mandate is anchored in a single priority: ensuring graduates leave with competencies that reflect how conservation and tourism actually operate in the field.

As conservation enterprises become increasingly technology-enabled, effective wildlife management now depends on professionals who can integrate ecological knowledge with digital tourism systems that drive planning, revenue management, and visitor control.

In 2025, the Institute advanced this mandate through a strategic partnership with Amadeus, a global leader in travel technology, during the Tourism Talent & Impact Day held on 30 October 2025.

The collaboration marked a deliberate shift from theory-led instruction to industry-grade training environments that mirror the systems used across tourist lodges, community conservancies, and tourism operations in East Africa.

Through this partnership, five desktop computers installed with industry-standard Amadeus software were incorporated into the Institute's training facilities. The systems allow trainees to develop hands-on proficiency in reservation, pricing, and visitor management platforms widely used across conservation lodges, community conservancies, and tourism enterprises in the region. This practical exposure strengthens the relevance and applicability of the Institute's training programmes.

Further reinforcing this approach, 20 trainees were awarded scholarships to undertake advanced Amadeus System training at the company's Nairobi headquarters, culminating in internationally recognised certification. These credentials enhance graduate readiness for employment across conservation and tourism operations that require both technical capability and sector understanding.

The programme also provided structured engagement with regional industry leadership, led by Amadeus East Africa Managing Director Mr. Louis Arnaud and senior managers from Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, and Rwanda. Mentorship sessions focused on the operational role of technology in conservation tourism, including revenue optimisation, data-informed visitor management, and the financial sustainability of conservation enterprises.

For conservation tourism, digital systems are an essential enabler of sustainability. Efficient revenue management supports ecosystem protection and community benefits, while data-driven visitor control contributes to the safeguarding of sensitive habitats. Developing human capacity to operate these systems is therefore a strategic investment in conservation outcomes.

Through partnerships such as Amadeus, the Institute continues to position itself as a centre of excellence for competency-based conservation tourism training, aligning curriculum, technology, and industry engagement to deliver graduates equipped to meet the evolving needs of the sector.

Applied Skills Where Enterprises Sustain Nature

> “Where capacity is weak, enterprises become donor-dependent, livelihoods erode, and gains on the ground are placed at risk.”

Why Enterprise Capacity Matters

Outcomes on the ground depend on enterprises operating at the frontline—community conservancies, coastal tourism groups, and lodges whose revenues support habitat protection and wildlife management. Their long-term viability requires more than stewardship. It requires operational capacity.

Financial management, service quality, professional standards, and market positioning determine whether these enterprises generate stable income or fail through preventable business weaknesses. Where capacity is weak, enterprises become donor-dependent, livelihoods erode, and gains on the ground are placed at risk.

In 2025, the Institute shifted training from classrooms into active enterprises—embedding skills directly where revenue is generated and where capacity gaps pose immediate threats to sustainability.

Service Excellence in Lodges

At **Lewa Wilderness Lodge**, the Institute delivered a four-day programme titled **“Excellence in Guest Experience and Lodge Operations.”** The training targeted frontline staff—Room Stewards and Waiters—whose daily performance shapes guest satisfaction, repeat visitation, and institutional reputation.

A total of **33 participants** from housekeeping and food and beverage departments completed the programme, gaining practical service skills, professional confidence, and a clearer understanding of guest-centred hospitality standards. All participants received certification upon completion.

Business Capacity for CBOs

Along the **Diani–Chale coastline and Kaya Kinondo area**, community-based organisations (CBOs) operate marine tourism enterprises linking livelihoods to marine ecosystems. These enterprises share common constraints: gaps in financial management, service delivery, marketing, and professional standards that limit competitiveness.

Through the **Blue Tourism Initiative**, led by **CORDIO East Africa**, the Institute facilitated a **three-module applied training programme** for two community organisations. Delivered by Institute staff, the programme focused on:

- Financial management
- Tourism and hospitality operations
- Marketing and branding

The training strengthened core business competencies within active enterprises—reducing donor dependency and reinforcing nature-based tourism as a viable livelihood strategy.

Training Workplace-Ready Professionals

> “By embedding structured, practical learning in professional environments, Enashipai and the Institute are strengthening the talent pipeline, elevating service standards, and setting a benchmark for industry-led workforce development.”

In today’s hospitality and tourism sector, success depends on professionals who are not only knowledgeable but also workplace-ready, adaptable, and capable of delivering exceptional service.

150+

Diploma trainees in Tourism & Hospitality Management

Traditional classroom learning alone cannot fully prepare graduates for the operational and interpersonal challenges of a high-performing hospitality environment.

To address this, the Institute partnered with Enashipai Resort & Spa to implement a pioneering Dual Technical and Vocational Education and Training (Dual TVET) program, combining classroom instruction with structured, on-the-job training in a live industry setting.

Through this partnership, trainees engage in hands-on rotations at Enashipai, learning core operational skills such as front-office management, food and beverage service, and hospitality operations, while simultaneously developing critical professional competencies including customer engagement, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving, all under the mentorship of seasoned industry professionals.

In 2025, the program empowered over 150 diploma trainees in Tourism and Hospitality Management to gain real-world experience and become workplace-ready from day one. Graduates have either secured positions at Enashipai or joined other leading hospitality establishments, a clear demonstration of the program’s effectiveness in translating learning into employment outcomes.

