



# LAKE NAIVASHA BASIN ECOSYSTEM BASED MANAGEMENT PROJECT

**Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for Restricted  
Access and Involuntary Resettlement in the Lake Naivasha Basin**

## 1. Project Background

Lake Naivasha is one of the two freshwater lakes in the Kenyan part of the Rift Valley. The Lake Naivasha Basin (LNB) is challenged by land degradation, water pollution and loss of biodiversity, resulting in a reduction in provision of ecosystem services. This is caused by a number of threats, in particular (i) poor agricultural practices by small scale farmers in the upper catchment; (ii) overgrazing and illegal logging in the lower, middle and upper catchment; (iii) pollution of water bodies from farmlands, settlements and industries; (iv) over-abstraction of water resources; (v) urbanization, agricultural expansion, infrastructure development and other types of development associated with land use change; and (vi) impacts of climate change.

The key objective of Lake Naivasha Basin (LNB) Ecosystem Based Management Project is to restore forest ecosystems and reduce land degradation in the LNB catchment for increased protection of Lake Naivasha's water resources, biodiversity, and associated ecosystem services to support the local and national economy. The project is being implemented over a period of four years and is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF-US). The project aims to promote sustainable agricultural practices, enhance farmer capacity, and strengthen community-based natural resource management within the Lake Naivasha Basin.

The project is structured around 4 key components:

- i. Component 1: Strengthening the enabling conditions for integrated landscape management in Lake Naivasha Basin
- ii. Component 2: Market and financial mechanisms for implementation of the LNB Integrated Management Plan
- iii. Component 3: Improved land management in LNB
- iv. Component 4. Knowledge Management and Monitoring and Evaluation

The National Environment Trust Fund (NETFUND) is the Lead Executing Agency for the project. The day-to-day management of the project is undertaken by Project Management Unit (PMU), with responsibilities for the coordination of work between the various partners in the project and leading on specific components of work. Several executing partners most notably Kenya Forest Services (KFS) and National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) are engaged in the implementation and coordination of specific project components.

In compliance with WWF Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework (ESSF), as detailed in WWF's Environmental and Social Safeguard Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP), the Lake Naivasha Ecosystem Based Management Project was screened according to WWF's Standard on Environmental and Social Risk Management.

The Project has been categorized as a Category "B" project, given that it is essentially a conservation initiative expected to generate significant positive and durable social, economic and environmental benefits.

WWF's safeguards standards require that any potentially adverse environmental and social impacts are identified and avoided or mitigated. The Project triggers WWF's Standard on Restricted Access and Involuntary Resettlement. This standard has been triggered because this project is concerned with land management, which often results in changes of access. In addition, restoration activities under component 3 of the project may require temporary fencing and restrictions of access to certain areas demarcated for restoration. The ESMP examines impacts which might arise from the mentioned activities and how they will be mitigated.

## **2. Purpose of the ESMP**

This Site-Specific ESMP is a project-specific source document detailing the environmental and social protection requirements to mitigate and minimize the adverse impacts. The ESMP's primary purpose is to ensure that the environmental requirements and social commitments associated with the project are carried forward into implementation and operational phases of the project and are effectively managed. The specific objectives of this ESMP are:

- Minimizing any adverse environmental, social and health impacts resulting from the project activities,
- Conducting all project activities in accordance with relevant Kenyan Laws and WWF's safeguard operational policies and guidelines,
- Preventing environmental degradation because of either individual subprojects or their cumulative effects,
- Enhancing the positive environmental and social outcomes of project activities.
- Ensuring that the proposed mitigation measures are feasible and cost-efficient,
- Providing an Action Plan to ensure that the project impact mitigation measures are properly implemented and monitored,
- Ensuring that all stakeholders are equitably engaged in the project's activities preparation and implementation, that their concerns are fully addressed and their own goals and desires are considered.

## **3. Planned Activities**

The activities that relate to this ESMP include the following:

- Protection and restoration activities on key riparian degradation areas implemented (passive restoration through demarcation and natural regeneration)

These activities will be implemented under component 3, on improved land management in upper LN. The project will support the development of a Code of

Conduct for LNB stakeholders. The Code of Conduct will delineate the roles and obligations for each stakeholder, including government institutions, other stakeholders (NEMA Lake Naivasha, etc.) and communities in ensuring ecologically, socially and economically acceptable protection and conservation measures to minimize, stop and reverse land degradation and loss of habitat in the LNB riparian lands.

#### 4. Potential Social and Environmental Impacts

##### 4.1 Potential negative impacts for the planned activities may include:

- i. **Loss of livelihoods:** People who depend on forests such as fuelwood collectors, grazers, honey gatherers, and herbal collectors may lose vital sources of income. Small-scale trade in forest products such as fruits and medicinal plants may also collapse. This may lead to increased poverty
- ii. **Conflict and resentment:** Fencing forests can strain relations between local communities and forest authorities, sometimes resulting in illegal entry, protests, or violent confrontations.
- iii. **Erosion of traditional knowledge:** Restricted access limits the passing down of indigenous ecological knowledge and forest management practices.
- iv. **Loss of cultural and spiritual access:** Sacred shrines, burial grounds, and ritual spaces within forests may become unreachable.
- v. **Decline in community stewardship:** Excluding local people can reduce their sense of responsibility for forest protection, sometimes leading to neglect or intentional damage.
- vi. **Management gaps:** Communities often help manage fires, pests, and illegal activities; fencing can remove this informal but effective protection.
- vii. **Ecosystem fragmentation:** Fencing can disrupt wildlife movement and block natural migration routes.
- viii. **Criminalization of traditional livelihoods:** Everyday survival activities may be labelled illegal, exposing communities to fines or arrest
- ix. **Increased cost of living:** Households may have to purchase firewood, fodder, or food that was previously collected freely from the forest.
- x. **Loss of grazing areas:** Pastoral communities may lose access to customary grazing lands, reducing livestock health and productivity.

