



Case Study

AERIAL FOREST SURVEILLANCE FOR MONITORING AND MANAGING ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH-WEST MAU FOREST, KENYA

Anthropogenic activities are one of the key causes of degradation in most forests across the globe. Over the last 10-15 years, the Mau Forest in Kenya has been reduced by more than 25%, and remaining forest is degraded and fragmented. As a result, the Kenya forest Service KFS and other law enforcement agencies have developed and enforced laws to control and manage these activities. Along side this, collecting and availing accurate information for targeted action is critical. As such, a routine monitoring aerial surveillance under the ISLA Kenya program was recognized as one of the key interventions to monitor and manage illegal forest activities.

The monitoring surveillance flight carried out every quarter has been essential for informed decision making, especially for targeted action by the law enforcement agencies. During the flight, all agencies; Kenya forest service, Kenya Wildlife Service, County security teams and the Judiciary are involved.

Illegal forest activities such as illegal forest grazing, charcoal burning and logging are spotted and geo referenced. After every flight an enforcement action plan is drawn, and the concerned agencies are engaged for action.



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IDH's unique approach in bringing all stakeholders in SW Mau together has provided the catalyst required for long term intervention strategies aimed at preservation and restoration of this critical water tower. Persuading all parties to identify the challenges and then work together to address those challenges has enabled the achievement of much greater progress than would have been the case from stakeholders' individual efforts. A lot remains to be done, but the chances of success are certainly enhanced by the landscapes approach.

Simeon Hutchinson

Managing Director James Finlay Kenya



ACHIEVEMENTS & FUTURE GOALS



Over 1,400 local smallholders and community members trained in sustainable water harvesting, biogas production, kitchen gardening, bee-keeping, and agroforestry practices to improve their health and incomes.



Successful restoration of degraded forest: rate of forest degradation from 2014-2018 was 22.6% lower; forest regeneration was 22.7% higher; and net emissions from forest cover change were 89% lower. At current rates of improvement, all degraded forest within the South West Mau Forest could be regenerated by 2029.



Behavioural change interventions through field-level Programs such as the Gender Empowerment Platform reached over 2,000 smallholder farmers and over 10,000 workers and dependents in 2019 alone.



Goal to restore and conserve 60,000 hectares of the forest by 2030.