Darwin Initiative: Final Report

To be completed with reference to the "Writing a Darwin/IWT Report" Information Note: (https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources-for-projects/reporting-forms-change-request-forms-and-terms-and-conditions/).

*It is expected that this report will be a **maximum** of 20 pages in length, excluding annexes)*

Darwin Project Information

Project reference	26-003
Project title	Securing the long-term future of Kenya's largest freshwater wetland
Country(ies)	Kenya
Lead organisation	Nature Kenya (The East Africa Natural History Society – EANHS)
Partner institution(s)	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB),The Inter-ministerial Technical Committee for the sustainable management of Kenya Deltas (IMTC), County Government of Siaya, County Government of Busia, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Yala Ecosystem Site Support Group (YESSG), Yala Planning Advisory Committee (YPAC), Lower Nyandera Water Resource Users Association (WRUA) and Muweri WRUA
Darwin grant value	£341,972
Start/end dates of project	1st April 2019-31st March 2022
Project leader's name	Dr. Paul Matiku
Project website/blog/social media	**www.naturekenya.org**
Report author(s) and date	Emily Mateche, Dr. Paul Matiku, 30th June 2022

1 Project Summary

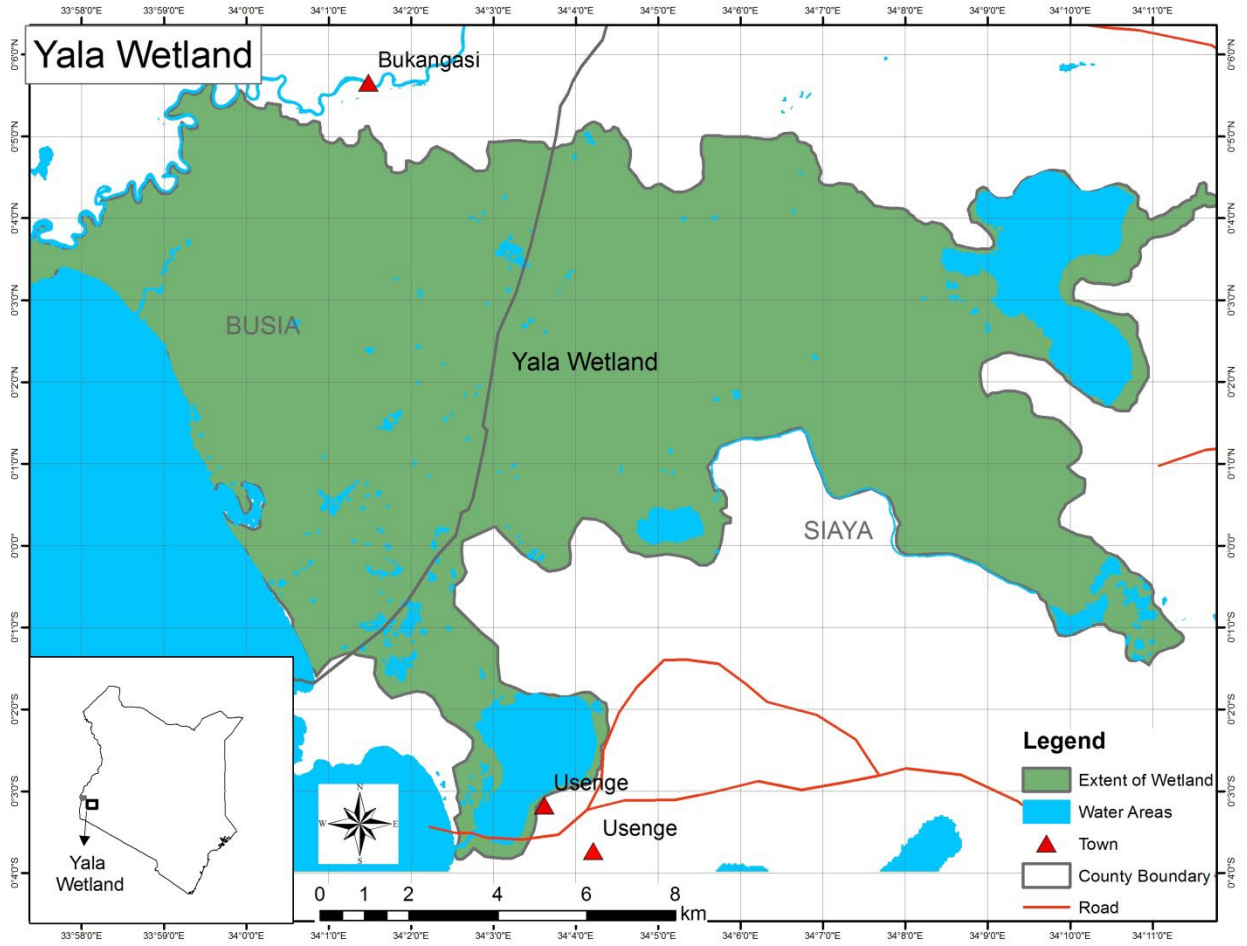

Figure 1: Map of the Yala Wetland showing project location, Source: Dickens Odeny, 2016

Yala Delta covers an area of 20,756 ha on the north-eastern shore of Lake Victoria. It is Kenya's largest freshwater wetland, a key biodiversity area and a proposed Ramsar site. It is a stronghold for the nationally threatened Sitatunga antelope, other larger mammals, numerous wetland birds (including the vulnerable Papyrus Yellow Warbler), and cichlid fish endemic to Lake Victoria (many of which have been extirpated in the main lake by introduced Nile Perch). In addition, it provides numerous essential ecosystem services: it acts as a filter for water flowing into the lake, and provides people who live around it with vital resources such as fish, papyrus and wood. These people number approximately 250,000, and many are extremely poor. Unfortunately, Yala is threatened by the establishment of large-scale agricultural operations and by over-exploitation of its natural resources by competing local communities. The American company Dominion has already converted 1,951 ha of wetlands to rice fields, fish ponds and banana and sugarcane plantations; and communities have converted 2,101 ha to subsistence production. The agricultural conversion work carried out to date has destroyed natural habitats directly, and – together with earlier engineering schemes – caused detrimental hydrological changes over a wider area.

Nature Kenya has worked in the Yala Delta for thirteen years, since 2008. In partnership with county governments of Busia and Siaya, and local communities under Darwin project 21-015, Nature Kenya facilitated the formulation of the Yala Delta Land Use Plan (LUP) informed by Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) between 2014 and 2017. The Yala LUP aims at providing a framework for sustainable management of Yala swamp. In 2019, County Governments of Siaya and Busia endorsed the LUP and SEA .The LUP and SEA further received high level endorsement by H.E. The Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga. In March 2022, the county government of Busia adopted the Yala LUP as policy.

Despite these milestone achievements, threats still persist. Lake Agro Limited took over farming operations from Dominion Farms Limited. Lake Agro Limited applied to the County government of Siaya to lease more land within the swamp to expand sugarcane farming-a move strongly objected by Nature Kenya and the local community conservation champions on

account of threats posed to critical biodiversity and livelihoods (see Annex 123, 124, 125, 136, 137,138,139,140,141,142,438,439,). Most recently in March 2022, in addition to the conversion of the wetland by Lake Agro Limited, a senior government official had began destruction of about 40ha of the wetland riparian land through drainage, construction of canals, heavy clearance of vegetation and access road development in favour of sugarcane farming. Nature Kenya raised serious concerns with NEMA urging them to stop the developments as they do not align with the recommendations of the Yala delta land use plan (see Annex 145, 440,441).

This project was designed to demonstrate LUP and SEA implementation, through the set-up of an 8,404ha Indigenous and Community Conserved Area (ICCA) at the heart of the swamp, to safeguard biodiversity, ecosystem services and livelihoods. We proposed to secure globally important biodiversity and local livelihoods in Kenya's Yala Delta through gazettement of an 8,404-ha Community Conservation Area, underpinned by an integrated management plan implemented by a trained multi-stakeholder management committee within the framework of a Land Use Plan adopted as government policy. Livelihoods would be improved by strengthening producer cooperatives (for papyrus, vegetables, fish, tourism, honey and chicken), benefiting c250,000 people and ensuring continued provision of vital ecosystem services. Project lessons will be widely shared. In the longer term, these gains will be maintained or increased through continued implementation of the LUP, funded largely by the governments of Busia and Siaya counties. Ultimately, at impact level, by EOP, balanced, sustainable management regimes will be established for large wetlands throughout Kenya. Yala swamp will be an important model, to be replicated in at least one other site.

2 Project Partnerships

Partners involvement in project planning and decision making

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB): During the implementation of the initial Darwin project 21-015 in the Yala delta, staff from the **RSPB provided technical support to Nature Kenya**, including training Nature Kenya staff in ecosystem services assessment (Annex 18) **which provided the basis for the establishment of the Indigenous Community Conservation Areas (ICCA)** and informed conservation and restoration objectives within the project site. RSPB continues to provide support to Nature Kenya on policy and advocacy.

County governments of Siaya and Busia: endorsed and **committed to support the adoption of the land use plan as policy** (Annexes 232,233,234,235,249); **provided input and validated the Yala swamp Indigenous and Community Conservation Area (ICCA) management plan** (Annex 14,15,16) **harmonized the Yala swamp ICCA management plan** with the **ICCA business case;** (Annex 17) **agreed on strategies to embed the resource mobilization pillar of the ICCA management plan in the county planning frameworks** (Annexes 19)**; trained the ICCA management committee** (Annex 22 and 23);**10 County Executives provided guidance, overall strategic policy and management direction to the project through the 34 member Project Implementation Committee (PIC)** (Annex 367, 369); **engaged Nature Kenya to provide input into county bills, policies and plans** (Annex 97, 98, 202, 203, 248, 251, 252, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 448).

Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), Kenya Forest Service (KFS), Water Resources Authority (WRA) **provided input & validated the ICCA management plan** (Annex 20), **supported the training of the ICCA management committee on the legal framework for ICCAs** (Annex 24,25,26) and are **members of the PIC** (Annex 367)**.** KWS **facilitated stakeholder consultations, towards registration of Yala ICCA as a community conservancy and Yala Ramsar listing** while NEMA as a principal authority for wetlands in Kenya **complemented KWS role in advancing Yala Ramsar listing** (Annex 46, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 54, 62, 63, 64)**.** KFS **provided technical support to** communities through **hands on training in tree nursery establishment** to 15 groups engaged in **habitat restoration** (Annex 69)**.** WRA **trained and supported** Water Resource Users Associations **(WRUAs)** in the project site within the L. Victoria North catchment area (KAWAYA, Nyandera, Muweri, SOWESA and Bunyala) **to produce Water Sub catchment Management Plans** and committed to support their implementation (Annex 186, 187, 188, 189,

190, 191, 192). **WRA engaged Nature Kenya to provide input into and validate** six regional Basin Plans **including the Lake Victoria North Basin Plan** (Annex 447).

Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee on Sustainable Management of Deltas in Kenya (IMTC) IMTC supported Siaya and Busia county governments by providing technical back-stopping through interpreting the LUP, guiding them through the process of plan adoption, and advising on plan implementation by engaging county planning departments (see pg. 35 of Annex 232). The IMTC facilitated seminars to educate and support the technical teams and county assemblies of Siaya and Busia on the contents of the LUP and SEA, and helped them to draft supportive legislative bills and motions tabled in county assemblies in order to operationalize the LUP and SEA as policy documents. IMTC also disseminated the LUP and SEA through national planning and policy making processes (Annex 205, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 223, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 232, 233, 238, 239).

National Museums of Kenya (NMK) Scientists from NMK carried out baseline and end of project **biodiversity surveys and water quality assessment, trained YESSG members in biodiversity monitoring** and also liaised with YESSG to provide monitoring data to **compile Key Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) annual Status and Trends Report, a key national reporting tool to the CBD** (Annex 83, 84, 85, 86, 90, 91, 92)**.** Kenya Meteorology Department (KMD): **County Departments of Meteorology** in Siaya and Busia provided farmers with **weather/climate information** on weekly and seasonal basis **accompanied by advisory services** from County **departments of Agriculture on timing for land preparation, planting, suitable crops to plant etc.** They also **provided day and night forecasts for fishermen in Lake Victoria** through County Fisheries Departments and Beach Management Units (Annex 93, 94, 95, 96, 163,164). The **County Directors of Meteorology** for Siaya and Busia are **members of the PIC** (Annex 367)**. The Kenya Forest Research Institute (KEFRI)** was involved in conducting baseline household wellbeing survey (Annex 87) and end of project socio-economic surveys (Annex 88). They disseminated the results of the surveys and recommendations through **publishing a peer reviewed journal paper** (Annex 427, 428). The County Commissioners of Siaya and Busia from the **Ministry of Interior and National Coordination provided input to the ICCA management plan** through the Inter-county Land Use Planning Committee (Annex 205)**,** are **members of the PIC** (Annex 367)**; t**hey **chair** the respective **County Tree Planting Committees for the national tree planting campaign**. **The committees set targets, monitored and coordinated county tree planting activities** (Annex 77). Assistant County Commissioners (ACCs) and Chiefs **mobilized riparian land owners for tree planting; convened community sensitization meetings in 62 villages on the LUP, ICCA and supervised elections of committee members** for the Village Natural Resources and Land Use Committees (VNRLUCs) (Annex 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7).