The impact of this model extends beyond individual trainees. Dual TVET is actively supported in Kenya by the government in partnership with KEPSA and GIZ, reflecting a national commitment to align vocational education with labor market needs. By embedding structured, practical learning in professional environments, Enashipai and the Institute are strengthening the talent pipeline, elevating service standards, and setting a benchmark for industry-led workforce development.

Looking ahead, this partnership exemplifies how industry-driven education models can sustainably develop high-quality talent, enhance operational excellence, and contribute to the long-term growth of Kenya’s hospitality sector.

Digital Tools, Smarter Conservation

Next-Gen Drones for Conservation

> “The partnership positions African conservation landscapes not as testing grounds, but as co-engineering environments where next-generation technologies are shaped by ecological complexity, operational realities, and conservation need.”

As conservation enters the era of **artificial intelligence and digital systems**, the priority is no longer simply observing wildlife, but **generating continuous, decision-ready data at scale**. Modern conservation demands tools that are reliable, scalable, and designed for complex, real-world environments.

Autonomous drones represent this shift. Unlike conventionally piloted drones that capture episodic imagery, autonomous systems are engineered to operate independently, execute repeatable missions, and integrate AI to transform raw imagery into actionable ecological insight. This transition—from piloted platforms to intelligent systems—fundamentally changes how conservation science supports decision-making.

To advance this capability, the **Institute has established a long-term collaboration with WildDrone**, a European Union–funded **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Doctoral Network** training 13 PhD candidates in autonomous drone technology for wildlife conservation. The partnership positions African conservation landscapes not as testing grounds, but as **co-engineering environments** where next-generation technologies are shaped by ecological complexity, operational realities, and conservation need.

Through this collaboration, drone engineers from the **University of Bristol**, wildlife behaviour specialists from the **Max Planck Institute**, and African conservation practitioners work together to design **fit-for-purpose conservation drones**. Autonomy is central to reducing operational constraints; **solar-powered systems enable extended endurance and continuous observation**; and **multi-sensor platforms linked to AI analytics** ensure that data collected directly informs conservation action.

13

PhD candidates in drone technology for wildlife conservation

> **“By co-engineering autonomous, AI-enabled drones within African ecosystems, we are redefining how conservation data is generated, scaled, and applied.”**

This approach ensures that innovation is not imported and adapted, but **co-developed**, producing technologies that are globally relevant and locally sustainable. In parallel, Institute students and researchers gain direct exposure to autonomous systems, spatial analytics, and AI-enabled monitoring—building a workforce equipped to operate and advance the tools defining the future of conservation.

By embedding innovation, capacity building, and research excellence within a single collaboration, the Institute is helping shape **how conservation will be practiced in the digital age**—smarter, more scalable, and grounded in real ecological systems.

Real-Time Wildlife Monitoring

> By enabling 24-hour, habitat-independent monitoring, advanced camera systems provide a more complete representation of ecological reality.”

50

Countries using HIKMICRO & CLOM systems

140,000+

Units operating globally

Effective conservation depends on when information is available, not just what is recorded.

Conventional camera traps capture images triggered by movement, but data often remains in remote field sites for weeks before retrieval and analysis. By the time patterns emerge, ecological windows have closed—migratory species have moved on, conflict incidents have passed, and opportunities for targeted intervention are lost.

To overcome this limitation, the **Institute partnered with ICU CLOM East Africa**, the official distributor of **HIKMICRO thermal imaging and Cellular Land Observation and Monitoring (CLOM) systems**, technologies deployed in over **50 countries with more than 140,000 units operating globally**. The collaboration equips researchers with **camera trap systems that integrate night vision, thermal imaging, and real-time cellular connectivity**, transforming wildlife monitoring from delayed observation to **live ecological intelligence**.

Unlike standard camera traps, ICU CLOM systems transmit images instantly. Wildlife detections are received as they occur, enabling rapid follow-up when rare species are recorded, timely responses to human–wildlife conflict incidents, and adaptive survey strategies informed by real-time conditions rather than retrospective analysis.

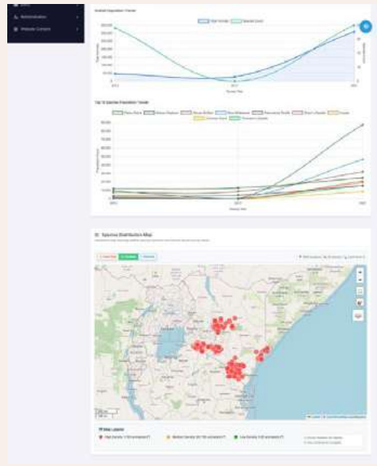
The scientific value extends beyond speed. **Thermal imaging detects animals by heat signature**, revealing species moving through dense vegetation or operating exclusively at night—behaviour that conventional visual monitoring consistently misses. This corrects a fundamental bias in wildlife science, where cryptic and nocturnal species are systematically underrepresented, skewing population estimates and management decisions toward diurnal and conspicuous species.

By enabling 24-hour, habitat-independent monitoring, advanced camera systems provide a **more complete representation of ecological reality**—capturing predator dynamics, nocturnal movements, migration timing, and conflict interactions previously invisible to standard surveys.

This capability has implications beyond research. When Kenya reports wildlife population trends to international conventions, **data quality determines credibility**. Countries with comprehensive, verifiable monitoring systems shape global conservation standards Real-time, thermally verified monitoring strengthens scientific authority, translating evidence into **policy influence and negotiating power**.