## 4.2 Positive impacts include:

- i. **Natural vegetation recovery:** Reduced disturbance achieved through fencing limits livestock access and uncontrolled human activity, allowing young plants to grow naturally. This allows native trees, shrubs, and ground vegetation to regenerate without intense interventions, conserving local genetic diversity.
- ii. **Soil conservation:** Continuous vegetation cover reduces erosion caused by wind and rainfall, improving soil stability. Also, accumulating leaf litter and organic matter gradually rebuilds soil health hence increasing soil fertility.
- iii. **Water conservation:** Forest cover increases water infiltration, reduces surface runoff, and supports groundwater recharge hence enhanced water regulation. In addition, reduced sedimentation and pollution due to increased ground cover helps keep nearby streams and rivers cleaner thereby improving water quality
- iv. **Climate and environmental services:** Regenerating forests capture and store carbon, contributing to climate change mitigation. Increased canopy cover also lowers surface temperatures and raises humidity levels hence microclimate moderation
- v. **Cost-effective restoration:** Natural regeneration requires fewer financial inputs than active tree planting
- vi. **Land degradation reversal:** Protection helps halt desertification and restore long-term ecosystem function
- vii. **Enhanced biodiversity:** increase in plant cover enhances habitats by securing feeding and breeding ground hence increased biodiversity.
- viii. **Reduced pest and disease outbreaks:** Higher species diversity lowers the risk of large-scale infestations and spread disease.
- ix. **Educational and research opportunities:** Fenced conservation areas function as living laboratories for ecological study and environmental education

## 5. Mitigation Measures for Environmental and Social Impacts

Potential impact	Impact scale	Proposed mitigation measures	Responsible party
Loss of livelihoods: People who depend on forests such as fuelwood collectors, grazers, honey gatherers, and herbal collectors may lose vital sources of income.	Long term Medium impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• Free and prior informed consultations with affected communities and relevant authorities</li> <li>• Provide alternative access areas within the forest for continued livelihood support</li> </ul>	NETFUND, KFS County Government
Conflict and resentment: between local communities and forest authorities, sometimes resulting in illegal entry, protests, or violent confrontations	Long term Medium impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct continuous community consultations and participatory planning</li> <li>• Establish grievance redress mechanisms (GRM)</li> <li>• Involve community representatives in forest management decisions</li> <li>• Awareness and education on forest management and conflict management</li> </ul>	NETFUND, KFS
Erosion of traditional knowledge: Restricted access limits the passing down of indigenous ecological knowledge and forest management practices	Long term Low impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document and integrate indigenous ecological knowledge into forest management plans</li> <li>• Support community-led conservation and learning programs</li> </ul>	NETFUND, KFS
Loss of cultural and spiritual access: Sacred shrines, burial grounds, and ritual spaces within forests may become unreachable	Long term Low impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map sacred sites and cultural areas before fencing</li> <li>• Provide controlled access corridors or permits for rituals and ceremonies</li> <li>• Exclude sacred sites from restricted zones where feasible</li> </ul>	NETFUND, KFS
Decline in community stewardship: Excluding local people can reduce their sense of responsibility for forest protection, sometimes leading to neglect or intentional damage.	Long term Low impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closely work with CFAs in forest management</li> <li>• Work with KFS to create benefit sharing mechanisms including NTFPs</li> <li>• Employing local people as forest scouts</li> </ul>	NETFUND, KFS

Potential impact	Impact scale	Proposed mitigation measures	Responsible party
Management gaps: Communities often help manage fires, pests, and illegal activities; fencing can remove this informal but effective protection	Long term Moderate impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage community in fire control, pest monitoring, and surveillance</li> <li>Train and equip scouts on fire control and forest patrols</li> <li>Use community reporting systems for illegal activities</li> </ul>	NETFUND, KFS
Ecosystem fragmentation: Fencing can disrupt wildlife movement and block natural migration routes	Long term High impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map out and protect wildlife corridors and unfenced buffer zones</li> <li>Use wildlife-friendly fencing designs where fencing is unavoidable</li> <li>Conduct biodiversity monitoring and adaptive management</li> </ul>	NETFUND, KFS
Increased cost of living: Households may have to purchase firewood, fodder, or food that was previously collected freely from the forest.	Long term Moderate impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote alternative energy sources (biogas, improved cookstoves, solar)</li> <li>Train farmers on establishment of fodder banks and community woodlots</li> <li>Legalize and regulate forest user rights under the PFMPs including grazing, firewood collection etc</li> </ul>	NETFUND, KFS
Loss of grazing areas: Pastoral communities may lose access to customary grazing lands, reducing livestock health and productivity	Long term Moderate impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legalize and regulate forest user rights under the PFMPs including grazing, etc</li> <li>Encourage cutting and carry of grass and fodder</li> <li>Development of grazing plans establishing controlled grazing zones or rotational grazing systems</li> </ul>	NETFUND, KFS

## 6. Consultation, Disclosure and Grievance Mechanisms

Community consultations and screening were held in each sub-catchment to identify risks and mitigation measures. Awareness of the existence of relevant Grievance redress mechanisms was also undertaken with training of GRM champions from identified community groups. Any grievances arising due to implementation of the Lake Naivasha Project will be handled as described in the project's Environmental Social Management Framework. This is through existing county systems, the project-level grievance desk, NETFUND GRM and WWF's independent grievance mechanism

For Complaints and Compliments in relation to this **Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)**:

Write to:

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