A capacitated YESSG continued working as **community champions for conservation.** YESSG created **awareness in 62 villages on the importance of LUP and ICCA and supported formation of** VNRLUCs (Annex 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11,12); **provided input and validated the ICCA management plan**(Annex 14, 20); **organized events during environment global days** to create awareness on the values of Yala swamp (Annex 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406); **build the capacity of other user groups (WRUAs, BMUs, farmers, weavers) in ICCA management** through mentorship and Trainer of Trainers (ToT) training (Annex 99, 100, 102, 175, 176, 177, 178); developed and implemented advocacy strategies and action plans to engage **in county planning and decision making processes** (Annex 109); mobilized communities to contribute views and represented them in **county decision making fora** (Annex 110, 111, 112, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 132, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 145); **conducted biodiversity monitoring** of the swamp and submitted data to NMK (Annex 162, 165, 166, 167, 170, 171, 172); carried out **habitat restoration through papyrus and tree planting** (Annex 70, 71, 72, 73, 74); **supervised and coordinated community engagement in income generating activities including** mobilization of producer groups for Trainer of Trainers trainings, monitoring and submission of records on production, implementation of the agreed benefit sharing strategy (Annex 160,161, 168, 169, 173, 174, 178, 197, 269, 270, 283); **mobilized resources to support conservation of Yala swamp ICCA** (Annex 119, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134, see pg. 5 of Annex 431).

Yala Planning Advisory Committee (YPAC), Chairpersons **of Lower Nyandera, Muweri and Bunyala WRUAs were actively involved jointly with YESSG in mobilization of community awareness meetings** on **importance of LUP, ICCA and formation of** VNRLUCs (see Annex 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 11) reaching the wider community; **provided input and validated the ICCA management plan** (Annex 14, 20)**; are represented in the ICCA management committee** and are **members of the PIC** (Annex 367)**.** The WRUA chairpersons mobilized their members during an organizational capacity assessment (OCA) exercise to inform capacity building plan for user groups in ICCA management (Annex 178)**.** YPAC and YESSG jointly utilized community gatherings to **engage with 2 Members of County Assembly** - Bunyala South Ward and Usonga Ward and the **National Assembly Member of Parliament for Budalang'i Constituency** to create awareness and rally support for Yala swamp **LUP/SEA** (see Annex 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11).

Particular Partnership Achievements

The chairperson IMTC sustained lobbying among the top **County government executives in Siaya and Busia for the adoption of the LUP. As a result, the counties remained supportive of the adoption process** (Annex 232, 233, 234, 235, 238, 239, 253) **and Busia county adopted the LUP as policy** (Annex 249). The counties **demonstrated willingness to allocate budgets for LUP implementation** (see the provided link https://www.kenyanews.go.ke/busia-passes-a-plan-to-guide-in-protecting-yala-swamp/ see also Annex 249). The **partnerships with government ensured sustainability of actions, lend legitimacy to activities** which made them more acceptable to communities and **provided technical support at no cost to the project.**

YESSG members were **represented in County Planning committees** and **consulted regularly by counties on conservation and development initiatives** (e.g. on County bills, policies, plans Annex 112, 114, 115, 116, 135,145). Based on capacity and track record in conservation, 1 YESSG member (Ibrahim Onyango) and 1 ICCA member (Dedan Olawoh) were recognized and gazetted as honorary Wardens in June 2021, and hence sit in the Wildlife Compensation Committees (Annex 144).

Partner involvement in writing this report
This report is compiled by Nature Kenya using reports (annexes) produced by project staff and partners with the roles described above.

Lessons, strengths, challenges and solutions;
The **project delivery approach** that included **involvement of government and local communities on the ground to deliver actions** and flexible financing and administrative system that allowed transfer of resources to the site level was an excellent one. YESSG and government officers on ground were able to devise ways to continue with project implementation during the Covid 19 lockdown within government protocol. YESSG secured partnership with a local venacular radio station (Bulala FM, Busia County) to carry on awareness creation (Annex 117); livelihood production, TOT training, habitat restoration and biodiversity monitoring were achieved significantly during lockdown courtesy of this approach (Annex 420).

Leadership/community buy-in and securing support is not easy when the subject matter is land which is generally a sensitive issue in Kenya. Securing support for the land use plan concept and the ICCA conservation model was no mean feat. It took intensive sensitization by joint multi-agency teams with well devised strategies to get community support and a highly influential IMTC team to get county leadership on board. An aggressive and dedicated IMTC chairperson sustained lobbying among the top county officials even when the LUP adoption process was derailed in Siaya county by biased interests on commercial farming in Yala swamp amidst a highly charged political environment.

Partners engagement after project completion
With the laid down structures including in policies and plans, there is no doubt each partner engaged in this project will continue their roles post project. Partners were engaged based on their mandates as government service providers or as community beneficiaries trying to derive a livelihood in Yala swamp.

Technical specialists
Based on need, the project management involved NEMA, KFS, WRA in training the ICCA management committee on the legal framework for ICCAs (Annex 24,25,26); KWS in guiding consultations on Yala Ramsar listing (Annex 46,48,49,50,51,52,53,54,237); KFS in establishment of tree nurseries (Annex 69), WRA in training WRUAs to produce Water Sub catchment Management Plans (Annex 183,184,185,186,187,188,189,190,192)**;** Kenyatta University in development of a Business case for the sustainable management of Yala Delta ICCA (Annex 17); KEFRI in conducting socio-economic surveys (Annex 87,88); National Museums of Kenya in conducting biodiversity surveys, water quality assessments and production of GIS maps (Annex 89,90,92); Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives in production of training manuals for climate smart agriculture (Annex 300,301); Business Enterprise Development consultant from the Community and Organizational Development Consultant Institute (CODIT) to develop business plans for livelihood enterprises and offer business advisory services (Annex 267,268,287,288)**.**

3 Project Achievements

3.1 Outputs

We set five outputs in the project which were achieved as follows;

Output 1: The 8,404-ha Community Conservation Area (CCA) within the Yala Delta is protected effectively and in perpetuity through formal gazettement and development of a management plan and associated governance bodies and regulations

At **baseline,** Yala LUP was completed as a technical document and included recommendations to set up ICCA. ICCA did not exist. The project supported the setting up of an 8,404ha ICCA, with a management plan, ICCA committee and local resource use guidelines. Official recognition of the ICCA as a protected area is in advanced stages. The indicators were achieved as follows:

Indicator 1.1: The CCA (established under Darwin project 21-015) is added to the official list of protected areas maintained by the Kenyan government by EOP. The County Governments of Siaya and Busia, national government agencies and 62 villages fully supported the setting up of an 8,404ha ICCA. YESSG, YPAC, Nature Kenya, Chiefs, County Ward & Village Administrators, held meetings in 62 villages to create awareness on Yala swamp LUP/SEA, ICCA and VNRLUCs (Annex 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12) with 5105 people (2965 male; 2140 female) reached with ICCA awareness messages (Annex 455). *Consultatively, integrated management plan for the ICCA was developed*, validated and agreed by stakeholders (Annex 20) as The Yala Delta Indigenous and Community Conserved Area Management Plan, 2019-2029 (Annex 16). For process and stakeholders involved please see: Annex 14, 15, 19, and 21. The ICCA management plan was harmonized with the finalized ICCA business case (Annex 17) drafted in project Y1 (Annex 196) *to ensure both conservation and resource use needs are taken into consideration,* achieving *Indicator 1.2.*

A multi-stakeholder Management Committee was set up for the CCA by EOY1, together with village-level Natural Resource & Land Use Committees and a Water Resource User Association (Indicator 1.3). On 3rd-4th March 2020, stakeholders set up a 47 member Yala swamp ICCA management committee comprising WRUAs, CFAs, BMUs, sand harvesters, farmers, wildlife guides, community wildlife wardens, papyrus products weavers, medicinal gatherers, representatives of the county and national governments, civil society and private sector (Annex 14). On 30th November 2020, the ICCA management committee formed in Y1 was reconstituted into a 17 (14M, 3F) member committee to make it more functional and operational (Annex 20). The County governments of Siaya and Busia, National government and state agencies (KWS, KFS, NEMA, WRA), are co-opted members who sit in the committee as technical matter specialists and advisors. YESSG, YPAC and Chiefs jointly facilitated the formation of VNRLUCs in 62 villages made up of 315 (179M,136 F) officials and 15 (5M,10F) co-opted members (see Appendix I of Annex 1). Chiefs and village elders oversaw VNRLUC elections to get a federated system of community representation in the ICCA governance. The VNRLUCs provide a vehicle for community involvement in ICCA governance and implementation of management actions on the ground (Annex 65).

On 9th September 2021 stakeholders were sensitized on process and benefits of recognition of Yala ICCA as a community conservancy and initiated the process towards recognition of Yala Swamp as a Ramsar site with an action plan to fast track the process (Annex 45, 46, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54). Counties were supportive (Annex 436). The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) issued a letter of no objection (Annex 43) in support of registration of the ICCA management committee. On 28th October 2021 the ICCA management committee was registered as "The Yala Swamp ICCA Wildlife Association" (Annex 44) with a management plan (see Annex 16) thus formalizing the ICCA for inclusion on the list of protected areas in Kenya *(Indicator 1.1)*. The ICCA committee held meetings and developed an action plan to fast track formal recognition and protection of ICCA (Annex 55,56). They wrote letters to county governments of Siaya and Busia and the Director General KWS urging them to fast track the process including issuing letters of no objection (Annex 57,58, 59, 61). On 20th December 2021, stakeholders held a meeting to progress key actions with a technical team constituted to spearhead listing/lobbying process and a road map developed towards Yala Swamp Ramsar listing (Annex 60). On 12th April 2022 the Kenya Ramsar Committee secretariat held a meeting and agreed on 6 proposed sites for designation including Yala swamp. Follow up meetings were planned to assess and prioritize the sites for designation (Annex 62,63,64).

Regulations were developed by EOY2 to guide access to water and papyrus and ensure the protection of the CCA (Indicator 1.4). Guidelines on water and papyrus access (Annex 66, 67) and fisheries (Annex 194,195) developed in Y1 were validated by stakeholders between 30th November 2020-2nd December 2020 (see Annex 21), the regulations are under implementation as part of the local resource use guidelines for the ICCA. The VNRLUCs are actively engaged in ICCA management and restoration through tree and papyrus planting (Annex 65). Within the project period, 150ha of degraded area within the Yala swamp ICCA was restored through direct papyrus planting, 183ha of the River Yala riparian zone was restored through direct tree planting (182,577 indigenous tree seedlings) and 171ha (170917 exotic tree seedlings) of own farm woodlots established (Annex 71, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 81, 82, 146,147,148). Management guidelines were developed (Annex 74) and applied to promote natural regeneration of papyrus in 200ha of degraded areas within Yala swamp and 200ha of riverine vegetation within the River Yala riparian zone, thus ensuring protection of the ICCA.

Output 2: The key 'user groups' in the delta are enabled to jointly manage the CCA through the provision of training and ongoing support

At **baseline,** the Yala LUP was completed as a technical document and included recommendation to set up ICCA. ICCA did not exist and feasibility studies had not been done. The Output 2 and indicators were achieved as follows:

Indicator 2.1: *The capacity of 40 members of the Yala Ecosystem Site Support Group (YESSG) (60% male; 40% female) to provide training on CCA management to 200 crop farmers (50% male; 50% female), 100 livestock herders and 150 (60% male; 40% female) fishers, and to represent these groups in county decision-making processes, was built by EOY1*
The capacity of YESSG members was built, equipping them with skills in various areas to enable them provide training on ICCA management to other ICCA user groups. Within the project period, 542 (304M, 238F) individuals (representing 56% male; 44% female) people including YESSG members were trained as trainers of trainers (ToT) in organizational capacity assessment (OCA) (Annex 176, 177, 178); chicken keeping (Annex 100, 350); basics in fish farming and formulation of fish feeds (Annex 101, 264, 273); use of monitoring tools to track livelihoods interventions (Annex 102, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316); leadership, governance, policy and advocacy (Annex 103); biodiversity monitoring (Annex 104); basics in tour guiding & bird identification (Annex 105, 278); fundamentals of ornithology, papyrus product development (Annex 106, 360); climate smart agriculture and conservation farming (Annex 107, 265, 300, 301, 302, 329); value addition, product packaging, marketing and book keeping (Annex 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357); principles of formation of cooperatives and management (Annex 108, 343). The ToTs were assigned duties to build the capacity of Yala swamp user groups in governance and ICCA management (see page 79 of Annex 302). Crop farmers, livestock farmers, fisherfolk, wildlife guides and other user groups who constitute YESSG form the ICCA governance structure in partnership with county and national government agencies. Capacitated YESSG is now ably representing Yala swamp communities

in decision making fora at the county level with notable outcomes (in county planning-see Annex 112, 135; county budgeting-see Annex 116; policy development-see Annex 115, 121,122; stakeholder consultations-see Annex 114, 120; advocacy against illegal activities- see Annex 111, 118, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142; publicity-see Annex 159).