Kenya’s National Wildlife Database: From Fragmented Knowledge to Strategic Intelligence

> The National Wildlife Database represents an investment in institutional capacity—ensuring that the knowledge Kenya already generates can be coordinated, interpreted, and applied with the strategic clarity that effective conservation requires.”



Prototype completed | 2025

Kenya generates extensive wildlife knowledge across research institutions, government agencies, conservation organizations, and field operations.

Yet much of this information remains distributed across systems designed for individual mandates, not collective decision-making. As a result, evidence exists—but it does not consistently arrive where and when decisions are made.

The Institute’s National Wildlife Database prototype responds to this structural gap by establishing a shared intelligence backbone for the conservation sector—one that connects data producers and data users within a common, continuously updated evidence environment.

Rather than creating another repository, the system is designed to align conservation evidence with governance processes. Population monitoring, spatial planning, conflict response, enforcement intelligence, and research outputs are brought into a single operational context, enabling institutions to work from the same evidence base, even as they retain their distinct mandates.

> **“For the first time, Kenya’s wildlife knowledge moves from scattered data to coordinated intelligence guiding real-time conservation decisions.”**

The value of the system lies not in technology, but in coordination. By reducing fragmentation, the database enables faster alignment across institutions, improves the consistency of decisions, and strengthens accountability for outcomes. Conservation action becomes less reactive, less duplicative, and more strategically coherent.

Beyond its national role, the prototype has broader significance. As global conservation frameworks increasingly emphasize transparent reporting, adaptive management, and evidence-based policy, countries with integrated data infrastructure are better positioned to demonstrate credibility and influence standards. In this context, Kenya’s initiative signals a transition from producing conservation data to governing through evidence.

The National Wildlife Database represents an investment in institutional capacity—ensuring that the knowledge Kenya already generates can be coordinated, interpreted, and applied with the strategic clarity that effective conservation requires.

Scan, Learn, Explore: Kenya's Digital Plant Trail

> "This "plant blindness" limits conservation literacy and underrepresents the critical role of flora in ecosystem health."

Arboreal Innovation Project | 2025

The Challenge: Plant Blindness in Conservation Tourism

Kenya's protected areas attract visitors with iconic wildlife—the Big Five dominate narratives, bookings, and revenue. Yet plants, the foundation of ecosystems, remain invisible. Visitors leave with detailed knowledge of animals but little understanding of the botanical diversity sustaining them. This "plant blindness" limits conservation literacy and underrepresents the critical role of flora in ecosystem health.

The Solution: Technology That Brings Plants to Life

The Arboreal Innovation Project transforms Kenya's indigenous plant collections into interactive, research-ready, multi-sensory experiences.

- **QR-Coded Interactive Plaques**: Visitors scan tags for species profiles including taxonomy, ecological role, medicinal use, cultural significance, and conservation status. Knowledge previously confined to experts is now instantly accessible.
- **Geo-Referenced GIS Database**: Every plant is mapped, photographed, and verified, creating Kenya's first digital plant sanctuary. Students, researchers, and conservation planners access real-time data to support studies, habitat analysis, and monitoring.
- **Multi-Sensory Trails**: Pathways integrate tactile, audio, and visual guides, ensuring inclusive access for visually impaired visitors, wheelchair users, and school groups.

The Impact: From Scenery to Science

- **Conservation Literacy:** Visitors leave with an understanding of how plants sustain wildlife, support pollinators, regulate water cycles, and store carbon.
- **Tourism Innovation:** Kenya now offers biodiversity-focused experiences beyond wildlife viewing, appealing to eco-tourists, researchers, and accessibility-conscious travelers.
- **Research & Education:** The sanctuary doubles as a living laboratory, hosting student fieldwork, taxonomy training, and GIS-based ecological studies.
- Inclusive Access: Technology ensures botanical knowledge is available to all, breaking barriers imposed by traditional trails.

The Arboreal Innovation Project repositions plants as ecological protagonists. When visitors learn how acacias support giraffes or figs sustain hornbill breeding, flora moves from backdrop to center stage. This is not merely aesthetic—it is conservation interpretation made accessible, engaging, and actionable.

Kenya's first digital plant sanctuary shows what happens when technology meets biodiversity: curiosity is sparked, knowledge spreads, research thrives, and conservation literacy becomes a shared experience.

> "Kenya's first digital plant sanctuary shows what happens when technology meets biodiversity."

Institute's Transformative Upgrades in 2025

Naivasha Wildlife Sanctuary Infrastructure Upgrades to Enhance Visitor Experience and Revenue Growth

> "Collectively, these improvements strengthened the Sanctuary's appeal as a reliable, year-round destination."

In 2025, the Institute undertook targeted infrastructure upgrades at the Naivasha Wildlife Sanctuary (Nawisa) aimed at enhancing visitor experience, improving operational efficiency, and strengthening the Sanctuary's capacity as a sustainable revenue-generating conservation asset.

These investments align with the Institute's strategy to integrate research, conservation, and nature-based tourism while maintaining high environmental stewardship standards.

The Institute carried out extensive grading, murraming, and compaction of internal road networks within the Sanctuary, including access routes to key wildlife viewing circuits and facilities linked to the Hippo Campsite and training areas.

