

Funding allocation

Funding allocated to the Ministry of Fisheries Development compared to other ministries is low, yet the poverty levels are highest amongst the fisherfolk along the coast and the lake region.

Recommendations

1. We would like to see the BMU Regulations (2007) further reviewed and amended to address the special case of marine and coastal fisheries.
2. The annual financial allocation for the Ministry of Fisheries Development should be increased. We would like the Ministry to promote the link between well managed marine fisheries and poverty reduction. This requires government investment which is in line with the current Draft Fisheries Policy.
3. We would like all the encroached landing sites and public beach land to be repossessed, surveyed, demarcated, gazetted and placed under Title to the Fisheries Department for public utility.
4. A national coastal fisheries association should be established so that fishers have representation and a voice, and can then be represented on committees appointed by government especially when policies and regulations are being developed, reviewed and revised.

The Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) together with Coastal Oceans Research and Development-Indian Ocean (CORDIO) and the East African Wild Life Society (EAWLS) convened two coastal community workshops in Kenya and Tanzania in 2007/2008. Community representatives reflected on the status of the marine environment and put forward concrete recommendations on improving marine resources and livelihood sustainability and enhancement. This series of one page publications are a product of this work.

The community workshops are part of a bigger project 'Conservation as Core Assets for Livelihoods in Eastern Africa' funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), The Ford Foundation and also 'Building capacity and strengthening policies for coastal communities to manage their marine resources in East Africa' funded by the Kiedanren Nature Conservation Fund (KNCF). The objective of these projects is to enhance knowledge on the contribution of biodiversity conservation to livelihoods and to assist communities to demonstrate to politicians and senior policy makers on this importance.

Opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of IUCN, IDRC, The Ford Foundation, KNCF, CORDIO or EAWLS.

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Building Capacity for Coastal Communities to Manage Marine Resources in Kenya



BMUs Beach Management Units



By
Fatuma Musa
Said Ali Chufu
Hamis Juma
Norman Sulubu
Pendo Morris Charo
Emmanuel Yaa

Introduction

Legal Notice no. 402 of the Fisheries Act (Cap 378) contains the Fisheries (Beach Management Units) Regulations 2007. The Regulations pave the way for the establishment of BMUs for each fish landing site along the coast.

The objectives of the BMUs are, among others to:

- Support the sustainable development of the fisheries sector.
- Help alleviate poverty and improve welfare and livelihoods of members through improved planning and resource management, good governance, democratic participation and self reliance.
- Strengthen the management of fish-landing stations, fishery resources and the aquatic environment.
- Recognise the various roles played by different sections of the community including women in the fisheries sector.
- Prevent or reduce conflicts in the fisheries sector.

The BMU administrative structure consists of an assembly (members), an executive committee and sub-committees. Membership of a BMU is open to persons who depend directly or indirectly for their income or livelihood on fisheries activities undertaken at the beach within the jurisdiction of that BMU. A BMU is entitled to formulate its own but binding by-laws.

Summary of BMUs aims, activities and issues of concern

ORGANIZATION	AIMS AND ACTIVITIES	ISSUES OF CONCERN
Takaungu BMU Kilifi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring together all Takaungu stakeholders • Sustainable fishing • Conservation of the environment e.g. restoration of mangroves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial waste pollution from adjacent Vipingo sisal factory • Lack of fishing skills and gear • Illegal possession of fish landing sites by private owners
Gongoni BMU Malindi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mangrove restoration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trawling at Ungwana Bay • Salt farms and associated destruction of mangrove and pollution
Ozi BMU Tana River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation and sustainable use of natural resources • Poverty reduction through the BMU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oppression of the community fisherfolk by the commercial fisherfolk • Lack of law enforcement by the Fisheries Department
Mida BMU Malindi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beach cleanup • Mangrove rehabilitation • Turtle tagging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollution from boat yards and disposal of medical waste • Conflict between marine resource users (boat operators vs. hoteliers; fisherfolk vs. hoteliers and KWS; beach plot owners vs. communities)
Bamburi BMU Mombasa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create conservation awareness • To learn and adopt modern fishing technologies • Diversification of resource use to maximise income generating activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of proper fishing gears • Lack of education centre to carry out education and awareness to members
Amu BMU Lamu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable fisheries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of proper fishing gear

A BMU's area of jurisdiction is the fish landing station, assigned for the exclusive purpose of landing and selling of fish and fishery products. A BMU mandate is to ensure orderly, safe and effective use, management and operation of fish landing sites. It can take measures to raise awareness of and provide training to its members in fishing techniques, the marketing and processing of fish, financial management and support cooperative and fishers self help groups. BMUs can be authorised by Fisheries Department to have a designated co-management area to undertake fishing. Each BMU member has specific responsibilities including undertaking patrols. In 2007 a number of BMUs were established on the Kenya coast. These include Lamu, Kipini, Gongoni, Ngomeni, Bamburi, and Mida among others.

A national coastal community workshop was held in Kilifi from 17th to 19th December 2007. The aim of the workshop was to give coastal communities an opportunity to interact and share practical experiences in marine resource use and management and to articulate their needs. As representatives of six BMUs at this meeting, we gave our views on our aims, activities and issues. These are presented below. We also came up with recommendations which appear at the end.

Issues of concern

Beaches and land access

The public utility land between the beach and privately owned beach plots or properties has either been illegally possessed or encroached on by private developers. This refers to the beach buffer zone above the high water mark. The issue is exacerbated by conflicting laws over this beach buffer zone. The Wildlife Act states the zone should be 30m wide, whereas the Survey Act states 60m. The consequences are denial of public access to the beach. More importantly, we have found it increasingly difficult to access the sea and use the beach for our livelihood activities.

Fish landing sites have also been illegally possessed. We are not sure how many fish landing sites are officially recognised by the Fisheries Department. Nor do we understand why the Fisheries Department has not been able to repossess the illegally acquired landing sites.

The conflict between local fisherfolk communities and private land developers is particularly seen in Diani, Shanzu, Bamburi, Watamu and Malindi. This conflict, coupled with corruption has compounded the problem of non compliance and inadequate enforcement of the laws.

BMU legislation

The BMU management framework is a positive step for fisheries governance and participatory fisheries management. However, we believe the legislation, passed in 2007, still has gaps because it is a model taken from the Lake Victoria fisheries and has not been fully adapted to marine fisheries. For example coastal fisheries involve a common pool resource and fishing areas are accessed by fishers from different BMUs. This is likely to cause conflict in the future between neighbouring BMUs, who are currently mandated to demarc their area of jurisdiction.

