

KENYA LAKES SYSTEM IN THE GREAT RIFT VALLEY WORLD HERITAGE SITE
(1060 rev)



December 2016

Executive summary

This report serves to address the issues and recommendations raised the WHC Decision 39 COM 7B.5 and specifically paragraph 8 that called for Kenya to submit an updated report of the state of conservation of the property. The Kenya Lake System in the Great Rift Valley, a natural property of outstanding beauty, was inscribed on the WHL in 2011. The property comprises three inter-linked relatively shallow lakes (Lake Bogoria, Lake Nakuru and Lake Elementaita) covering a total area of 32,034 hectares.

Past efforts towards sustainable management of the property include funding from the UNESCO Regional Office in Nairobi that facilitated for consultative workshops activities focused on the conservation of the Lake's riparian area.

As reported in the SOC report of 2015, the local communities of Lake Bogoria, in particular the Endorois were given loyalties amounting USA Dollars 22,000 (2,000,000 Kenya Shillings) by Novozymes a Bio-prospecting Company that used resources from the lake to develop products. The Baringo County Government also provided funding to sponsor needy local children progress in their education. This as an incentive enhances full and effective participation of the Endorois among other communities in the management of the Lake.

Conservation concerns had been raised by ecologists due to increased interest by hoteliers in development of tourist facilities around Lake Elementaita that arose post-inscription. This called for a resurveying of Lake Elementaita to substantiate the riparian area on the side of the demarcated high use zone. Experts who agreed upon the high water mark contour as the applicable method for delineating the riparian land. Further work is being undertaken to have the new boundaries recognized by the National Land Commission of Kenya and accord the riparian and ecological sensitive areas protection by the relevant government agencies and more by the local communities and adjacent land owners.

Introduction

This report serves to address the issues and recommendations raised by the WHC Decision 39 COM 7B.5 and specifically paragraph 8 that called for Kenya to submit an updated report of the state of conservation of the property.

The Kenya Lake System in the Great Rift Valley, a natural property of outstanding beauty, was inscribed on the WHL in 2011. The property comprises three inter-linked relatively shallow lakes (Lake Bogoria, Lake Nakuru and Lake Elementaita) covering a total area of 32,034 hectares.

WHC Decision 39 COM 7B.5

Para 3: The Kabarnet Declaration made in 2014 with Endorois community is still in place and no party has called for a review of the agreement to date.

Para 4: Geothermal Prospecting and Development is subject to Kenyan Environmental Laws that require Environmental Impact Assessments done before any proposed project is licensed to engage in the activity anywhere in the country. The license is issued by the National Environmental Management Authority of Kenya. To date, no geothermal prospecting has been done at the Kenya Lakes Systems Boundary.

Para 5: As reported in the SOC report of 2015, prior to the US Dollars 22,000 payments to the Lake Bogoria local community, there was a meeting with the local leaders and the Endorois to discuss the issues raised by ACHPR. The local community agreed to work closely with the County Government and the Kenya Wildlife Service to ensure conservation of Lake Bogoria and its environment. The County Government also provided funding and continues to support needy children's progress in their education. This as an incentive enhances full and effective participation of the Endorois among other communities in the management of the lake. The Kenya constitution of 2010 introduced a system of devolved government where the local community is greatly represented in the County Government and effectively involved in decision making on all local resources through county assemblies that are mandated to drive development through universal suffrage.

Para 6: The status quo remains as regards of Lake Natron as reported in the 2015 SOC report

Para 7: Coupled with resurveying work reported in detail under **para 8** below, the Kenya Wildlife Service in collaboration with various stakeholders and the local community is currently finalizing a revised management plan that focus on tackling ecological and developmental issues around Lake Elementaita. The updated management plan that details all the necessary actions to be taken on the lake awaits validation by the stakeholders. A copy of the validated document shall be submitted in due course.

Para 8: The State Party of Kenya wishes to report that it embarked on the Lake Elementaita Wildlife Sanctuary re-survey and boundary variation project.

Lake Elementaita is a component part of the Kenya Lakes System World Heritage Sites and a national wildlife sanctuary set aside to protect and sustainably conserve the water body, the unique birdlife, and associated habitats. The boundary plan for the Sanctuary was developed following boundaries of adjoining land parcels some of which touch the water or are within the riparian. This exposed the Sanctuary to several challenges including but not limited to encroachment, water pollution and blockage of wildlife movements.

A re-survey was therefore carried out under UNESCO/Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) funded project to inform conservation of the lake riparian and ecological sensitive areas. KWS conducted the boundary resurvey in collaboration with the National Land Commission, National Museums of Kenya, Water Resources Management Authority, and the County Government of Nakuru, the Ministry of Lands Housing and Urban Development and other key stakeholders. The main objective of the survey was to identify and map the lake's riparian area so as to propose enhanced Lake Elementaita Wildlife Sanctuary (LEWS) boundary plan. Expected outcomes of the project included increased area of Lake Elementaita Sanctuary and increased role of local community involvement in its management. This would not affect the boundary of Lake Elementaita as a World Heritage Site.

Methodology of the resurveying exercise

The exercise involved meetings of the project technical committee of experts who agreed upon the high water mark contour as the applicable method for delineating the riparian land. The committee comprised of natural resource managers, water officers, land surveyors, physical planners, community wildlife managers and ecologists. Secondary data comprising Cadastral

Maps, Registration Index and Topographical Maps of Lake Elementaita ecosystem were acquired from the Department of Survey of Kenya and used to inform the proposed delineation. The cadastral data was transformed from Cassin to UTM for compatibility with primary data. Area Ortho photographic data taken in 2015 were also acquired from the County Government of Nakuru. On the ground, a high water mark contour 1780 meters from Water Resource Management Authority (WRMA) regular gauging station number 2FA9 was adopted as benchmark and navigated on the ground using handheld GPS unit to define the peak flood perimeter of the lake and offset 30 meters riparian.

Vegetation transition areas were referred to indicate extents of peak floods for example Sedge communities – woody bushes. Primary data was collected by two teams; the land surveyors and planners picked the riparian while the scientists mapped the sensitive areas off the riparian. Observed developments, encroachments, pollution incidences, vegetation aspects, physical features such as hills, cliffs, etc were also recorded. The primary data was collated and superimposed onto the Ortho Aerial imagery map and the LEWS Boundary plan using arc GIS to show location of the contour, the ecological sensitive areas and other features. Registered Index Map (RIM) data were then overlaid onto the boundary plan to show the relationship between the boundary plan and the riparian area. Ortho imagery data aided detection and correction of tilts. The resultant maps inform spatial overlap of private land parcels and riparian whose total area was approximately 435.41 HA.

Ongoing work

Further work is being undertaken to have the new boundaries recognized by the National Land Commission of Kenya and accord the riparian and ecological sensitive areas protection by the relevant government agencies and more by the local communities and adjacent land owners.

Signed on behalf of the State Party

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kibunjia', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Mzalendo Kibunjia, *PhD, EBS*

Director General,

National Museums of Kenya