

European Cetacean Bycatch Campaign

New strategy targets Tanzania's coastal problems

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The government of Tanzania has joined other Indian Ocean countries to launch a National Integrated Coastal Management Strategy that will strive to improve the living standard of the coastal people and revamp national development.

The strategy is a joint initiative between the Tanzanian National Environmental Management Council, the University of Rhode Island Coastal Resource Center, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was developed following years of community consultation and input.

Launching the strategy at the Golden Tulip Hotel in Dar es Salaam, on April 16, Arcado Ntagazwa, Minister of State in the Vice President's Office, noted that the decision to put the National Integrated Coastal Management Strategy (ICM) in place was undertaken in recognition of the significance and value of the coast.

**The Tanzanian capital of Dar es Salaam is a coastal city.
(Photo courtesy African Heart)**

"Our coast is a unique part of the environment endowed with scenic, diverse and rich resources", Ntagazwa said. "It supports a diversity of important natural systems including coral reefs, beaches, estuaries, seagrass beds and extensive mangrove stands."

Coastal erosion, as well as industrial and domestic based pollution in Tanzania coastal urban centres are viewed as critical threats to sustainable development.

The minister observed that the National ICM Strategy would improve the decision making process for sustainable coastal development by providing guidance and clarification on sound resource use with allocations to be made at both national and local levels.

According to ICM strategy team leader Jeremiah Daffa, more than US\$13.4 million have been injected into the project since 2000 from the American government through its aid agency USAID.

Daffa says the strategy is intended to improving the environment, as well as the well being and livelihood of all people who utilize coastal resources. These, he says, include the poor coastal

communities who are engaged in small-scale agriculture, artisanal fisheries, mariculture, use of forests and mangroves, and small-scale business.

It will also support local initiatives, decision making for intersectoral development, and harmonizing national interests with local needs.

Michael Korff, counsellor for the American Embassy to Tanzania, attended the strategy's launch last week. He believes that every cent put into coastal conservation is an investment.

**Tanzania's Pangani River flows into the Indian Ocean.
(Photo courtesy Grant's Lodge)**

“Yes, I have used the words ‘we have invested,’ since that money is an investment in your and our future because we share the planet. It is in our mutual interest to insure a bright future for your people and ours,” said Korff.

He noted that globally, coastal areas have great potential for economic development, offering opportunities to support coastal populations and contribute to national economic growth, while continuing to provide habitats for some of the world’s most important and endangered species.

“As Tanzania continues to move toward a market driven, private sector led economy, and looks at the yet untapped resources of the coast for economic development, the need for sustainable management both nationally and locally has become ever more urgent,” he told attendees at the launch.

But Korff cautioned the project managers to expect some resistance when they attempt to implement the strategy, since human beings are resistant to new things regardless of their importance.

“When coastal management was introduced in the U.S. in the 1970s, many people, especially the developers, were sceptical about this management option, thinking it was about stopping development,” Korff said.

“But over time, they realized that coastal management was a way to make development more predictable, sustainable and equitable. Coastal activities became more coordinated and coherent as information and decision making was shared among stakeholders, and our country has benefited from this coordination,” said Korff.

USAID says the funds earmarked for Tanzania this year will support broad public media campaigns and local government and community training on ways to implement the new policies and legislation.

Joint activities with USAID's private sector program will assist local communities to implement

new wildlife and coastal resource management regulations. This support will include business planning, natural resource management and public advocacy, among other skills, to enable local populations to manage and benefit from wildlife populations.

USAID's activities are implemented in collaboration with the Tanzanian Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, and the Vice President's Office. Key U.S. government agencies include the Peace Corps and Department of the Interior. Prime grantees and contractors include: Tuskegee University, University of Rhode Island, African Wildlife Foundation, World Wildlife Fund, World Resources Institute, Africare, and the Academy for Educational Development.

Professor Elin Torell, who among other things emphasised the commonality in coastal management issues around the world, represented the University of Rhode Island, one of the partners in this initiative, at the ceremony.

“Most coastal nations are experiencing problems of habitat loss, pollution, and declining resources, conflicts between users, poor planning and decision making cause all these problems,” she stressed.

“The problem in developing countries is particularly severe because people are much more dependent on the natural resources around them, and they have fewer options when local natural resources decline or vanish.”

**Paddling along the Tanzanian coast
(Photo courtesy Tanzania High Commissioner in South Africa)**

The Tanzania coastal area stretches for over 800 kilometres (500 miles) of coastline covering five administrative regions - the capital region of Dar es Salaam, Tanga to the north of the capital, Coast in the west, and in the south Lindi and Mtwara.

About two thirds of the coastline has fringing reefs, often close to the shoreline, broken by river outlets including Rufiji, Pangani, Ruvuma, Wami, Matandu and Ruvu rivers.

The continental shelf is 5.8 kilometres (3.6 miles) wide, except for the Zanzibar and Mafia channels where the continental shelf reaches a width of about 62 kilometres (38.5 miles).

The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which extends 200 nautical miles out from the Tanzanian shoreline, has an estimated area of 223,000 square kilometres (86,100 square miles).

The five coastal regions encompass about 15 percent of the country's land area and are home to approximately 25 percent of country's population. This is about eight million people.

Most rural communities of the coast are very poor, earning less than US\$100 per capita. Yet the area contributes about one-third of Tanzania's Gross Domestic Product. Currently, 75 percent of the country's industries are in urban coastal areas.