The improved road infrastructure significantly enhanced accessibility, ensuring smoother and safer movement for visitors, tour vehicles, researchers, and trainees throughout the year, including during the rainy season. Reduced travel time within the Sanctuary improved game-viewing efficiency and overall visitor satisfaction. Additionally, enhanced road conditions lowered vehicle wear and maintenance costs, while supporting faster response for security patrols and routine monitoring activities. Collectively, these improvements strengthened the Sanctuary's appeal as a reliable, year-round destination.

To address water scarcity and sustain wildlife presence in key visitor zones, the Institute drilled, equipped, and solarised two boreholes serving the Eland Gate and Leopard Gate areas.

The increased and reliable water supply has reduced pressure on natural water sources while supporting healthier wildlife populations and more stable animal distribution patterns. By improving the likelihood of wildlife sightings near established viewing areas, the project has directly enhanced the quality of the visitor experience and strengthened the Sanctuary's competitiveness as a tourism product, with positive implications for gate collections and related revenue streams.

To further improve visitor comfort and environmental sustainability, the Institute constructed a modern eco-toilet facility within the Sanctuary.

Overall, these infrastructure enhancements have strengthened Naivasha Wildlife Sanctuary's role as a model site where conservation, research, and tourism converge to deliver ecological value and sustainable institutional revenue.

Rehabilitation of the Staff Houses

> “Improved staff housing has had a direct positive impact on employee well-being”

To improve staff welfare, productivity, and retention, the Institute undertook the upgrade of staff housing units, creating more habitable, secure, and comfortable living conditions.

The renovations addressed long-standing issues such as removal of asbestos, inadequate space, poor sanitation, and aging infrastructure.

Improved staff housing has had a direct positive impact on employee well-being, enabling staff to live closer to their workstations and respond more efficiently to operational needs.

Before

After

Institutional Presence Across Public Platforms

Building the Institute's Brand Footprint

> "The Institute's participation reflected the role of research, training, and monitoring systems in enabling sustainable tourism expansion and professional capacity development."

Conservation science operates through systems—monitoring, data analysis, environmental management, and institutional coordination.

While these systems are essential to tourism, land-use planning, and wildlife protection, they are rarely encountered in public settings.

In 2025, elements of this work intersected with national and international public platforms through the Institute's presence in environments where conservation, tourism, and public life converged.

During the **WRC Safari Rally 2025**, the Institute hosted the event's **largest Service Park** at its Naivasha facilities. The service park functioned as a central operational hub for rally teams, officials, and international media supporting one of the world's most-watched motorsport events. The site was officially visited by **H.E. the President of the Republic of Kenya**, situating the Institute's conservation infrastructure within a national platform of economic, diplomatic, and public significance.

The location placed research facilities, monitoring systems, and environmental management operations within a global tourism and development context, observed as part of the rally's operational environment.

At **World Wildlife Day celebrations in Lake Bogoria**, the Institute participated in national dialogue under the theme *"Wildlife Conservation Finance: A Shared Future for Wildlife and Sustainable Livelihoods."* Engagements brought together community representatives, conservation practitioners, youth, and financial actors to examine evidence-based approaches linking biodiversity protection with economic systems, benefit-sharing frameworks, and long-term sustainability.

The **Magical Kenya Travel Expo**, officiated by **H.E. Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki**, **Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife Hon. Rebecca Miano**, and senior government officials, positioned tourism as a driver of national economic growth. Within this forum, the Institute's participation reflected the role of research, training, and monitoring

> "The Institute operated within national events, tourism platforms, and public forums as part of the systems supporting wildlife-based development."

systems in enabling sustainable tourism expansion and professional capacity development.

At **Jamhuri Day celebrations** and the **Laikipia Wildlife and Tourism Expo**, the Institute demonstrated operational conservation tools, including wildlife tracking technologies and digital census systems. Practitioners, students, conservancy managers, and community representatives engaged with these systems in applied settings, illustrating pathways linking conservation science, workforce development, and community participation.

Across these settings, conservation science entered public space through routine institutional practice. The Institute operated within national events, tourism platforms, and public forums as part of the systems supporting wildlife-based development.

This positioning reinforced conservation as an element of national infrastructure—integrated into tourism, public planning, workforce development, and community engagement.

CSR Activities

Extending Institutional Value Beyond the Institute

On 19 June 2025, the Institute undertook a targeted Corporate Social Responsibility engagement at **Naivasha Women Prison**, reinforcing its commitment to social inclusion, dignity, and community responsibility.

The initiative, coordinated through the Institute's **Gender Committee**, brought together staff and student representatives to support the welfare of incarcerated women through the provision of essential items, including blankets, bedsheets, and personal hygiene supplies. The engagement was designed to address immediate needs while affirming the importance of dignity and wellbeing for vulnerable populations.

Receiving the support, the Officer in Charge of Naivasha Women Prison, **Ms. Dorothy Ngugi**, acknowledged the Institute's contribution and its recognition of the humanity and rights of inmates.

While the Institute's core mandate lies in wildlife research, training, and conservation science, its public role extends beyond ecosystems alone. Sustainable conservation depends on inclusive, resilient societies—where equity, care, and responsibility are embedded across institutions.

Through structured community engagements such as this, the Institute demonstrates that conservation leadership is not confined to field sites and laboratories. It is expressed equally through ethical practice, social responsibility, and a commitment to the broader public good.

> "The Institue's public role extends beyond ecosystems alone. Sustainable conservation depends on inclusive, resilient societies—where equity, care, and responsibility are embedded across institutions."