Indicator 2.2: *Training and representation was provided by YESSG thereafter, with support from Nature Kenya as needed.* The project employed the on-site/mentorship ToT training strategy and supported selected ToTs trained in various areas as detailed in Indicator 2.1 above to transfer skills and knowledge among other beneficiaries and the wider community. For instance, within the project period, trained agricultural extension officers carried out hands on training of 150 (57M 93F) ToT farmers on CSA/CA (Annex 329). Through continued partnership with County Departments of Agriculture, the extension officers sustained hands on training of beneficiary farmers on field practices in CSA/CA as ToTs, the ToT farmers were supported to train 10 farmers each and as a result all the 250 project beneficiaries on CSA/CA were trained. Based on the expertise build through trainings and experience, YESSG members are represented in County Planning committees and are consulted regularly by counties on conservation, livelihood and development initiatives including county bills, policies, plans (see Annex 114, 115, 120, 121,122). 1 YESSG member (Ibrahim Onyango) and 1 ICCA member (Dedan Olawoh) were recognized and gazetted as honorary Wardens in June 2021, (see Gazette notice Annex 144) and hence sit in the Wildlife Compensation committees.

Indicator 2.3: *The capacity of 60 members of the multi-stakeholder Management Committee (60% male; 40% female) to oversee management of the CCA was built by EOY2* In addition to the individuals trained as detailed in Indicator 2.1 above, 16 (12M, 4F) (representing 75% male; 25% female) members of the ICCA management committee were trained in legal frameworks for ICCAs in Kenya (see Annex 21) building their capacity to oversee management of the ICCA (see details in Indicator 2.1 above).

YESSG who coordinate community engagement in income generating activities developed guidelines for community contributions towards sustainable financing of the ICCA management actions from proceeds of livelihoods initiatives funded through the project (see Annex 197). Through an agreed benefit sharing strategy, 10% of all proceeds from livelihood enterprises (crop farming, beekeeping, chicken farming, fish farming, papyrus product development, tour guiding) goes to a conservation kitty to support simple but critical conservation actions including ICCA management meetings, habitat restoration, biodiversity monitoring, awareness and advocacy. Within the project period, livelihoods beneficiaries remitted Ksh. 555,657 (£ 3,923) to the conservation kitty. YESSG contributed Ksh. 127,650 (£ 924) from the conservation kitty towards supporting awareness (Annex 201), publicity (Annex 200) and advocacy activities (see budgets in Annex 198 and 199) while the rest of the monies (77%) were ploughed back into the livelihood enterprises. YESSG mobilized resources to support sustainable production and conservation of Yala swamp ICCA (see Annexes 119, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134) achieving ***Indicator 2.4*** *(All three user groups are making major contributions to the sustainable management of the CCA by EOP, coordinated by the Management Committee)* and ***Indicator 2.5*** *(By EOP community production cooperatives are contributing 10% of all proceeds from sales of produce towards CCA management)*

Indicator 2.6 *By EOY1, feasibility studies on using ecosystem services to generate income for CCA management were done, and the best approach to realising income in this way is agreed* The Nature Kenya Science Advisor conducted studies to assess the feasibility of using ecosystem services to generate income for ICCA management (Annex 17). The feasibility studies report was harmonized with the ICCA management plan (see pages 89 of management plan (Annex 16) and pages 7-10 of the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) based business case-Annex 16). The feasibility studies concluded that some of the swamp's ecosystem services including climate regulation, water services and ecotourism can be commercialized to provide resources for sustainable management of the Yala swamp ICCA. On 3rd-4th March 2020, during stakeholders consultative meetings (see Annex 14), stakeholders drawn from county governments of Siaya and Busia, NEMA, KFS, KWS, WRA, KMD, Ministry of Interior and National Coordination, YESSG, YPAC, VNRLUCs, WRUAs, CFAs and BMUs estimated

the budget for implementing the Yala ICCA management plan at about Ksh. 101.8 million per year. The stakeholders agreed that the funds to implement the plan will be mobilized from the county and national government-through mainstreaming implementation of Yala Swamp ICCA in the government budgeting processes; fundraising from development partners; engaging the private sector players through PES related initiatives and harnessing local community contribution from livelihood enterprises for sustainable management of Yala Swamp ICCA. The stakeholders established the initial structures and systems for ICCA management to operate effectively with the project investing significantly in public awareness creation and community sensitization (Annex 1, 2, 3, 4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12), advocacy (Annex 109, 110,111,112,113,116, 117,118,121,122,123,124,125,126,127,135,136,137,138,139,140,141,142,143,145,146,150,15 1, 152,153,154,155,156,157,158), capacity building (Annex 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 176, 177, 178, 264, 265, 273, 278, 300, 301, 302, 329, 343, 350, 352, 360), biodiversity monitoring (Annex 83,84,85), habitat restoration (Annex 38, 39, 40, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81), building partnerships (see details in section 2 above), and in laying foundation for PES based income streams (see Annex 17) while the county and national governments invested in improvement of physical infrastructure especially roads. In the next 5 years, the bulk of the activities including those related to habitat and biodiversity conservation, management programme and the recurrent cost of maintaining staff to manage the ICCA will in the long term be supported by PES related income streams including climate regulation, water supply and purification, ecotourism, and from community conservation enterprises. It was estimated that PES related initiatives will raise about Ksh.104.3 million annually to run ICCA activities (see pg. 8 of Annex 17). This is about the annual budget of implementing the ICCA management plan, though income from PES related streams e.g. ecotourism are currently low (see incomes in Annex 452,453,454,455) but will grow as mechanisms for exploiting more ecosystem services are explored.

Indicator 2.7 *Informed by these feasibility studies, a CCA business case that includes a sustainable financing plan has been developed, applied and promoted to the private sector and county governments by EOY2* Informed by the feasibility studies as detailed above, the Nature Kenya Science Advisor developed an ICCA business case (see Annex 17). It provides details on the estimated value of ecosystem services provided by Yala Delta ICCA when the LUP is implemented (see pg. 4 of Annex 17), a business plan for sustainable provision of ecosystem services (pg 7), a Yala swamp ICCA implementation business plan pg 8-12 of Annex 17, with an elaboration on how each of the identified income streams can be realized and guidelines on financing of ICCA management (pg 13). The business case further identified the various sources of funding for Yala ICCA implementation, necessary actions to be carried out by various actors to achieve targets and the revenue that can be generated once the actions are implemented. County governments already mainstreamed some of the actions and recommendations through CIDPs and were prioritized for implementation through ADPs. Involvement of counties and the private sector especially in the carbon market as one of the PES income streams remains area for further engagement and capacity building.

Output 3: The Land Use Plan (LUP) for the entire delta is adopted as official policy by the governments of Busia and Siaya counties, and capacity is established within these governments to implement the plan effectively

At **baseline,** the Yala LUP was completed as a technical document with no endorsement. The Output 3 and indicators were achieved as follows:

*The LUP (developed under Darwin project 21-015) is adopted as policy by EOY1 (**Indicator 3.1**).* On 8th July 2019 five members of the IMTC met in Siaya, discussed and prepared presentations on the Yala SEA and LUP to catalyse county government endorsement of the SEA and LUP (Annex 213, 214, 215, 216). On 10h and 12th July 2019, the IMTC held briefing meetings on LUP/SEA respectively with 48 (40M, 8F) members of the Inter-county Land Use Planning Committee including county executives and 58 (47M, 11F) YPAC members (Annex 204, 205, 208). 3 Members of County Assembly (MCA) attended the Inter-county Land Use

Planning Committee held on 12th July 2019. The Vice Chair for Lands Committee in the County Assembly of Siaya, Hon. Osewe Odongo, expressed support for the LUP (see Annex 205 pp.13). On 11th July 2019, the IMTC held a briefing meeting with H.E. Cornel Rasanga who signed off the LUP and SEA at this meeting (Annex 206). H.E. Sospeter Ojaamong Governor Busia County also signed the documents after briefing meetings with county executives in Busia (see Annex 207). On 27th September 2019, the LUP and SEA were signed by H.E. The Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga Prime Minister, Republic of Kenya (2008-2013) and African Union High Representative for Infrastructure Development (Annex 209). 1,000 copies of the LUP and SEA were published and distributed to national government agencies, County governments of Siaya and Busia and communities in Yala Swamp (Annex 224, 236)

One on one meetings were held with county executives for environment and land in Siaya and Busia counties. The executives endorsed the LUP and SEA by signing in the preliminary pages (Annex 217, 218). On 8th and 9th March 2021, the IMTC held briefing meetings on LUP/SEA respectively with 38 (28M, 10F) members from the County executive and County Assembly of Siaya and 32 (21M, 11F) members from the County executive and County Assembly of Busia (Annex 232, 233). 10 (8M, 22F) MCAs from Siaya and 16 (9M, 7F) MCAs from Busia were part of the meeting where House Committee Chairs for Agriculture and Lands from both counties reiterated support for the LUP (see Annex 232 pp. 4 and Annex 233 pp.4-5). Technical staff also attended the 2 meetings. During the meetings, the members were sensitized on the importance on LUP/SEA, the significance of adoption and mainstreaming LUP implementation in county planning (Annex 228, 229, 230, 231). As a result, the County Executive for Lands, Siaya County developed a roadmap to guide adoption on Yala swamp SEA/LUP within a timeframe of 3 months by June 2021 while the County government of Busia developed a work plan to guide adoption on Yala swamp SEA/LUP within a timeframe of 3 months by end of June 2021 (Annex 234, 235).

Nature Kenya and the IMTC prepared policy briefs and cabinet memos and availed these to County executives for onward engagement with county assemblies on adoption of the finalized LUP as policy (Annex 210, 211, 212). On 7th and 8th September 2021, briefing meetings with the 12 County Executives and 37 Members of County Assembly (MCAs) from Siaya and Busia were held to fast track the adoption of LUP as official policy (Annex 244, 245, 256). During the meetings, both the Executives and MCAs committed support for adoption of Yala LUP and SEA. The IMTC team committed to support clerks of lands committees in Siaya and Busia to prepare motions on the adoption of the LUP for tabling in the respective assemblies (Annex 253). As a result, on 22nd March 2022, the Yala swamp LUP was tabled in the Busia County Assembly, debated and adopted as policy on 24 h March 2022 (Annex 249). In Siaya county, on the other hand, the adoption process was disrupted by political interests as highlighted in Section 1 above in favour of allocation of land within Yala swamp to Lake Agro Limited for commercial sugarcane farming. However, with the partnerships formed, established structures both at the national and community level plus continued aggressive lobbying, Siaya county will no doubt be obligated to follow suit with adoption.

The County Planning Departments (CPDs) are supported to create a detailed, up-to-date map of the delta by EOY2, using satellite imaging with ground-truthing ***(Indicator 3.2).*** A GIS expert within the IMTC was engaged to produce GIS maps using GIS technology and satellite imagery. GIS maps were produced showing various aspects including land use and land cover and extent, land use and land cover in a balanced scenario, agricultural potential areas, human settlements, sensitive and vulnerable areas, degraded areas and human settlement in the ICCA etc. (Annex 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37). The GIS expert committed to and shared shape files of maps and other GIS products in the Yala LUP and SEA with the County Planning Departments (CPDs) of Siaya and Busia (see pg. 35 of Annex 233). The maps will provide a basis for CPDs to create a detailed and updated map of the delta as part of LUP implementation once counties allocate budgets.

The CPDs are supported to create and populate a register recording all land- and water-use activities in the delta by EOY2 ***(Indicator 3.3).*** A zero draft Strategic Plan for Water for Siaya County is in place (Annex 240). Desktop policy analysis was conducted to provide input for the development of a land and water register for Yala Delta (Annex 179). Subsequently, stakeholder meetings were planned (Annex 241) with a proposed framework for the development of a land and water register for the delta (Annex 242, 243). CPDs together with

the ICCA management committee will be engaged to generate a register of all land and water use activities in the delta as part of the input before validation of the Siaya County Strategic Plan for Water within the Siaya county financial year 2021/2022.

A cross-county Yala Sustainable Development Board is established by EOY1 to oversee land and water use in the delta, and regulations and procedures are developed to ensure that these resources are utilised sustainably and equitably **(*Indicator 3.4).*** Modalities of establishing a cross-county management structure for Yala swamp generally was flagged up as part of the discussions during the meetings with the County governments of Siaya and Busia on 8th-9th March 2021 (see pp. 35-36 of Annex 233). Specifically, establishment of a Yala swamp board to oversee land and water use in the delta was recommended as an area for further discussions in subsequent joint meetings between the 2 county governments because land and water governance requires a lot of consensus building with stakeholders. With Busia county government already a step ahead with the LUP adoption process, there is possibility of starting with County based boards then later formation of a joint coordination body with regulations and procedures to ensure that land and water resources within the delta are utilised sustainably and equitably.

County governors and assemblies are supported throughout the project to advocate for beneficial changes in national policy **(*Indicator 3.5).*** The IMTC presented a cabinet memo to the Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of Environment emphasizing on the importance of supporting upstream counties on maintaining ecosystem services including catchment protection applying lessons learnt from Tana delta (Annex 227).

