

Tana Delta, Kenya

Title



Status: Important Bird and Biodiversity Area and Ramsar Site

Campaign period: December 2007 and ongoing

Background

The Tana Delta in the coastal province of Kenya covers an area of about 130,000ha. It is one of the three most important deltas in the country.

Why it is important

- The delta is both a breeding and a feeding site for thousands of birds. It is home to the endangered Malindi Pipit and the Basra Reed Warbler. Due to fluctuating salinity at the river mouth, a habitat for thousands of snails is created that lures more than 1500 birds

- every day.
- It is also residence to mammals such elephants, lions, hippos and even wild dogs. The Tana River primate national reserve was set up to protect the endemic and critically endangered Tana River Red Colobus and Tana Crested Mangabey.
- The community benefits from the delta through fishing, fresh water, agricultural farming, grazing and tourism.

The threat

- The delta has been under constant threat from developers in all sectors;
- TARDA (Tana River Development Authority) has been awarded tenure rights and ownership of 40,000ha of the delta to plant rice and maize. Sugar companies- Mat international and Mumias Sugar Company have shown interest in acquiring sections to plant sugarcane.
- Bedford Biofuels Inc, a multinational company based in Canada, wants to plant *Jatropha curcas*. The company is seeking for a 45 year lease agreement on 65,000 ha. Titanium extraction has been proposed by Tiomin Kenya Ltd.

Campaign Strategies

- Media and lobbying campaign
- Reaching out to the local communities
- Engagement with policy makers
- Reaching out to the international community

Campaign Outcomes

- The Tana Delta strategic land use plan which is being informed by strategic environment assessment was set up with involvement from the Office of the Prime Minister and Peter Nelson, the International Consultant who is supporting the Secretariat.
- Livelihoods projects have been set up on the ground.
- Listing as a Ramsar Site - wetland of international importance. Read related stories http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-news-archives-2012-kenya-tana/main/ramsar/1-26-45-520%5E25948_4000_0__;
<http://www.naturekenya.org/content/kenya%E2%80%99s-tana-river-delta-designated-newest-ramsar-site-africa>

Links:

IBA factsheet: <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/sitefactsheet.php?id=6412>

Related links:

<http://www.naturekenya.org/content/tana-delta>

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/ourwork/casework/details.aspx?id=tcm:9-228564>

<http://www.tanariverdelta.org/tana/about.html>