Awards and Recognitions for 2025

Clean Audit Confirms Financial Integrity

> "A clean audit signals that funding flows efficiently from allocation to program impact."

Unmodified Audit Opinion | FY 2023/2024

The Office of the Auditor-General issued an **Unmodified Audit Opinion** for FY 2023/2024, affirming that the Institute's financial statements are accurate, internal controls are strong, and public resources are managed with integrity.

Director **Dr. Patrick Omondi** received the recognition at the End-Year Public Service Reflection Dinner in Kisumu, attended by **Cabinet Secretary for the National Treasury Hon. John Mbadi** and **Chief of Staff Hon. Felix Koskei, EGH**.

Why Clean Audits Matter

For research institutions, financial credibility is more than compliance—it is a **strategic asset**. Donors, government agencies, and international partners rely on transparent financial management when deciding where to invest limited resources.

> **"Clean audits aren't just compliance—they're a signal that every shilling strengthens conservation impact."**

A clean audit signals that funding flows efficiently from allocation to program impact. It strengthens the Institute's ability to secure **multi-year grants**, attract high-value collaborations, and demonstrate that **conservation results are delivered responsibly**. In short, financial integrity directly translates into **conservation capacity and credibility**.

Institute Earns National Recognition for Advancing Gender Inclusion and Equality

> “Gender inclusion is now a strategic asset, ensuring programs are effective, workplaces are equitable, and the Institute’s impact is enduring.”

Certificate of Recognition | National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), FY 2024/25

Making Gender Inclusion Central to Conservation and Research

At the Institute, advancing gender equity is not a compliance exercise—it is integral to fulfilling its mission. Research, conservation, and institutional effectiveness all thrive when diverse perspectives, experiences, and voices shape decisions and programs. Yet embedding these principles across operations requires deliberate, sustained effort.

Purposeful Action: Policies into Practice

The Institute has taken **measurable steps to mainstream gender** across its governance and operational frameworks. Key initiatives include:

- **Integrating gender actions into annual work plans** to ensure accountability and follow-through.
- **Allocating a dedicated budget for gender initiatives**, guaranteeing resources match intent.
- **Developing and operationalizing Gender and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Policies**, strengthening safeguards for a safe, inclusive, and respectful workplace.

These actions are more than administrative—they **translate policy into culture**, influencing how teams collaborate, how research projects are designed, and how conservation programs engage communities.

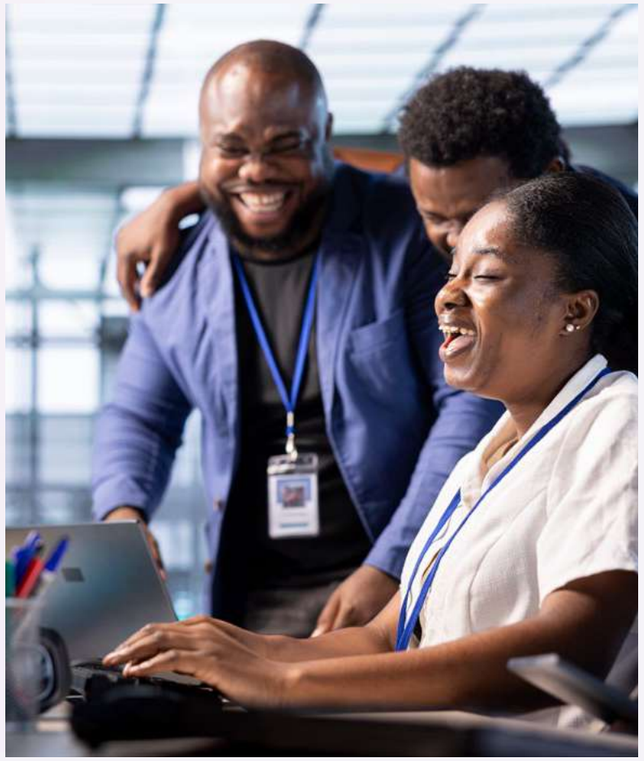
Impact: From Policy to Practice

By embedding gender considerations, the Institute ensures that its scientific work is **socially responsive as well as technically rigorous**. Programs and research outcomes now reflect **inclusive participation**, equitable access to opportunities, and a broader understanding of community dynamics that affect conservation success.

Recognition and Broader Significance

The NGEC awarded the Institute a **Certificate of Recognition** for timely submission of its Gender Inclusion and Mainstreaming Report, affirming leadership in institutionalizing gender equity. The recognition highlights the Institute’s role as a **responsible public institution** that aligns its mandate with national priorities on equality, social inclusion, and human rights.

This milestone signals that the Institute **adheres to policy and also it leverages it to strengthen people, research, and conservation outcomes**. Gender inclusion is now a strategic asset, ensuring programs are effective, workplaces are equitable, and the Institute’s impact is enduring.



Strategic Alignments

Strategic Alignments

In 2025, the Institute strengthened its position as national hub for wildlife science, policy dialogue, and cross-sector collaboration by hosting high-level government leaders, international scientists, conservation organizations, and development partners.

These engagements were not ceremonial. They represented strategic alignment—moments where shared priorities crystallized into collaborative frameworks, research partnerships, and policy commitments that advance evidence-based conservation and sustainable development.

Government Leadership & Policy Alignment

Cabinet Secretary for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, Hon. Salim Mvurya, alongside Principal Secretary Peter Tum and WRC Safari Rally CEO Charles Gacheru, convened stakeholders at the Institute to explore intersections between youth empowerment, sports tourism, creative industries, and wildlife conservation. The engagement positioned the Institute as convener of cross-sector dialogue linking conservation to livelihoods and national development priorities.

Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Hon. Deborah Barasa, visited the Institute during the launch of the Lake Naivasha Basin Ecosystem-Based Management initiative in April. The engagement underscored the central role of scientific evidence in ecosystem restoration, climate resilience, and sustainable resource management—core pillars of the Institute's mandate.

International Research Partnerships

Prof. Masahiro Kajihara, Associate Professor at the International Institute of Zoonotic Control, Hokkaido University (Japan), engaged Institute leadership in January to explore collaborative research under the One Health approach—recognizing that wildlife health, livestock productivity, and human disease prevention are interconnected challenges requiring coordinated scientific response.

Dr. Bradley Cain, Dr. Sue Ann Zollinger, and Dr. Scott Pedley from Manchester Metropolitan University visited in June, opening pathways for academic exchange, joint research initiatives, and capacity building that strengthen the Institute's international research networks and knowledge transfer mechanisms.

Prof. Enrico Di Minin from the University of Helsinki formalized partnership with the Institute in December. The two institutions are keen to advance both research and training excellence and also opportunities.

> "Gender inclusion is now a strategic asset, ensuring programs are effective, workplaces are equitable, and the Institute's impact is enduring."

> These strategic engagements laid groundwork for expanded research collaboration, policy influence, capacity development, and innovative financing—positioning the Institute to amplify conservation impact through partnerships that translate knowledge into action at scale."

Conservation Science

African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), led by Vice President for Conservation Science and Planning Dr. Philip Muriithi, deepened collaboration frameworks with the Institute in February. Discussions focused on applied research, landscape planning, and science-driven conservation—areas critical to safeguarding Africa's wildlife heritage through evidence-based interventions.

Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF), represented by Director of Conservation and Co-founder Dr. Julian Fennessy, engaged the Institute in March on shared priorities in species recovery, population monitoring, and regional collaboration. The engagement reaffirmed the Institute's growing contribution to global species conservation efforts beyond Kenya's borders.

International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) visited in September, reinforcing shared commitments to wildlife protection, animal welfare, and science-based interventions across landscapes where human-wildlife coexistence requires evidence-informed strategies.

Institutional Excellence & Innovative Financing

Kenya Accreditation Service (KENAS) CEO Dr. Walter Ongeti engaged Institute leadership in July on quality assurance, accreditation standards, and institutional excellence—critical enablers of credible science and trusted training programmes that meet national and international benchmarks.

Equity Bank's Public Sector Banking Division, led by Director Ambassador Mary Mugwanja, explored opportunities at the intersection of finance, conservation, and sustainable development. Discussions reflected the growing role of innovative financing mechanisms in conservation—from payment for ecosystem services to conservation enterprise development—areas where the Institute coordinates evidence generation, capacity building, and implementation support.

Building Bridges for Impact

By convening dialogue across government, academia, conservation organizations, financial institutions, and development partners, the Institute strengthened its role as bridge between science and policy, research and practice, and conservation and development.

These strategic engagements laid groundwork for expanded research collaboration, policy influence, capacity development, and innovative financing—positioning the Institute to amplify conservation impact through partnerships that translate knowledge into action at scale.

Our Conferencing Guests in 2025, Thank You

In 2025, the Institute proudly served as a premier conferencing destination for a wide spectrum of distinguished national and international institutions.

Beyond providing a venue, the Institute became a hub for dialogue, policy engagement, research exchange, and strategic planning.

We were particularly honoured to host delegations from the **Executive Office of the President**, **The National Assembly**, and **Parliamentary Joint Services**, reflecting the confidence placed in the Institute as a conducive environment for high-level governance discussions.

Several **State Departments** also convened their meetings at the Institute, including the **State Department for Wildlife**, **State Department for Tourism**, **State Department for Devolution**, **State Department for Public Service**, **State Department for Sports**, and the **State Department for Internal Security and National Administration**. These engagements highlight the strong link between wildlife conservation, public service delivery, national security, and sustainable development.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENTS

> “These globally respected organisations brought valuable research, technical expertise, and collaborative spirit, enriching knowledge exchange and reinforcing the Institute’s position within the international research community.”

Key oversight and regulatory institutions such as the **Public Service Commission**, **Capital Markets Authority**, **Insurance Regulatory Authority**, **Pest Control Products Board**, **Kenya Veterinary Board**, **National AIDS Control Council**, and the **Office of the Attorney General** also selected the Institute for their conferences and workshops. Their meetings here demonstrate trust in our facilities to support critical national mandates and professional coordination.

The Institute’s appeal also extended to the security sector, with the **National Police Service**, **Administration Police Service**, and the **Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI)** holding engagements on our grounds. Their presence reflects the Institute’s secure, serene setting that supports focused deliberations on matters of national importance.

Internationally, we were privileged to receive partners such as the **University of Helsinki (Finland)**, **Auburn University**, the **Smithsonian Institution**, **GIZ**, **WWF**, and the **World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)**. These globally respected organisations brought valuable research, technical expertise, and collaborative spirit, enriching knowledge exchange and reinforcing the Institute’s position within the international research community.