Output 4: The poorest and most vulnerable people living in and around the Yala Delta are empowered to further enhance their livelihoods in ways that support the long-term conservation of the delta's natural resources

At **baseline,** community production was disorganized using unsustainable methods. The output 4 and the indicators and sub indicators were largely achieved as follows:
Indicator 4.1: *By EOY1 a wholesale market has been established at a suitable site to act as a 'hub' for the sale of delta products to large external purchasers* Feasibility studies were conducted in Y1 to establish the best location of a wholesale market hub for delta products (Annex 267). From the feasibility studies report and stakeholder consultations, Siaya and Busia towns were identified as key sites for the wholesale market, Usenge and Yala towns were also identified as potential market hubs. Based on input from engagement with stakeholders including YESSG, the feasibility studies report and business plans developed in Y1 were revised (Annex 287 and 288) to include a marketing strategy for engagement of private sector. The stakeholders agreed on establishment of the market hub, bulking centres, market outlets, branding, value addition, external buyers and governance of the market hub among other things. In line with the recommendations of the feasibility studies report, the project supported the establishment of an operational bulking centre/outlet for papyrus products within Siaya town (Annex 289). The centre doubles up as a display/ market outlet for other nature based products. The harvest of honey from beekeepers is currently bulked, packaged and sold at the centre. The project also established an operational poultry unit at Rawalo village, Siaya county for rearing chicks before supply to farmers to improve the indigenous chicken (Annex 290). The unit also serves as a bulking and marketing center for chicken farmers. A similar poultry unit is under establishment within another targeted cluster of trained chicken farmers in Siginga village, Busia county, to serve as a chicken market hub replicating lessons learnt under an AfriEvolve project with financial support from The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union - NABU (Annex 328).

Indicator 4.2a: *By EOY1 200 existing crop farming households made up of 1,000 people (direct beneficiaries being approximately 50% female, 50% male) have been helped to form cooperatives and given training and support in wholesale marketing* To build the capacity of livelihood beneficiaries, producer groups 119 (68M, 51F) households (43% female, 57% male) were trained as ToTs in business planning and entrepreneurship (Annex 271), bookkeeping, value addition, packaging and marketing (Annex 352) equipping them with skills to effectively engage in wholesale marketing. Beneficiaries were also equipped with skills in specific areas

as follows: 150 (57M, 93F) crop farmers trained as ToTs in sustainable climate-smart production (Annex 265, 286, 300, 301, 318, 329, 330); 83 (70M, 13F) fish farmers trained as ToTs fish production (Annex 101, 264, 350); 91 (14M, 77F) chicken farmers trained as ToTs in chicken production (Annex 100, 351); 81 (64M, 17F) beekeepers trained as ToTs in honey production (Annex 359); 31 (18M, 13F) weavers trained as ToTs in papyrus product development (Annex 106, 360) and 38 (27M, 11F) guides trained as ToTs in wildlife guiding (Annex 105). Optimization models for the various livelihood enterprises were consultatively developed and operationalized (Annex 293). During the feasibility studies (Annex 287) and business planning (Annex 288), we found out that some YESSG members are committee members at the existing wholesale fresh farm produce markets in Siaya, Yala and Usenge towns. We used the opportunity to support farmers to market their produce.

During business planning for livelihood enterprises in Y1 (see annex 268) an assessment conducted on cooperatives found out that farmers (crop, fish, chicken, beekeepers) and weavers had existing common interest groups for production, bulking and marketing with potential to be formalized into cooperatives. Between August-September 2021, pre-cooperative sensitization trainings were conducted for producer groups (Annex 108) including the existing common interest groups (crop farmers, fish `farmers, beekeepers, chicken farmers, weavers). A total of 82 (51M, 31F) (38% female, 62% male) producers were trained by County Cooperatives Officers on principles of formation of cooperatives and their role in production, bulking and marketing (Annex 343). An economic appraisal was conducted to determine viability and sustainability of the producer/marketing cooperatives (Annex 343). Through the project, a total 5 cooperatives were established to enhance production, bulking and marketing for community producers (Annex 344,345,346,347,348,349).

Indicator 4.2b: *By EOP these crop farmers are selling at least 50% of their produce to large external purchasers through the market hub* 200 (131M, 69F) crop farming households made up of 1,000 (470M, 530F) people produced 64243.5kg of high value vegetables & cereals under conservation agriculture. A total of 13214kg of the produce worth Ksh. 528,540 (£ 3571) was consumed within households and 51029.5kg sold for Ksh. 2,267,923 (£ 15,324) in market centres, local hotels and restaurants in Siaya and Busia (see Annex 319). 32 (6M, 26F) households (part of the 200 benefitting households) sold 12 tonnes of sorghum and soya beans to East African Breweries Limited (EABL) through contractual farming and later switched to Farm Market Alliance when EABL pulled out of the project site upon expiry of contract. *By EOP the incomes of these households has increased by an average of 30%* (***Indicator 4.2c****)* The total income for the farmers in project Y3 (Ksh. 1,380,464 (£ 9,327) were up from project Y2 earnings of Ksh. 887,459 (£ 6,723) indicating an average household income increase of 56% (see Annex 453, 454). Low harvest due to low rainfall, invasion of sorghum by birds and poor germination of some seeds e.g. soya beans were highlighted by farmers as some of the challenges leading to low yields in conservation agriculture (see EOP survey results in Annex 88).

Indicator 4.3a: *By EOY1 150 households made up of 750 people have been provided with fishponds and associated training and support (with the direct beneficiaries of training etc being approximately 40% female and 60% male)* 150 (100M, 50F) households made up of 750 (353M, 397F) people were supported to stock 17 fish ponds-12 ponds with tilapia *(Oreochromis niloticus)* and 5 ponds with catfish *(Clarias gariepinus)* (see Annex 304). A total of 83 (70M, 13F) ToT fish farmers (16% female and 84% male) were trained in fish production equipping them with skills on basics in fish production, formulation of quality feeds, packaging and storage of feeds and record keeping (Annex 101, 350). The benefitting fish farmers were supported to form cooperatives for fish production and marketing as detailed under *Indicator 4.2a above* thus achieving **Indicator 4.3b***. By EOP participating fish farmers are selling fish and fish products to local people and at least one large-scale buyer and household incomes have increased by an average of 30%* **(Indicator 4.3c).** By EOP, the ponds yielded 13,245kg of fish (see Annex 321, 332). A total of 1617kg worth Ksh. 546,733 (£ 3,694) was consumed within households and 11215kg sold for Ksh. 3,900,300 (£ 26,353) to local hotels and fish mongers at Usenge fish market. The income for the fish farmers increased from 813,500 (£6,163) in project Y1 to (Ksh. 1,373,900 (£10,408) in project Y2, to Ksh. 1,712,900 (£11,574) in project Y3 indicating a mean household income increase of 46% (see Annex 452, 453, 454).

Beneficiaries highlighted some of the challenges that affected fish yields and reduced income including predation, difficulty in draining ponds especially during the harvesting of cat fish in rainy seasons, extreme floods and drought events.

Indicator 4.4a: *By EOY1 100 households made up of 500 people have been provided with beehives and associated training and support (direct beneficiaries 50% female and 50% male)* 100 (53M, 47F) households made up of 500 people (235M, 265F) were supported to produce honey from three apiaries with a total of 100 beehives (Annex 263). A total of 81 (64M, 17F) ToT beekeepers (21% female and 79% male) were trained equipping them with skills in beekeeping basics, setting up an apiary, beekeeping equipment, stocking beehives, management of bees (feeding, inspection of hives, predator/pests control), honey harvesting processing and marketing (Annex 274, 275, 359). *By EOP the income of these households has increased by an average of 25%* ***(Indicator 4.4b).*** By EOP, the beehives yielded 410.5kg of honey (see Annex 305). A total of 114.25kg worth Ksh. 93,950(£ 635) was consumed within households and 320kg sold for Ksh. 236,730 (£ 1600) at the product centre in Siaya town and households within Siaya and Busia counties (see Annex 326, 333). The total income from honey production in project Y3 (Ksh. 127,360 (£ 861) were up from project Y2 earnings of Ksh. 76,120 (£ 577) indicating an average household income increase of 67% (see Annex 453, 454). Beneficiaries highlighted some of the challenges that affected honey yields and reduced income including infestation of beehives by pests, partial filling of beehives thus resulting in poor yield of honey/products, drought which affected sources of forage for the bees among others.

Indicator 4.5a: *By EOY1 50 households made up of 250 people have been trained and supported to initiate chicken-rearing as a business (direct beneficiaries 75% female and 25% male).* Women from 50 households made up of 250 (118M, 132F) people were supported to establish a poultry production unit (see Annex 334). A total of 91 (14M, 77F) ToT chicken farmers were trained equipping them with skills in improved production of local indigenous poultry; good poultry production practices; chick management; good breeding and stock selection; management of chicks; management of layers; vaccines and vaccination; disease prevention and control measures; feeds, feeding and egg handling; management of chicken equipment; common bio-security measures; and general farm management for good poultry production and record keeping (Annex 100, 351). *By EOP the income of these households has increased by an average of 30%* ***(Indicator 4.5b)*** BY EOP, over 1240 chicken (2232kg) were produced. A total of 944 (1699kg) chicken were bulked and sold to community event caterers within Yala township market for Ksh. 604,200 (£ 4,082) and 296 chicken (502.2kg) worth Ksh. 119,175 (£ 805) were consumed within households. From the EOP survey, the total earnings from chicken-rearing represented an average household income increase of 45.3% from baseline earnings in 2019. Beneficiaries highlighted some of the challenges that affected chicken production including poor breed chick stock from suppliers and prevalence of diseases.

Indicator 4.6a: *By EOY1 55 households made up of 275 people that are already producing papyrus products such as baskets have been trained and supported to form a marketing cooperative (direct beneficiaries 40% female and 60% male).* 55 households made up of 275 (130M, 145F) people were supported to produce high value papyrus and palm leaves products. 31 (18M, 13F) ToT weavers were trained equipping them with skills in smooth edge finishing, cushion fixing, glass fitting etc (Annex 284). *By EOP these households are selling their products through the market hub and their incomes have increased by an average of 25%* ***(Indicator 4.6b)*** Benefiting households produced over 9067 assorted products (see Annex 323), sold 4667 assorted high value papyrus and palm frond products worth Ksh. 2,579,267(£ 17,427) at a market centre-Mubwayo, in Busia, and the product centre in Siaya Town (see Annex 289, 335, 362). The income for weavers in project Y1 was Ksh. 639,800 (£4,847), the earnings dropped to (Ksh. 481,330 (£3,646) in project Y2 but increased to Ksh. 1,458,167 (£9,852) in project Y3 indicating a mean household income increase of 89% (see Annex 452, 453, 454). Beneficiaries highlighted COVID 19 pandemic as one of the challenges that drastically affected sales in the second year of the project due to government protocols that restricted movement of people in target markets.

Indicator 4.7a: *By EOY1 50 households made up of 250 people have been supported to develop businesses based on the sustainable, climate-smart production of high-value vegetable crops (direct beneficiaries 50% female and 50% male)* 50 (25M, 25F) crop farming households made up of 250 (118M, 132F) people were supported to produce high value horticultural crops including kales, capsicum, coriander & indigenous vegetables using climate smart agriculture techniques. 50 (25M, 25F) ToT crop farmers were trained in sustainable climate-smart production techniques (Annex 265, 286, 300, 301, 329). *By EOP the income of these households has increased by an average of 25%* ***(Indicator 4.7b)*** Benefiting households produced 44,400.55kg of vegetables. A total of 10469kg of the produce worth Ksh. 394,960 (£ 2,669) was consumed within households and 33,931kg sold for Ksh. 1,614,215(£ 10,907) in market centres and local hotels and restaurants in Siaya and Busia (Annex 331). The EOP survey indicated that the total earnings from climate smart agriculture represented an average household income increase of 75.4% from the baseline earnings in 2019. The significant increase in income was attributed to knowledge gained from trainings, provision of certified seeds, provision of water pumps for irrigation, reduction of expenses and farmers making more profit.

Indicator 4.8: *By EOP 30 people (50% male and 50% female) have been trained to be wildlife guides and their annual income has increased by an average of 25%.* A total of 38 (27M, 11F) guides were trained as ToTs in wildlife guiding (Annex 105). 18 active guides out of the 30 trained tour guides earned a combined income of Ksh. 756,000 (£ 5,108) from guiding tourists visiting the Yala Swamp and lower River Yala (Annex 285, 336). The income for tour guides in project Y1 was Ksh. 353,000 (£2,674), the earnings dropped to (Ksh. 68,000 (£515) in project Y2 but increased to Ksh. 335,000 (£2,264) in project Y3 indicating a mean household income increase of 14% (see Annex 452, 453, 454). Beneficiaries highlighted COVID 19 pandemic as one of the challenges that adversely affected income due to government protocols that restricted movement of people-and tourists to various destinations.

Indicator 4.9a *By EOY1 meetings have been held with the private sector to discuss their engagement and* ***Indicator 4.9b*** *By EOP at least one private sector player is actively engaged in each of the production chains (farming, fish, beekeeping, poultry and papyrus products)* In the first and 2 second year of the project, a number of consumers were **identified to be engaged as potential buyers** for community products. They ranged from **large companies** like the East African Breweries Limited (EABL) to **smaller businesses such as local hotels and learning institutions. The project supported establishment of initial contacts** with the buyers and a good proportion of the **producers were engaged in business** with the buyers.

