



Q2 PROGRAM REPORT 2024

Mission statement

To foster sustainable development through effective conservation in the greater Amboseli Ecosystem.

Vision statement

**An ecosystem
where people and
nature thrive in
harmony**

Programmes and Goals



Ecosystem Planning

Goal 1: The Amboseli Ecosystem Management Plan 2020 - 2030 is effectively implemented through coordinated partnerships.



Conservancies Development

Goal 2: Community conservancies and designated Rangeland Management areas are effectively managed to enhance habitat connectivity.



Enterprise Development and Tourism

Goal 3: Economic growth and community livelihoods are enhanced through viable community enterprises.



Corporate Growth

Goal 4: AET's Institutional Capacity strengthened to deliver its mandate as a locally led umbrella body.

Greetings from AET



Jackson Mwato
Executive Director AET

Our vision to reconcile the interest of people and protect biodiversity in the Amboseli landscape is not a small endeavour. Over the years, we have all come to appreciate the reality of diminishing spaces for wildlife which is caused by different and sometimes conflicting land uses.

We have worked to secure more than 60% of community land to be under conservancies and open rangelands for grazing, however the peak of one mountain is the bottom of another, today the challenge is sustaining these open spaces to continue being available support people and wildlife.

I am glad to report that in this second quarter, we have made significant strides towards this vision.

We worked with the Eselengei community and stakeholder to develop a comprehensive Eselengei Conservancy Management Plan. The conservancy management plan is essential in strengthening the operations and governance of the pioneer conservancy by providing a clear framework between the community and the investor. This is crucial because conservancies are the only remaining spaces that can sustain wildlife areas into the future.

Secondly, we held the first of its kind conservation tournament that brought together 10 local schools to compete in AET's Tournament that featured both volleyball and football, dubbed *#Score4Nature*. The ripple effect of the tournament is immeasurable, it brought together the local communities from across the landscape to cheer for their teams and participate in conservation education and tree planting.

Additionally, the women in our grass seedbanks had a bountiful harvest of grass seeds which translates to getting income for their families and the reseedling of rangelands.

At the national level, the transition of the Amboseli National Park is making major strides, with community leaders, conservancy committees, stakeholders and the public given an opportunity to contribute their views and opinions, which are in support of the transition process.

It is from these activities and many others outlined in this report, that I remain optimistic and steadfast that our collective resolve and unity of purpose can drive us towards achieving an ecosystem where people and nature thrive in harmony

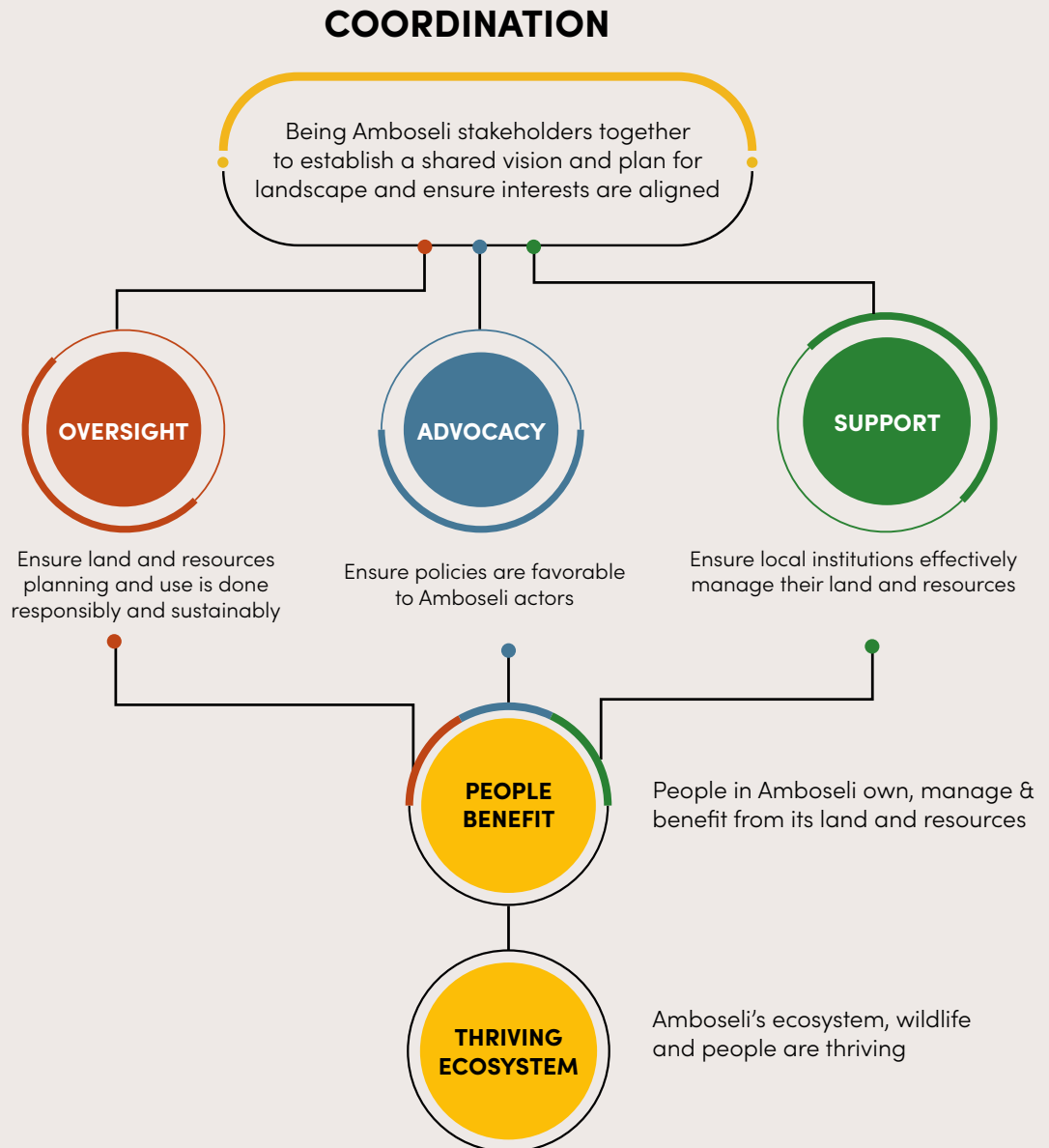
Who we are:

Amboseli Ecosystem Trust was founded in 2009, to bring together the local community, government, conservation, and developmental stakeholders in the Amboseli Ecosystem to develop land use practices that improve the livelihoods and well-being of people and wildlife.

Since its inception, AET has established itself as a community led organization spearheading sustainable partnerships in the Amboseli landscape to benefit the people and the environment. Remarkable achievements and track record have mainstreamed AET as the reference point for policy advocacy and community engagement, earning recognition and respect from public and private spheres.



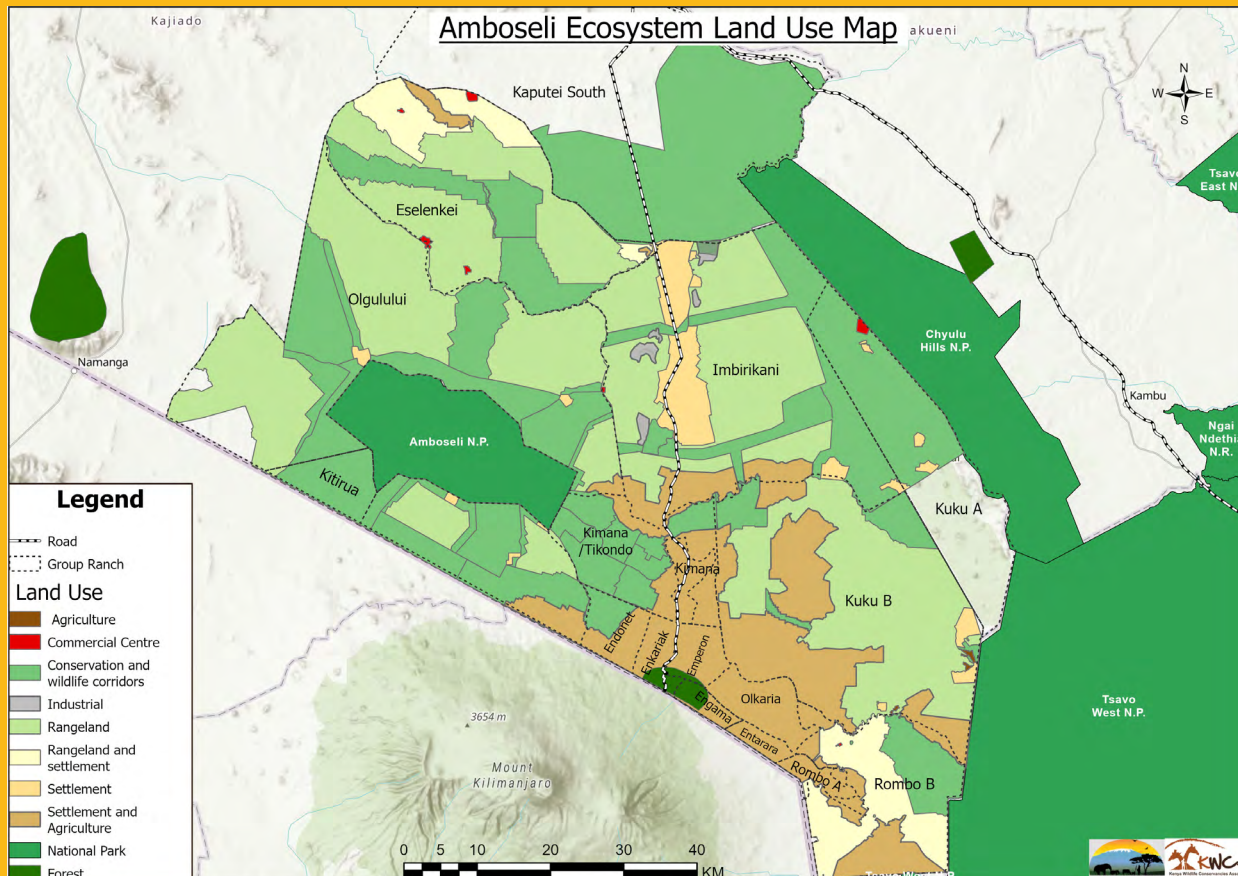
Impact Model



Our Ecosystem:

The Amboseli ecosystem is a delicate balance of ecological connectivity between the Amboseli National Park, adjacent group ranches, and conservancies with distant conservation areas such as Chyulu Hills, Tsavo West, and Kilimanjaro West in Tanzania.

The exceptional intersection of wildlife diversity with livestock and pastoralism makes the Amboseli Ecosystem a unique mosaic of people and wildlife for which it earned the designation as a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve (MAB) in 1991. The MAB Programme champions sustainable use and conservation of the resources of the biosphere with a special focus on harmonious coexistence.



1.3 million acres under conservation



650,166 acres under conservancies



35 community conservancies



716,122 acres under rangelands



2 AEMP Plans



744 community rangers

Achievements of Q2 at a Glance



1 conservancy management plan developed



4 Kitchen gardens Established



200 Kgs of Viable grass seeds (Enteropogon Macro Stachus) purchased for reseeding GSBs



34 Rangers trained on IWT



158 women and Youth trained under ToT program on alternative livelihood options



274 students from 10 schools engaged in AET cup Tournament



430 Tree seedlings distributed to schools.



403 Community members trained on HWC mitigation measures



924 community members sensitized on sustainable land use



50 Energy saving jikos established



470 Kgs of grass seeds harvested from 3 GSB supported by AET



25 zonal committee members trained on pasture management

Ecosystem Planning:

a) Mobilize partners to implement priority actions in the ecosystem plan

→ Judicial Dialogue Forum

The Amboseli Ecosystem Trust, through the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) and in partnership with Big Life Foundation facilitated a Judicial Dialogue forum on Habitat Protection and Sustainable Development in Kajiado County.