GOVERNANCE

THE PRESIDENCY
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

STATE DEPARTMENTS

OVERSIGHT & REGULATION

KENYA VETERINARY BOARD

CAPITAL MARKETS AUTHORITY

maisha! National AIDS Control Council

Insurance Regulatory Authority

TOURISM FUND

PCPB

KENYA URBAN ROADS AUTHORITY

WASREB

SECURITY SECTOR

THE NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Directorate of Criminal Investigations

PARTNERS

UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

World Agroforestry Centre

Smithsonian

GDC Geothermal Development Company

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE

WWF

AUBURN UNIVERSITY

The Institute At The Global Stage

In 2025, the Institute advanced Kenya's influence in global wildlife research, conservation policy, and biodiversity economics. Through strategic participation and collaboration, we set standards, define priorities, and turn science into impact.

IUCN World Conservation Congress

Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, UAE | 9-15 October 2025

Theme: "Powering Transformative Conservation"

At the world's largest conservation gathering—10,000 delegates from 189 countries, 1,000+ events, 148 resolutions including groundbreaking motions on wildlife pet trade (Motion 108) and One Health integration—Kenya's wildlife monitoring methodologies and National Census data influenced frameworks defining what "evidence-based conservation" means operationally. When IUCN adopted its 20-year Strategic Vision "Unite for Nature on the Path to 2045," the IUCN Programme 2026-2029, and the Abu Dhabi Call to Action establishing global standards for biodiversity monitoring and species protection, Kenya's systems were positioned as reference models.

CITES SC78

Geneva, Switzerland | February 3–8, 2025

The Institute participated in the 78th Meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC78), held in January 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Engagement at SC78 provided a strategic platform to contribute technical perspectives on the implementation of CITES provisions, compliance mechanisms, and emerging conservation challenges, while also strengthening collaboration with national authorities and international partners.

CITES CoP20

Samarkand, Uzbekistan | 24 November - 5 December 2025

Theme: *"CITES at 50: Bridging Nature and People"*

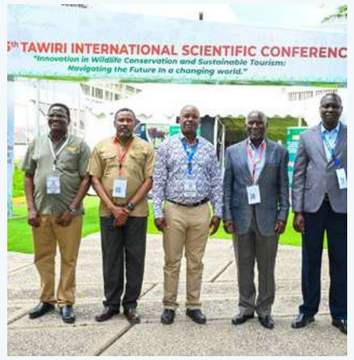
Leveraging Kenya's comprehensive wildlife data, the Institute strengthened the country's negotiating authority at CITES' 50th anniversary. When 184 countries debated 51 species proposals on ivory trade, trophy hunting, and enforcement, Kenya's positions were well articulated and supported because our evidence demonstrated robust monitoring and credible threat assessments. Rich datasets translated into negotiating power, ensuring Kenya shaped wildlife trade decisions.

2nd African Biotrade Festival

Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa | 18-20 September 2025

Theme: ***"Indigenous plant products and ingredients for food, health and beauty – from Africa to the world"***

The Institute represented Kenya in strengthening regional cooperation on access and benefit-sharing frameworks governing indigenous wildlife and plant products. When African biodiversity enters global markets (Baobab, Marula, medicinal ingredients), equitable frameworks determine whether source communities benefit or watch external actors extract value. Kenya's participation advanced strategies ensuring scientific validation, fair benefit distribution, and sustainable standards—proving conservation and economic returns align when governed by evidence and equity.



15th Tawiri International Scientific Conference

Arusha International Conference Centre, Tanzania | 3-5 December 2025

Theme: *"Innovations in Wildlife Conservation and Sustainable Tourism: Navigating the Future in a Changing World"*

Among 600+ researchers from 20+ countries presenting 248 studies, the Institute shaped East Africa's conservation research priorities as peer scientists addressing shared challenges—human-wildlife conflict, transboundary management, technology innovation, climate adaptation. Kenya's participation ensured our input into the 10 conference resolutions adopted.

American Society Of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene Annual Meeting

Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, Canada | 9-13 November 2025 74th Annual Meeting

The Institute presented "Hidden Threat to Urban Public Health: Metagenomic Evidence of High-Risk Zoonotic Pathogens in Pet African Grey Parrots" during a One Health session attended by 4,900 global health professionals. Kenya's research demonstrated that the exotic pet trade creates unmonitored pathways for pandemic emergence. By detecting high-risk zoonotic threats in exotic pets before human spillover, Kenya's surveillance positioned wildlife trade as a critical biosecurity concern requiring monitoring frameworks that international One Health systems currently lack, elevating Kenya's methodologies as models for pandemic prevention at the wildlife-trade-human interface.

Through strategic science, authoritative data, and global engagement, the Institute positions Kenya as a leader—shaping conservation policy, advancing economic opportunities, and setting the standard for excellence in wildlife research.

Staff Welfare, Building Culture

Strengthening Institutional Cohesion and Workforce Resilience

> By investing in its people across all functions, the Institute continues to build a resilient, inclusive, and high-performing workforce”

In 2025, the Institute invested in organizational cohesion and staff development through a structured team-building retreat held at **Hippo Campsite, Naivasha**.

The engagement brought together staff from across the Institute’s professional spectrum—researchers and trainers alongside finance, administration, hospitality, security, technical, and support teams—reflecting the integrated workforce required to deliver the Institute’s mandate.

The programme combined facilitated team exercises, problem-solving activities, and reflective sessions designed to strengthen communication, mutual respect, and cross-functional understanding. By engaging diverse professional roles in shared challenges, the retreat reinforced a culture of collaboration and collective accountability, recognizing that high-quality research and training depend on systems that function seamlessly beyond laboratories and classrooms.