32 (6M, 26F) beneficiary crop farming households engaged directly with East African Breweries Limited (EABL) through contracts for growing sorghum and soya beans varieties used in brewing beer. 7 (3M,4F) beneficiary crop farming individuals representing 4 large crop farming clusters each with over 50 farmers were **engaged directly** with 3 **schools through tenders for the supply of vegetables** (Annex 291). 56 (38M, 18F) beneficiary fish farming households engaged **local hotels and fish mongers at Usenge fish market** to sell their fish at competitive prices. Fish farmers through their business committee engaged **Pacho Farms Limited in Siaya for optimization of the feeds production enterprise in Usenge town. Proposals were put forward** by the farmers **to develop a business model** for optimal operation of the feeds production unit leveraging on managerial/ business skills offered by Pacho Farms Limited (Annex 292). Beekeepers **held meetings** with **Western Honey Flows Limited for sell of honey**. They **agreed in principle** that the two parties will **negotiate and agree on the prices before every harvesting season** and that it would be mandatory for the company's experienced apiarists to be present at the apiaries during each harvesting season for purposes of quality control (Annex 339). Chicken farmers through their business committee **contacted Chicken Basket Limited in Kisumu for commercialization of the chicken enterprise**. Under consideration through contractual engagement was the supply of chicks, medication and ready market for mature chicken and eggs (Annex 340).Tour guides **established linkages with Lake Victoria Tourism Association (LVTA) for promotion of ecotourism.** Through the linkages, tour guides established strategies to receive support from the national government Tourism Stimulus Fund towards the revival of the ecotourism sector post the Covid-19 pandemic (Annex 342). Through the partnership with LVTA, selected tour guides whose income was worst affected during the Covid 19 pandemic started receiving a monthly stipend of Ksh. 4,000 from October 2021 as a coping strategy to support the guides as

the economy gradually recovers from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Weavers **engaged** with **Kisumu Innovation Centre (KICK)** through **training/mentorship by professional artisan weavers** and **providing market linkages for papyrus and palm leaves products** (Annex 341).

Baseline and EOP socio-economic surveys were conducted on household wellbeing, diet and socioeconomic status in communities around the ICCA (Annex 87,88). The baseline report indicated that 78.6% of all households fell under the poor category based on community level socioeconomic characterization. The EOP report, showed that generally there was improvement on diet and income. A comparison between the 2019 baseline and 2022 showed that the number of respondents who earned less than Ksh. 2500 reduced by 78% whereas those earning over Ksh 10,000 increased by at least 64% suggesting a great impact due to the project influence. Further, 85.1% of respondents attributed the project influence for their income increase to the income in climate smart agriculture, attributed to making more profit, knowledge gained from training, provision of certified seeds and quality fingerlings, provision of water pumps, and reduction of expenses. Despite Covid-19 protocols which affected sales in general due to limited movement, the returns from various livelihood sources was higher the end of the project than at the start except for papyrus products (see pg.1 of Annex 88)

Output 5 Application of lessons learned from the project at other large wetland sites in Kenya and beyond is encouraged through communication actions reaching all key stakeholders

The **baseline condition** was that there were low levels of awareness on LUP among stakeholders. By EOP, there was increased level of awareness on LUP/ICCA concept among stakeholders and lessons learned from the project were widely shared. The output 5 and the indicators were achieved as follows:
Project outcomes are presented at meetings and conferences attended by relevant policy-makers, such as those associated with World Environment Day ***(Indicator 5.1).***The project outcomes and outputs were presented at meetings with County executives and Members of County Assembly for Siaya and Busia County (Annex 231 and 216) and Project Implementation Committee (PIC) members (see Annexes 365, 366 and 371) . Project briefs, updates, lessons and recommendations were also presented to many stakeholders including: the Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee on Deltas, the National Environment Management Authority, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Kenya Forest Service (KFS), Water Resources Authority (WRA), Kenya Forest Research Institute (KEFRI), and the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KNCCI) (see Annexes 365,366,368,372).

County governments throughout Kenya are lobbied to support the creation and management of additional CCAs ***(Indicator 5.2).***The county governments of Siaya and Busia supported the set up of the Community Conservation Area in Yala Delta as a demonstration of the Land-Use-Plan implementation. Creation of a conservancy within the ICCA in Busia County was included in the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) (see Annex on the link https://www.devolution.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Busia-CIDP-2018-2022.pdf). On 4th February 2020, during the World Wetlands Day event at Usalu Village, the Siaya County Governor's speech (delivered by the County Executive for Water, Environment &Natural Resources-Hon. George Rubiik) emphasized the importance of the balanced approach in the LUP as key in safeguarding the unique biodiversity found within Yala swamp ICCA. (see pg. 4 of Annex 393). During the International Day of Forests event on 21st March 2021 at Luthehe Village, Siaya County, the County Executive for Water, Environment & Natural Resources in his speech lauded and publicized the ICCA sustainability model adopted by the Yala LUP as a concept to be replicated in the management of other wetlands within and beyond Siaya county to safeguard natural resources that support livelihoods (see pg. 3 of Annex 399). Set up of the Yala ICCA is modelled after the Tana Delta process where ICCA set up was completed. ICCAs are also being set up in Dakatcha Woodland Key Biodiversity Area.

Based on successful piloting of the LUP/SEA model in Tana and Yala delta, the Netherlands government wrote to Nature Kenya expressing interest to support up-scalling of the SEA/LUP model in Nyando delta (see Annex 385).

The Kenya Wildlife Service was lobbied to provide wildlife management support in other CCAs, including that in the Tana Delta on the Kenyan coast ***(Indicator 5.3).***Through continued well

established partnership, KWS remains committed to provide wildlife management in Yala swamp the same way they have done in the Tana Delta including through trainings on legal provisions for CCAs in Kenya and co-chairing of the ICCA Committee with County governments of Tana River and Lamu.

Awareness of wetlands and the need to manage them sustainably was raised among non-specialist audiences through a range of broader dissemination activities achieving ***Indicator 5.4***. In September 2019, YESSG was represented in the annual SSGs workshop (Annex 430). The workshop provided a forum for lesson sharing on ICCA, LUP and SEA approach with 22 other site support groups including Tana Delta and Dakatcha Woodland where ICCA approach is also under implementation. A lesson learned booklet documenting the lessons we have learned from our work in Yala Swamp is in publication (see Annex 435) for dissemination to conservation practitioners, students, and decision makers. YESSG, YPAC, County governments of Siaya and Busia, NEMA, KFS, Nature Kenya, jointly conducted awareness creation through global environment events including World Wetlands Day, International Day of Forests, World Water Day, World Wildlife Day, World Environment Day, World Migratory Bird Day, World Clean Up Day, etc. By end of the project period, a total 7141 (4267M, 2874F) households representing 35,705 (19644M, 16061F) people, 362 (191boys, 171girls) children were reached with awareness messages on the importance of Yala delta biodiversity (Annex 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406). Articles about the project impact on sustainable management of Yala swamp were published in the Nature Kenya monthly newsletter (Annex 408, 411, 413, 417, 418, 422); Darwin Newsletter (Annex 409, 410, 412, 414, 419, 420, 424); and the Kenya Birding Magazine which is annually disseminated in the UK Bird Fair but was disseminated online in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 travel restrictions-Annex 415, 416, 421, 423, 425).

Other dissemination activities were done through meetings with the elected Member of Parliament for Budalang'i Constituency Hon. Raphael Wanjala (see Annex 373); communication visits (see Annex 374); peer to peer field exchange visits with Nature Kenya partners from Uganda and Tanzania (see Annex 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382); calendars with key messages (Annex 434); radio broadcasts and television features. On 11th November 2019, Ibrahim Onyango a trained guide and member of YESSG was featured on Nation Media TV (NTV) segment "My Job" as an experienced tour guide championing conservation around L. Kanyaboli (see the link provided https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Das1hhil-gk). In 2020, a team of YESSG, YPAC, and Nature Kenya staff used a local vernacular radio station, Bulala FM, in Budalang'i, Busia County to broadcast key messages on the importance of sustainable management of wetlands to mark global events including the World Migratory Bird Day (9th May 2020), World Environment Day (7th June 2020), and World Nature Day (26th July 2020) (see Annex 10). Three YESSG Management Committee members gave an hour long talk on a local vernacular radio station-Radio Mikayi on use of illegal fishing gear around Lake Kanyaboli and the importance of the Yala swamp LUP. In August 2020, YESSG, YPAC, and Nature Kenya staff were featured on national Kenya Television Network (KTN) News TV creating awareness and rallying support for the Yala swamp SEA/LUP and ICCA model (see the link provided https://youtu.be/Wr77SAONe84) In April 2021, following a press release (see Annex 125) issued by YESSG highlighting threats to Yala swamp, popular local radio stations Ramogi FM in Siaya county and Mulembe FM in Busia county featured YESSG leaders during prime time news respectively on 13th and 24th April 2021 condemning the activities of Lake Agro Limited that threatened local livelihoods and biodiversity.
Dissemination was also done through articles published in local, national and international newspapers as follows: on 10 h January 2022 in The Standard "*Essential Ox bow lake in Yala at risk of dying up"-Nature Kenya* (see the link provided https://www.ghanamma.com/news/2022/01/10/essential-oxbow-lake-in-yala-at-risk-of-drying-up/); On 29th January 2022 in UK's Independent newspaper "*Can local conservation efforts save Kenya's Yala Swamp?"* (see the link provided https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/campaigns/giantsclub/kenya/can-local-conservation-efforts-save-kenya-s-yala-swamp-b2001924.html); On 2nd February 2022 in The Standard "*How 50 years of farming, mining have been killing wetlands locally"* (see the link provided https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/rift-valley/article/2001436191/how-50-years-of-farming-

mining-have-been-killing-wetlands-locally); On 13 h February 2022 in The Sunday Nation "*Lets safeguard our planet by taking part in efforts to preserve wetlands"*

Policy and advocacy work in priority sites in Kenya including Yala delta was disseminated through the African Sites Casework On Emerging Threats Taskforce (ASCET) meetings courtesy of Birdlife International-a Nature Kenya partner.

Technical articles about the project were written and disseminated widely through Nature Kenya and RSPB communication channels and at events such as CBD meetings achieving ***Indicator 5.5.***The recommendations and results of the baseline household wellbeing survey (Annex 87) conducted by scientists from the Kenya Forest Research Institute (KEFRI) were disseminated through a peer reviewed journal paper (Annex 428) published in the Journal of Environmental Challenges. Project achievements such as the value of involvement of local communities (through YPAC and ICCA management committee) in the development and implementation of Yala swamp LUP were also disseminated through through a peer reviewed journal paper (Annex 429) published in the African Journal of Environmental Science and Technology. The contents of the LUP and SEA were disseminated through policy briefs (Annex 225, 226) and a cabinet memo (see Annex 210). 1000 copies each of LUP and SEA were printed and distributed to national government agencies, county governments of Siaya and Busia and local communities (Annex 224). YESSG submitted biodiversity monitoring data to the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) to compile Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) annual Status and Trends Report (see the link provided https://naturekenya.org/shop/ibas-of-kenya-status-and-trends-reports-back-copies/), a key national reporting tool to the CBD.

3.2 Outcome

Outcome: The future of Kenya's globally important Yala Delta is secured for the long term, benefiting both the rich biodiversity of this site and 250,000 people, and replication elsewhere is encouraged.

The outcome was achieved by delivering all the 6 indicators that the project set out to track and measure as outlined below:

Indicator 0.1: B*y the end of the project (EOP) 8,404 ha of papyrus swamp have been protected through gazettement of a Community Conservation Area (CCA); 200 ha of this swamp have undergone natural regeneration; 100 ha have been actively restored; and 300 ha of riparian habitats upstream of the CCA have been protected through implementation of the Land Use Plan (LUP) for the delta* Two county governments, national government agencies and 62 villages fully supported the setting up of an 8,404ha ICCA with an integrated management plan and a trained management committee formed. 62 VNRLUCs were formed (see Appendix I of Annex 1) to provide a vehicle for community involvement in ICCA governance and implementation of management actions on the ground. Guidelines on water and papyrus access (Annex 67) and fisheries (Annex 195) were developed and the regulations are under implementation as part of the local resource use guidelines for the ICCA. GIS maps of wetland habitats including restored areas within the ICCA were produced (Annex 15). The VNRLUCs are actively engaged in ICCA management and restoration through tree and papyrus planting. 150ha of degraded area within the Yala swamp ICCA was restored through direct papyrus planting, 183ha of the River Yala riparian zone was restored through direct tree planting (182,577 indigenous tree seedlings) and 171ha (170,917 exotic tree seedlings) of own farm woodlots established (Annex 71, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 81, 82,146,147,148). Management guidelines (Annex 74) were applied to promote natural regeneration of papyrus in 200ha of degraded areas within Yala swamp and 200ha of riverine vegetation within the River Yala riparian zone, thus ensuring protection of the ICCA.

On 9th September 2021 stakeholders initiated the process towards recognition of Yala Swamp as a Ramsar site with an action plan to fast track the process (Annex 45, 46, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54). Counties were supportive (Annex 436). The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) issued a letter of no objection (Annex 43) in support of registration of the ICCA management committee. On 28th October 2021 the ICCA management committee was registered as "The Yala Swamp ICCA Wildlife Association" (Annex 44) with a management plan (see Annex 16) thus

formalizing the ICCA for inclusion on the list of protected areas in Kenya. The ICCA committee held meetings and developed an action plan to fast track formal recognition and protection of ICCA (Annex 55, 56). They wrote letters to county governments of Siaya and Busia and the Director General KWS urging them to fast track the process including issuing letters of no objection (Annex 57,58, 59, 61). On 20th December 2021, stakeholders held a meeting to progress key actions with a technical team constituted to spearhead listing/lobbying process and a road map developed towards Yala Swamp Ramsar listing (Annex 60). On 12th April 2022 the Kenya Ramsar Committee secretariat held a meeting and agreed on 6 proposed sites for designation including Yala swamp. Follow up meetings were planned to assess and prioritize the sites for designation (Annex 62,63,64).