Creating space for staff to interact beyond formal roles encouraged appreciation of how different functions intersect to support institutional performance, public service delivery, and operational excellence. These interactions strengthened trust and reinforced professional standards that underpin integrity, inclusivity, and effective partnership within the organization.

The retreat concluded with a structured reflection session, allowing participants to identify practical lessons, align around institutional priorities, and reaffirm shared responsibility for sustaining a positive and professional workplace culture.

By investing in its people across all functions, the Institute continues to build a resilient, inclusive, and high-performing workforce—one equipped to support innovation in conservation science, deliver quality training, and uphold the standards expected of a national public institution.

Summary of Financials (2024-2025)

Statement of Financial Performance for the year ended 30 June 2025

DETAILS	Notes	FY 2024-25	FY 2023-24
		Kshs	Kshs
Revenue from non exchange transactions			
Transfers from Other Government Entities	6	594,272,400	537,000,000
Public contributions and donations	7	62,907,860	21,469,823
		657,180,260	**558,469,823**
Revenue from exchange transactions			
Tuition Fees, Conference & Research Permits	8	202,204,658	138,844,846
Sale of goods	9	14,080,585	4,231,763
Rental Income	10	2,628,800	3,023,803
Finance Income	11	9,501,765	1,399,261
		228,415,809	**147,499,673**
Total revenue		**885,596,069**	**705,969,496**
Expenses			
Use of goods & services	12	379,667,316	196,701,106
Employee costs	13	439,123,764	415,525,440
Board Expenses	14	20,716,460	17,190,889
Depreciation and amortization expense	15	27,108,141	16,911,806
Repairs and maintenance	16	12,455,633	8,457,478
Contracted services	17	12,189,546	6,161,159
Provision for audit fees	18	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total expenses		**892,260,860**	**661,947,879**
Other gains/(losses)			
Surplus before tax		**(6,664,791)**	**44,021,617**
Taxation		-	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the period		**(6,664,791)**	**44,021,617**
Remission to National Treasury		-	-
Net Surplus for the period		**(6,664,791)**	**44,021,617**

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2025

DETAILS	Notes	FY 2024/25	FY 2023/24
		Kshs	Kshs
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	19	150,595,458	346,256,918
Current portion of receivables from exchange transactions	20	82,102,561	85,736,637
		232,698,019	**431,993,555**
Inventories	21	8,487,914	5,976,385
		241,185,933	**437,969,939**
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	22	1,144,910,755	473,832,917
Intangible assets	23	32,875,156	12,778,352
Total Non-Current Assets		**1,177,785,911**	**486,611,269**
Total assets		**1,418,971,845**	**924,581,209**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	24	42,063,065	79,175,482
		42,063,065	**79,175,482**
Non-current liabilities			
Total Non-Current Liabilities		-	-
Total Liabilities		**42,063,065**	**79,175,482**
Reserves:			
Capital Fund - From Last Financial Year		605,968,726	253,020,229
Accumulated Surplus		239,437,002	195,415,384
Surplus for the Period		(6,664,791)	44,021,617
- Revaluation Reserve (Buildings Revalued - FY2024/25)		393,167,844	-
Capital Fund:			
'- GOK Development Grant FY		25,000,000	204,000,000
- TPF Funds (Infrastructure Development)		120,000,000	148,948,497
Total Reserves		**1,376,908,780**	**845,405,727**
Total Reserves and Liabilities		**1,418,971,844**	**924,581,209**

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 2025

DETAILS	Notes	FY 2024-25	FY 2023-24
		Kshs	Kshs
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts			
Government grants and subsidies (Gok)	6	594,272,400	537,000,000
Public contributions and donations	7	62,907,860	21,469,823
Fees, Conference, & Research Permits	8	202,204,658	138,844,846
Sale of goods	9	14,080,585	4,231,763
Rental Income	10	2,628,800	2,616,397
Finance Income	11	9,501,765	1,399,261
Total Receipts		**885,596,069**	**705,562,090**
Payments			
Use of goods & services	12	379,667,316	194,819,660
Employee costs	13	439,123,764	415,525,440
Board Expenses	14	20,716,460	17,190,889
Repairs and maintenance	16	12,455,633	10,338,924
Contracted services	17	12,189,546	6,161,159
Audit fees	18	1,000,000	-
Total Payments		**865,152,719**	**644,036,073**
Working Capital Adjustments			
Increase in inventory	25	30,079,714	(2,961,638)
Increase in receivables	25	18,112,458	(34,953,542)
Decrease in payables	25	14,905,840	45,456,424
Total Working Capital adjustments		**63,098,012**	**7,541,243**
Net cash flows used in operating activities		**(42,654,662)**	**70,876,467**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of PPE and intangible assets		298,006,798	277,769,767
Net cash flows used in investing activities		**298,006,798**	**277,769,767**
Cash flows from financing activities			
GOK Capital Development		25,000,000	204,000,000
Receipts from TPF for Infrastructure development		120,000,000	148,948,497.00
Net cash flows used in financing activities		**145,000,000**	**352,948,497**
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		**(195,661,460)**	**146,054,564**
Cash and cash equivalents at period Start	19	346,256,918	200,202,355
Cash and cash equivalents at Period end	19	150,595,459	346,256,918

WILDLIFE RESEARCH & TRAINING INSTITUTE

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