Indicator 0.2: *By EOP Encounter Rate per Km of papyrus endemics including Papyrus Yellow Warbler, Carruther's Cisticola and Papyrus Canary, have not declined below 0.21, 4.78, 0.13 and 2.94 respectively; Sitatunga and Critically Endangered Oreochromis esculentis and O. variabilis have stopped declining below 6 and 3 Catch Per Unit Effort respectively in the CCA protected by the project, which covers 40% of the Yala Delta.* EOP biodiversity assessments on mammals, key bird and fish species within the ICCA indicate that the most pristine papyrus habitats (in Maduwa Island, Lake Namboyo, L. Kanyaboli, and Bulwani Island) registered the highest numbers of the papyrus endemic bird species, while sharp declines in the number of papyrus endemics were observed in areas experiencing papyrus burning and encroachment for farming (i.e. L.Bob).The baseline scenario was similar for papyrus endemics. The frequency of sighting of Sitatunga was the same in the baseline and EOP surveys (five sightings made in both surveys). However, in 2019 observations of Sitatunga were made at Swila Beach - Lake Kanyaboli and Lake Bob areas where none were recorded in the 2021 survey. Human activities including encroachment was cited to have contributed to low sighting of Sitatunga. Two critically endangered fish species i.e. *Oreochromis esculentus* and *Labeo victorianus* were recorded during the 2019 baseline as compared to the EOP assessment where three critically endangered fish species where recorded-*Oreochromis variabilis* in L. Namboyo, *Labeo victorianus* in L. Bob , *Oreochromis esculentus* in Lakes Kanyaboli and Namboyo. The 2019 baseline on fish indicated that lakes that retained connectivity with River Yala had more species than those that had been cut off by Dominion farms. The EOP fish survey findings confirmed that satellite lakes located within the core of the ICCA are good refugia for the native and endangered species due to the presence of diverse habitats hence their conservation should be enhanced (Annex 92).

Indicator 0.3. *The quantity of nitrates, phosphates and sediments in water flowing out of Yala Delta into L. Victoria falls measurably below 1.5 mg/l, 0.019 mg/l and 0.049/l respectively, due to improved filtration by better protected papyrus swamp.*

EOP findings on water quality showed that water levels-as compared to the 2019 baseline-had risen in almost every sampling point due to back flow from L. Victoria (Maduwa, Khadundu, Bulwani, L. Sare and Goye bridge) as well as due to human activities including blockage of the main canal from R. Yala that feeds Lake Kanyaboli and hydro engineering works by Lake Agro Limited around Lake Bob area. Oxygen levels in the swamp had dropped over time, a sign of increase in density of papyrus and general swamp vegetation reducing movement of water. Water turbidity decreased (increased transparency) downstream, a testament of a working swamp in filtration and retention of sediments, a scenario same as the baseline due to expansion of the macrophytes coverage. Water pH (a factor of eutrophication and decomposition) decreased downstream and had stabilized above neutral, a sign of a functioning swamp ecosystem in moderating alkalinity/acidity (Annex 92).

Indicator 0.4: *By EOP a total of at least 3,055 very poor people are benefiting directly from the livelihood interventions detailed under Output 4, and some 250,000 people who live within the swamp's 5-km buffer zone and who are dependent on swamp ecosystem services are benefiting indirectly from the improved management of the Yala Delta.* Within the project period, the project supported 605 (342M, 263) households made up of 3,025 (1,424M, 1,601F) people directly to produce high value vegetables and cereals, fish, honey, chicken, high value papyrus and palm fronds products using sustainable methods as planned. Additionally 30 (26M, 4F) wildlife guides were trained in basics of tour guiding and bird identification by

professional guides from Nature Kenya. This brings total direct beneficiaries of income generating activities to 3,055 (1,450 M, 1,605F). 178 (68M, 110F) households made up of 890 (418M, 472F) individuals were supported to grow 353,495 (182,577 indigenous, 170,917 exotic) tree seedlings for use in habitat restoration. During the project period a total of 605 (342M, 263) households made up of 3,025 (1,424M, 1,601F) people sold vegetables, cereals, fish, honey, chicken, papyrus/palm leaves products, tree seedlings and tour guiding, worth Ksh. 12,670,185 (£ 85,609) and consumed products worth Ksh. 1,683,358 (£ 11,374) (see Annex 281, 282, 324, 325, 361, 364, 452, 453, 454, 455). 7141 (4267M, 2874F) households representing 35705 (19644M, 16061F) people, 362 (191boys, 171girls) children were reached with awareness messages on LUP/SEA, ICCA and biodiversity values of the Yala Swamp. Awareness was done through village meetings; world environmental awareness days (WWD, International Day of Forests, World Water Day, WMBD, WED, World Clean up day); and various stakeholders meetings. The number of people reached through awareness and outreach is higher when we factor people reached through radio and TV broadcast. Overall, by EOP we directly reached 10841 (6297M,4544F) households made up of 55,056 (28,746M, 26310F) people, and 362 children (191 boys,171 girls). This includes livelihoods support and training, trainings in livelihoods support without direct investment, awareness and outreach and tree growing (see Summary in Annex 455). By EOP Improved management of Yala Swamp will indirectly benefit the 250,000 people who live within the swamp's 5km buffer zone and who are dependent on swamp ecosystem services including food (fish), water, fuel, fodder, thatching material, herbal medicine, papyrus for handicrafts industry, purification of water, flood regulation, climate regulation, promotion of cultural heritage/religious values, creation of ecotourism opportunities etc. This is as per the Ecosystem Services Assessment carried out in 2015 with funding from Darwin Initiative project 21-015 (Annex 18).

Indicator 0.5: *By EOP, the governments of Busia and Siaya counties have committed to creating permanent new budget lines to support the implementation of the LUP in the long term* The land use plan has ownership of the county governments and high level political support at the national level. Busia county already adopted LUP as policy. In Siaya county even though there has been delay in the process of adoption, MCAs have continued to commit support for the LUP and are eager to adopt it as policy (see Annex 232 pg. 4 and Annex 233 pg.5). Communities support the LUP and have held meetings with County Executives for Lands urging them to fast track its adoption and implementation. Communities also requested the inclusion of LUP into the Siaya County Spatial Plan. With sustained lobbying through established structures, Siaya county will follow suit with adoption as a matter of obligation. Both counties already recognize the Yala SEA/LUP and have integrated the documents in their CIDPs (see the links provided for Siaya and Busia CIDPs https://siaya.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/SIAYA-County-Integrated-Development-Plan-2018-2022-1.pdf ; https://www.devolution.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Busia-CIDP-2018-2022.pdf). Adoption of LUP as policy paves way for allocation of budgets to support implementation. paving way for allocation of implementation.

Indicator 0.6: *By EOP, lessons learned from the project have informed regional plans created by the Lake Victoria Basin Commission, and are demonstrably being applied in at least one other large wetland in Kenya.* In august 2019 the **Physical and Land Use Planning Act, 2019 became law in Kenya** with **sections on land use planning borrowing heavily from the Tana LUP** development process. The **Yala LUP, SEA and ICCA approach** is **modelled around the Tana Delta process** (see the link provided http://kenyalaw.org/kl/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/Acts/2019/PhysicalandLandUsePlanningAct_No13of2019.pdf). On 27th September 2019, the Nature Kenya Advocacy Manager and members of the Inter Ministerial Technical Committee on Sustainable Management of Deltas held a briefing meeting with H.E. The Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga and briefed him about the work in Tana and Yala Deltas (see Annex 209). As a result, the Yala Land Use was signed by the former prime minister. Yala is his birth place and political stronghold. When he signed the Siaya and Busia Governors also signed the Land Use Plan.

3.3 Monitoring of assumptions

We monitored risks, Outcome and Output level assumptions throughout project implementation as per the revised logframe (Annex 450).

At the Output level: The assumption that it will be possible to progressively work within government restrictions to curb the transmission on COVID-19 to deliver project actions that require meetings or gatherings manifested across Kenya and the world from 2020. We developed strategies on activity delivery as per schedule while adhering to government directives (Annex 451).
At the Outcome level: While county and national governments remained supportive of a balanced and sustainable approach to delta management, some significant shift of attitude manifested during the project which derailed the LUP adoption process in Siaya county. On 14th October 2021, the National Lands Commission (NLC) issued a notice of intention of the County government of Siaya to allocate 6763.74ha of land within Yala swamp to Lake Agro Limited for commercial farming. However, an enlightened and empowered YESSG rallied communities to raise objections (Annex 136,137,138,139,140,141,142,149). In March 2022, when a senior government official had began wanton destruction of about 40ha of the wetland riparian land for sugarcane farming, Nature Kenya raised serious concerns with NEMA urging them to stop the developments which contradicted the recommendations of the Yala delta land use plan (Annex 145, 438, 439, 440, 441).

3.4 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty alleviation

Project Impact: Balanced, sustainable management regimes are established for large wetlands throughout Kenya, supported by all relevant stakeholders and ensuring that the needs of both biodiversity and people are met indefinitely.
The project is supporting **expansion of protected areas network in Kenya** through **set up of 8,404ha ICCA with community and political support**. Siaya and Busia County Governments, national government agencies and over 62 Village Natural Resource and Land Use Committee (VNRLUCs), set up an 8,404ha ICCA at the heart of the swamp with a management plan (Annex 16) and a multi-stakeholder management committee (Annex 21). **Restoration of degraded habitats** within the ICCA (100ha through direct papyrus planting within the swamp and 100ha through tree planting within the riverine riparian zones respectively) (Annex 70,71,72,73,74,75,76) **promotes protection of biodiversity and continuous flow of ecosystem services (water, food, firewood, medicine** etc). YESSG and VNRLUC developed community level habitat management and restoration guidelines (Annex 82) that are under implementation to promote natural regeneration of papyrus in 200ha of degraded areas within Yala swamp and 200ha of riverine vegetation within the River Yala riparian zone. **Prevention of species extinctions-**the ICCA promotes conservation of Papyrus endemic birds, Critically Endangered fish *Oreochromis esculentis* and *O. variabilis*; formation of the Yala swamp ICCA management committee that is inclusive of multi users promotes traditional practices of indigenous communities for the conservation of biodiversity.

The project is **demonstrating to county and national level decision makers and communities that conservation and development is possible through sustainable land management practices**. Through the implementation of various sustainable livelihoods, improvement of the wellbeing of Yala Swamp communities is on course. 7141 (4267M, 2874F) households representing 35705 (19644M, 16061F) people, 362 children (191boys, 171girls) **were reached with awareness messages** on balancing conservation and development through implementation of the LUP by setting up the ICCA.

The project supported **605 (342M, 263) households** made up of **3,025 (1,424M, 1,601F) people directly in sustainable production** of high value vegetables and cereals, fish, honey, chicken, high value papyrus and palm fronds products**.** 30 (26M, 4F) wildlife guides were trained in basics of tour guiding and bird identification by professional guides from Nature Kenya. This brings **total direct beneficiaries of income generating activities to 3,055 (1,450 M, 1,605F)**. A total of 605 (342M, 263) households made up of 3,025 (1,424M, 1,601F) people consumed products worth Ksh. 1,683,358 (£ 11,374) and sold products earning a total income of Ksh. 12,670,185 (£ 85,609) disaggregated as follows: 50 climate smart agriculture households (25M, 25F) Ksh 1,614,215 (£ 10,907); 200 conservation agriculture households (131M, 69F) 2,267,923 (£ 15,324); 100 beekeepers (53M, 47F) Ksh 236,730 (£ 1,600); 150 fisher folk households (100M, 50F) Ksh 2,900,300 (£ 19,597); 50 poultry famers (all women headed households) Ksh 634,200 (£ 4,285); 55 weaver households (33M, 22F) Ksh 2,579,297 (£ 17,428);and 30 individuals trained in wildlife guiding earned Ksh 756,000 (£ 5,108).

During the end of project socio-economic survey, a total of 296 (147M and 147F) respondents were interviewed. The EOP report, showed that generally there was improvement on diet and income. A comparison between the 2019 baseline and 2022 showed that the number of respondents who earned less than Ksh. 2500 reduced by 78% whereas those earning over Ksh 10,000 increased by at least 64% suggesting a great impact due to the project influence. Further, 85.1% of respondents attributed the project influence for their income increase to the income in climate smart agriculture, attributed to making more profit, knowledge gained from training, provision of certified seeds and quality fingerlings, provision of water pumps, and reduction of expenses. Despite Covid-19 protocols which affected sales in general due to limited movement, the returns from various livelihood sources was higher the end of the project than at the start except for papyrus products (Annex 87, see pg.1 of Annex 88)

4 Contribution to Darwin Initiative Programme Objectives

4.1 Contribution to Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs).

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
As per the livelihood selection criteria for livelihoods beneficiaries developed in Y1 (Annex 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260) and group profiling exercise (Annex 261, 262) poor and vulnerable households were selected and actively engaged as community producers. Through sustainable livelihood interventions over 3 years, a total of 381 households sold vegetables, cereals, fish, honey, chicken, papyrus/palm leaves products, tree seedlings and tour guiding, worth Ksh.12,670,185 (£ 85,609) and consumed products worth Ksh.1,683,358 (£ 11,374). Production of fish, vegetables, cereals, chicken and honey contributes to improved food security while income from sale of farm produce, papyrus/palm fronds products, tree seedlings and tour guiding contributes to improved income at household level thus ending poverty. Consumption of 502.2kg of chicken and 1617kg of fish-high quality proteins and 23,283kilos of high value vegetables and cereals–is contributing to nutritional improvement at household level.Cumulatively, crop farming households 250 (156M; 94F) translating to 1250 (588M; 662F) people were trained in climate smart and conservation farming, and chicken keeping. A demonstration site was established at Kanyibok village to model CSA and CA techniques thus promoting sustainable agricultural production.

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
The project supported training of 542 (304M, 238F) community groups-farmers, artisan weavers, wildlife guides, BMUs, WRUAs in various areas as ToTs (see Annex 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 108, 176, 177, 178). The ToTs were assigned duties to build the capacity of Yala Swamp user groups in governance and ICCA management. This promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
All Nature Kenya project implementation work conforms to the one third gender rule as per the Kenya constitutional requirements. The selection criteria for livelihoods developed in Y1 included gender representation (Annex 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260). During the baseline and EOP socio-economic surveys, data collection tools (questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) took account of gender differences and captured disaggregated data (Annex 87,88). Community sensitization meetings about the land use plan ICCA and VNRLUCs were scheduled in the late afternoon hours to allow for the participation of women, 5105 people were reached (2965 male; 2140 female). 136 female and 179 males form the leadership of 62 VNRLUCs. In 7 villages where the elected leadership of VNRLUCs did not meet the one third gender rule, 15 (5M,10F) people were co-opted into the committees (see pg. 30 and 38 of Annex 11). The project supported women in chicken rearing to offset the deficit created for female beneficiaries in wildlife guiding which is traditionally a male dominated field. Traditionally more women engage in chicken rearing compared to men. The ToT training in chicken keeping was designed to be on-site with flexi hours to ensure full participation of female ToTs; as a result 91 (14M, 77F) ToTs were trained (see Annex 100,350). Women formed 46% of direct beneficiaries of livelihoods activities and 40% of all project beneficiaries.

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Within the reporting period, the project planted 182,577 (183 ha) indigenous tree seedlings and established woodlots with 170,917(171 ha), 150ha of planted papyrus is already absorbing carbon. To support communities to adapt to climate change the project initiated fish farming to provide alternative source of protein for households while easing pressure on wild populations. Production of improved indigenous chicken varieties contributes to reduction of greenhouse gases emissions. Production of high value fast maturing and drought resistant crops constitutes ecosystem based adaptation to climate change. Other livelihood enterprises (beekeeping, value addition on papyrus, ecotourism) provide additional incomes to households and enhance resilience for communities. Some of the papyrus and palm frond products produced by weavers are baskets that keep food warm, eliminating the need for lighting a fire to warm food later, significantly reducing consumption of fuel wood thus conserving trees.

Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
The project is supporting expansion of national protected areas network through set up of 8,404ha ICCA. The ICCA is promoting conservation of large areas of the Yala swamp, protecting biodiversity, and preventing the extinction of threatened species. Establishment of woodlots (171ha); restoration of degraded areas within the ICCA (papyrus planting-150ha, indigenous tree planting-183ha)are significant actions towards reducing degradation of natural habitats, protection of riparian areas, while absorbing carbon. The balanced approach advocated in the LUP ensures the integration of ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, thus sustainability in development. Adoption and implementation of LUP directly contributes to sustainable land management.

Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals
Nature Kenya partnered with RSPB, local communities, County Governments of Siaya and Busia and national government agencies to deliver the project. The multi-stakeholder approach adopted in the development and implementation of the LUP, setting up of Yala ICCA management committee, formation of the PIC promotes effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.

4.2 Project support to the Conventions or Treaties (e.g. CBD, Nagoya Protocol, ITPGRFA, CITES, Ramsar, CMS, UNFCCC)

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): The project is contributing to the achievement of a number of CBD objectives including;

6b – integrating conservation and sustainable use -advocating for the adoption/implementation of the LUP ensures development overall is sustainable and compatible with biodiversity protection, sustainable livelihood options-sustainable farming, climate smart production, fish farming and production of high value papyrus products.
7b/7c/7d–Identifying/monitoring: set up of 8,404ha the Yala Swamp ICCA for biodiversity protection, developed ICCA biodiversity monitoring protocols and trained monitors
8a/8e/8j–The project is promoting in-situ conservation of globally threatened and other biodiversity within the ICCA including papyrus endemic birds, critically endangered fish *Oreochromis esculentis* and *O. variabilis,* nationally endangered sitatunga antelope.
10b–Sustainable use:the ICCA will protect customary use of natural resources e.g. beekeeping, eco-tourism, climate smart production (fish, crops), sustainable papyrus harvesting.
13a–Public education/awareness: global events/community sensitization was done within the project area reaching 7141 (4267M, 2874F) households representing 35705 (19644M, 16061F) people, 362 (191boys, 171girls) children.
18–Cooperation. Through the project, partnerships between civil society, national and county governments, local communities and private sector were strengthened as detailed in Section 2 of this report.
The project is also contributing to the attainment of several Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including 2 (LUP ensures the integration of ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning), 11 (increasing terrestrial and inland water protected areas by gazetting the ICCA-

8404ha and progressing listing for Yala Swamp both as a Ramsar site and Biosphere Reserve).12 (prevention of species extinctions – ICCA is promoting conservation of critically endangered *Oreochromis esculentis* and *O. variabilis*), 14 (restoration of ecosystems for water and livelihoods-150ha through papyrus planting, 183ha indigenous and 171ha exotic tree planting), 15 (promoting ecosystem resilience to climate change-papyrus and tree planting, production of high value fast maturing and drought resistant crops),18 (promoting traditional practices of indigenous communities for the conservation of biodiversity-through Yala ICCA management plan and ICCA committee).

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS): The Yala Delta, project site, is believed to support the near-threatened Great Snipe (*Gallinago media)*, has been recorded at L. Kanyaboli in the past. This is a migratory member of the family *Scolopidae*, and is included in Appendix 2 of the CMS. Yala Swamp is a critical feeding ground for them as other areas become converted to agriculture.

The project has made significant steps in progressing listing for Yala Swamp as a Ramsar site under the Ramsar convention (Annex 60, 62, 63, 64).

4.3 Project support to poverty alleviation

Project beneficiaries and how the project helped them

The project benefited 3,025 (1,424M, 1,601F) people directly represented by 605 (342M, 263) through investment in livelihood support and training, and another 7141 (4267M, 2874F) households representing 35705 (19644M, 16061F) people, 362 (191boys, 171girls) children through awareness and outreaches. The project is benefiting 250,000 people (50% men and boys, 50% women and girls) indirectly from sustainable management of Yala swamp.

See also Section 4.1 above-SDG 1

4.4 Gender equality

All Nature Kenya project implementation work conforms to the one third gender rule as per the Kenya constitutional requirements (see Annex 449). The selection criteria for livelihoods developed in Y1 included gender representation (Annex 254, ,256, 257, 258 ,259, 260). During the baseline and EOP socio-economic surveys, data collection tools (questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) took account of gender differences and captured disaggregated data (Annex 87, 88). Community sensitization meetings about the land use plan ICCA and VNRLUCs were scheduled in the late afternoon hours to allow for the participation of women, as a result, 5105 people were reached (2965 male; 2140 female). 136 female and 179 males form the leadership of 62 VNRLUCs. In 7 villages where the elected leadership of VNRLUCs did not meet the one third gender rule, 15 (5M,10F) people were co-opted into the committees (see pg. 30 and 38 of Annex 11). The project supported women in chicken rearing to offset the deficit created for female beneficiaries in wildlife guiding which is traditionally a male dominated field. Traditionally more women engage in chicken rearing compared to men. The ToT training in chicken keeping was designed to be on-site with flexi hours to ensure full participation of female ToTs; as a result 91 (14M, 77F) ToTs were trained (see Annex 100,350). Women formed 46% of direct beneficiaries of livelihoods activities and 40% of all project beneficiaries.

4.5 Programme indicators

- **Did the project lead to greater representation of local poor people in management structures of biodiversity?** Yes. Leadership/representation into the ICCA Committee, YESSG, YPAC, the 62 VNRLUCs take into account diverse community interests. The project supported VNRLUC elections to get a federated system of community representation in the ICCA governance.
- **Were any management plans for biodiversity developed and were these formally accepted?** Yes. The finalized Yala swamp LUP and SEA were endorsed by by County Governments of Siaya and Busia, the Yala ICCA management plan was validated by

County Governments of Siaya and Busia plus other stakeholders. Seven sub catchment management plans were developed by Water Resources Authority.

- **Were they participatory in nature or were they 'top-down'? How well represented are the local poor including women, in any proposed management structures?**

  Yes, they were fully inclusive and highly participatory, in each of the structures, the one third gender rule applies.

- **How did the project positively influence household (HH) income and how many HHs saw an increase?** Overall, direct project beneficiaries were 10841 (6297M,4544F) households made up of 55,056 (28,746M, 26310F) people, and 362 children (191 boys,171 girls). This includes livelihoods support and training, trainings in livelihoods support without direct investment, awareness and outreach and tree growing (see Summary in Annex 455). A total of 605 (342M, 263) households made up of 3,025 (1,424M, 1,601F) people earned a total income of Ksh. 12,670,185 (£ 85,609) and consumed products worth Ksh. 1,683,358 (£ 11,374) disaggregated as follows: 200 (131M, 69F) sustainable crop farming households made up of 1,000 (470M, 530F) people earned Ksh. 2,267,923 (£ 15,324) and consumed produce worth Ksh. 528,540 (£ 3571); 50 (25M, 25F) climate smart farming households made up of 250 (118M, 132F) people earned Ksh. 1,614,215(£ 10,907) and consumed produce worth Ksh. 394,960 (£ 2,669) (Annex 277).; 150 (100M, 50F) fish farming households made up of 750 (353M, 397F) people earned Ksh. 3,900,300 (£ 26,353) and consumed produce worth Ksh. 546733 (£ 3,694) (see Annex 272); 100 (53M, 47F) honey producing households made up of 500 people (235M, 265F) earned Ksh. 236,730 (£ 1600) and consumed produce worth Ksh. 93950(£ 635) See Annex 266); Women from 50 households made up of 250 (118M, 132F) people earned Ksh. 604,200 (£ 4,082) and consumed produce worth Ksh. 119,175 (£ 805); 55 weaver households made up of 275 (130M, 145F) people earned Ksh. 2,579,267 (£ 17,427) (see Annex 320); Trained wildlife guides earned a combined income of Ksh. 756,000 (£ 5,108) from guiding tourists visiting the Yala Swamp and lower River Yala (Annex 322);178 (68M, 110F) tree growing households made up of 890 (418M, 472F) individuals earned Ksh. 681,520 (£ 4605) from sale of tree seedlings.

  How much did their HH income increase (e.g. x% above baseline, x% above national average)? How was this measured?

  The mean annual HH income for crop farmers (conservation agriculture) increased by 56% meeting project target of 30% increase in HH income. (see Annex 453, 454). The mean annual HH income for fish farmers increased by 46% meeting project target of 25% increase in HH income (see Annex 453, 454). The total annual income from honey production in project Y3 was (Ksh. 127,360 (£ 861) up from project Y2 earnings of Ksh. 76,120 (£ 577) representing 67% meeting the project target of 30% increase in HH income (see Annex 453, 454). From the EOP survey, the total earnings from chicken-rearing represented an average household income increase of 45.3% from baseline earnings in 2019 meeting the project target of 30% increase in HH income. The annual income for weavers in project Y1 was Ksh. 639,800 (£4,847), the earnings dropped to (Ksh. 481,330 (£3,646) in project Y2 but increased to Ksh. 1,458,167 (£9,852) in project Y3 indicating a mean household income increase of 89% meeting the project target of 25% increase in HH income (see Annex 452, 453, 454). The EOP survey indicated that the total earnings from climate smart agriculture represented an average household income increase of 75.4% from the baseline earnings in 2019 meeting the project target of 30% increase in HH income.The income for tour guides in project Y1 was Ksh. 353,000 (£2,674), the earnings dropped to (Ksh. 68,000 (£515) in project Y2 due to the

Covid 19 pandemic but increased to Ksh. 335,000 (£2,264) in project Y3 indicating a mean household income increase of 14% (see Annex 452, 453, 454).

4.6 Transfer of knowledge

Yes. The project resulted in formal qualifications, 2 YESSG individuals (1male, 1 female) attained Certificate level training in Ornithology and biodiversity monitoring.

Besides the above, Peter Nelson from Planning Green Futures in the United Kingdom, trained 4 members of the IMTC on the detailed interpretation of the Yala swamp LUP applying lessons from the Tana delta. In turn, Dr. Dickens Odeny trained 2 County Physical Planners (Mr. Benard Odhiambo and Mr. Maurice Ochieng' from Busia and Siaya county respectively) in the interpretation of maps used in the Yala swamp LUP.

4.7 Capacity building

Three Nature Kenya staff who were mentored by the Nature Kenya Executive Director Dr. Paul Matiku and learned on job while interacting with RSPB staff have advanced in career- Ms Serah Munguti (F), is now the Kenya Country Programme Manager for Fauna & Flora International. Mr. John Kiptum (M), a Conservation Policy and Advocacy Officer was promoted to a Policy and Advocacy Coordinator and is now at Fauna & Flora International, as a Technical Specialist-Conservation Policy. Mr. Kiptum also served as a member of the national committee of developing Kenya's position to SBSTTA and SBI. Ms Emily Mateche (F) formerly a Project Site Officer in Yala swamp is now promoted to a Policy and Advocacy Manager. Mr. Antony Mwenje (M), a new member of the IMTC team was trained on the LUP/SEA approach when he took up the position of a hydrologist previously held by Eng. Eugene Mnyamwezi (M) who retired in 2019. Similarly, Mr. Dan Ashitiva (M), the Principal Wetland Officer at NEMA was trained on the LUP/SEA approach as a new member of the IMTC team when he took up the position previously held by Mr. Ben Opaa (M) who moved to a new role as a Director at the National Lands Commission. Peter Odhengo, the Chairman of IMTC, has continued to hold senior level positions at the National Treasury. Dr. Paul Matiku, is in the BirdLife Africa thought leaders on post 2020 framework, member of the Africa Group of Negotiators and member of advisory group on mainstreaming biodiversity.

5 Sustainability and Legacy

Our planned exit strategy is still valid. The Yala ICCA will expand the protected areas network in Kenya with the support from KWS, a trained ICCA committee together with other stakeholders. The ICCA business case provides guidelines on sustainable financing of ICCA management with income from community businesses, governments and private investors. Partnerships formed with governments at the national and county level and communities at the local level constitute security for continuity of project initiatives after project completion. Capacitated YESSG and ICCA committee will effectively represent Yala swamp communities in decision making fora at the county level, coordinate communities in restoration, ICCA governance, resource mobilization and sustainable production. Through the established structures and partnerships, we will continue lobbying the County Government of Siaya to adopt the Yala swamp LUP and SEA as policy documents. This will enable the county governments of Siaya and Busia to prepare specific policies, guidelines, regulations and action plans as well as allocate budgets for the implementation of LUP. Streamlining the LUP and ICCA management plan into county planning frameworks; development of a marketing strategy for private sector engagement all constitutes sustainability strategies. All the staff have been retained by Nature Kenya to continue work with funding from AfriEvolve aimed at diversification of livelihoods through CSA and adaptation of land use to take pressure off the Yala swamp ecosystems.

Impact on policy: The LUP and SEA are policy documents already approved by the County Government of Busia. The policy documents will eventually be approved by the County Governments of Siaya through continued lobbying and established structures as a matter of obligation.

The Yala Community Conservation Area expands the protected areas network in Kenya and provides for enhanced management of the Yala Swamp by all stakeholders for posterity.

6 Lessons learned

Partnerships with governments at national and county level enhance project outcomes: Communities and local leaders became more receptive towards ICCA and LUP awareness because of the joint civil society and government team that was involved. More villages were also reached faster, by the joint team because smaller teams were formed to visit several villages concurrently. Technical government agencies provided free extension services to tree planting and income generating activities thus saving the project money.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships are multi-dimensional and based on trust: The success of the project is based on the ability to work with real multiple partners. Local engagement is critical.

Champions tend to be individuals who then bring their institution on board: The IMTC is a game changer in formulation and implementation of the Yala Swamp LUP and SEA. The effectiveness of the IMTC is the result of extraordinary commitment by its individual members. Led by its chair Peter Odhengo who works at The National Treasury, IMTC produced spectacular and unexpected results for the project when the LUP and SEA were endorsed by H.E. The Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga. The County government of Busia already adopted LUP as policy. With continued aggressive lobbying, Siaya county will follow suit.

Train the Trainer: The on-site/mentorship training strategy is a very cost-effective way of transferring skills and knowledge among beneficiaries and the wider community.

Capacitated YESSG has gained ground as conservation champions recognized by County governments of Busia, Siaya and other stakeholders: YESSG has claimed space as a complimentary conservation partner.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation is key in identifying and addressing challenges for livelihoods initiatives: monitoring tools capture information on challenges encountered for appropriate remedial actions enhancing chances of productivity of the enterprises.

Monetary contribution of beneficiary communities into livelihood enterprises is important in fostering community ownership of initiatives and sustainability: Gradual investment of beneficiaries in the livelihood enterprises from the start constitutes sustainability beyond the project cycle.

Adaptive management is key to success: The project was able to proceed amidst the Covid-19 pandemic and did not need to make requests for no-cost extension and attendant budgetary realignments. We developed a protocol (Annex 451) to guide the project team in implementation of activities while safeguarding staff, beneficiaries and partners from COVID-19. *See also detailed lessons learned in Annex 435.*

6.1 Monitoring and evaluation

We used outcome and output indicators to track project progress (see Annex 2 of this report). Following advice from reviewers and guidance from LTS, we revised outcome indicators and important assumptions on the revised logframe submitted to LTS on 30th November 2020 (Annex 450). We measured indicators through continuous tracking of activities to ensure that each action was contributing to set targets in the manner envisaged in the project proposal. We monitored impact through sharing of lessons in Yala Swamp including through the IMTC Chairman (Peter Odhengo) currently working for National Treasury and the former Prime Minister (Raila Odinga) and Busia and Siaya County Governors who endorsed Yala Land Use Plan. We monitored outcome impact by monitoring and evaluating delivery of planned targets within the target population assessing delivery against the baseline and end of project representative household wellbeing survey (Annex 88). Biodiversity baselines were compared with end of project surveys on water quality, mammals, key bird and fish species within the ICCA. We measured habitat restoration efforts using GIS maps generated by the NMK GIS expert Dr. Dickens Odeny (Annex 38, 39,40) and GPS ground-truthing conducted by YESSG. We closely monitored and evaluated county publications e.g. policies, plans, reports of funding being directed to support LUP implementation, as well as through face-to-face meetings with county staff/members of county assemblies and we held regular meetings with beneficiaries and kept records in score cards. Feedback was useful for the project. For instance, we considered the reviewers advice in Y1 to reinforce business development expertise to support livelihood strategies and engaged a consultant who developed business plans and optimization models for livelihood enterprises with inbuilt strategies for growth to generate proportionate income to be ploughed back into ICCA management.

6.2 Actions taken in response to annual report reviews

We responded to all issues raised in the reviews of our annual reports, there is no outstanding issue. Please see the details below of the key responses:

On Covid-19 pandemic we did not pursue rescheduling or re-budgeting with the Darwin Initiative as our adaptive measures worked. The logframe was revised and improved (see logframe in Annex 1 of this report, see also Annex 450). We have indicated in the sustainability section that Darwin activities will continue courtesy of sustainability structures and approaches and funding from AfriEvolve aimed at diversification of livelihoods through climate smart agriculture and adaptation of land use to take pressure off the Yala swamp ecosystems. Streamlining the LUP and ICCA management plan into county planning frameworks; development of a marketing strategy for private sector engagement all constitutes sustainability strategies.

7 Darwin identity

The Darwin Initiative funding was identified as a distinct project with a clear identity. Deliverables achieved through Darwin were distinctively acknowledged and credited.

The Darwin Initiative logo was been used in all publicity materials e.g. event posters calendars, training materials, power point presentations and reports presented to stakeholders. The sign board for the products centre in Siaya town (see Annex 289). Nature Kenya newsletter Nature Net [redacted] and Kenya Birding Magazine (Annex 421), livelihood assets acquired with Darwin funding (Annex 358) all bear the Darwin logo.

Nature Kenya is active on Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Nature Kenya is following the Darwin Initiative on Twitter and Instagram and has subscribed to their YouTube channel.

- Twitter - https://twitter.com/Nature_Kenya
- Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/nature_kenya/
- YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/user/NatureKenya1

Awareness has been created in all meetings on the Darwin Initiative's funding.

8 Impact of COVID-19 on project delivery

We delivered all planned activities, we did not request rescheduling or budget alignments. We adapted to the situation, followed guidelines and kept our staff and partners safe. We adapted to Nairobi lockdowns by taking advantage of our excellent delivery approach that includes senior staff based at site level, use of government and local communities on the ground to deliver actions and flexible financing and administrative system that allowed transfer of resources to the site level. We ensured our staff and partners were safe by distributing masks to all those attending meetings and ensured social distancing. Nature Kenya stopped distribution of hard copy documents for example Nature Net and Kenya Birding and embraced all virtual meetings especially in hotspots. During complete lockdown periods in mid 2021 where Siaya and Busia Counties were among affected counties, Nature Kenya suspended in person activities. When the government relaxed restrictions associated with curbing the spread of COVID-19, Nature Kenya in consultation with YESSG and government agencies encouraged some of the activities to be done in small groups within government protocol. YESSG secured partnership with a local venacular radio station (Bulala FM, Busia County) to carry on awareness creation (Annex 117); livelihood production, TOT training, habitat restoration and biodiversity monitoring were achieved significantly during lockdown courtesy of this approach (Annex 420). Covid is still with us. Masks are now mainstreamed into project budgeting and meetings. Only necessary travel takes place and virtual meetings replaced a good number of avoidable physical meetings.

9 Finance and administration

9.1 Project expenditure

Complete the expenditure table below, providing a breakdown of salaries, capital items and explanations of 'Other' costs. If the budget was changed since the project started, please clarify the main differences. **Explain in full** any significant variation in expenditure where this is +/- 10% of the approved budget lines.

Project spend (indicative) since last annual report	2021/22 Grant (£)	2021/22 Total actual Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)	[redacted]	[redacted]	0.01	
Consultancy costs	[redacted]	[redacted]	(0.18)	
Overhead Costs	[redacted]	[redacted]	(3.36)	
Travel and subsistence	[redacted]	[redacted]	(0.67)	
Operating Costs	[redacted]	[redacted]	1.27	
Capital items (see below)	0	0	0	
Others (see below)	0	0	0	
TOTAL	[redacted]	[redacted]		

Staff employed (Name and position)	Cost (£)
Celine Achieng – Advocacy & Policy Manager	[redacted]
Paul Matiku – Executive Director	[redacted]
Emily Mateche – Site Project Manager	[redacted]
Gibson Mwatete – Local Empowerment Manager	[redacted]
Paul Gacheru – Sites & Species Manager	[redacted]
Moses Owili – Extension Officer	[redacted]
Peter Kibobi – Community Trainer/Local Empowerment Officer	[redacted]
John Kiptum - Policy & Advocacy Coordinator	[redacted]
Denvas Gekonde – Finance Manager	[redacted]
Calorine Kabilu – Programme Support Manager	[redacted]
Cecilia Mueni – Finance Officer/Internal audit	[redacted]
Juliet Mbaka – Programme Assistant	[redacted]
James Mutunga – Biodiversity & Monitoring Officer	[redacted]
Gloria Waswa – Marketing & Membership Manager	[redacted]
John Mwacharo – Communication Coordinator	[redacted]
TOTAL	[redacted]

Capital items – description	Capital items – cost (£)
N/A	0
TOTAL	0

Other items – description	Other items – cost (£)
Consultancy costs	[redacted]
Overheads	[redacted]
Travel and subsistence	[redacted]
Operating costs	[redacted]
TOTAL	[redacted]

9.2 Additional funds or in-kind contributions secured

Source of funding for project lifetime	Total (£)
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	[redacted]
Global Environment Facility/UNEP	[redacted]
The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union - NABU	[redacted]
TOTAL	[redacted]

Source of funding for additional work after project lifetime	Total (£)
The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union - NABU	[redacted]
TOTAL	[redacted]

9.3 Value for Money.

Project start-up costs were maintained at minimal because the key staff were already engaged at Nature Kenya and the RSPB and the infrastructure needed to deliver the project was already in place. Nature Kenya also worked with government and local communities providing “in kind” staff time, enhancing ownership and value for money.

10 OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

I agree for the Darwin Secretariat to publish the content of this section (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here)

Yala delta Indigenous and Community Conserved Area established: The project supported 62 villages, two county governments and national government agencies who agreed and established a 8404ha ICCA, supported by a management plan and governance structure. The Siaya and Busia counties and the Kenya Wildlife Service support the Yala ICCA Committee in enhanced management of the Yala delta through the implementation of a management plan which guarantees perpetual conservation of critical parts of Yala delta to continue offering ecosystem services for the developed parts of the swamp. The ICCA Committee and KWS engagement to register the Yala ICCA as a conservancy is a major step in the right direction to safeguard Yala Swamp.

Approval of Yala delta LUP and SEA by Busia County is a major policy impact- this sets ground for preparation of specific policies, guidelines, regulations and action plans for the implementation of the LUP. The county assembly of Busia highlighted a sixteen point priority action plan which was forwarded to the county executive for allocation of budgets and implementation (see the recommendations on pg. 13 and action plan on pg. 22-23 of the Busia LUP Adoption report-Annex 249).

Yala Ecosystem Site Support Group (YESSG): With enhanced capacity, YESSG is recognized as a community champions for local governance and community led conservation and livelihoods improvement, constituting a legacy for the project. Made up of 1126 people (505 males & 621 females) drawn from 55 Community Based Organizations across the delta, including 62 VNRLUCs from all villages within the Yala delta ICCA, YESSG is a local force for coordinating community initiatives. These groups are farmers, fisherfolk and other swamp users. Due to its wide membership across various interest groups in the delta, YESSG provides a perfect vehicle for implementation of green value chains and delivery of community actions.