The judicial dialogue was hosted by the Kajiado County Court Users Committee under the directive of Hon. Justice Stella Mutuku the Presiding Judge of the Kajiado High Court.

H.E Joseph Ole Lenku, EGH, Governor of Kajiado County, officially opened the two-day forum, expressing his commitment to sustainable development that secures a thriving ecosystem that benefits both wildlife and local communities.

This dialogue serves an important role in sensitizing Judges and Magistrates to the environmental challenge, introducing them to the applicable legal regimes while enhancing their capacity to understand the local issues related to habitat protection and sustainable development in Kajiado County



→ AEMP sensitization meetings

To build understanding and awareness on the Amboseli Ecosystem Management Plan, AET with funding support from the Amboseli Trust for Elephants, has conducted community sensitization meetings in Meshenani, Ilmarba, Risa, Iloirero, Lorkiu, Lenkisim, Ituleta and Ilngosuani areas.

These meetings enhanced community understanding of how land uses and human activities affect the ecological viability of the ecosystem, which supports livestock production and wildlife conservation.

We are grateful to the Amboseli Trust for Elephants whose immense support has made these meetings possible.



→ Human Wildlife Conflict Sensitization and Conservation Awareness Meeting

In partnership with other stakeholders, the Amboseli Ecosystem Trust held community engagement meeting to enhance community awareness on wildlife conservation and human wildlife conflict. The shift from traditional pastoralism to farming along areas adjacent to conservancies and wildlife areas fuels human wildlife conflict in the Amboseli ecosystem, therefore these meeting provide a platform to enhance community awareness on sustainable land uses that foster human wildlife coexistence.



→ Amboseli Advisory committee meeting with Conservancy and Group ranches

The Advisory committee for the transfer of the Amboseli National Park to the County government of Kajiado held consultative meetings with stakeholders, conservancy leadership and group ranch leaders to gather their opinion on the transfer of the prime park to the community. The engagements, organized by the Amboseli Ecosystem Trust provided a dialogue forum for the stakeholders and community leaders to share their commitment to conservation and enthusiasm to the transfer of the Amboseli National Park.



→ Rangers participate in dialogue with Advisory Committee

AET facilitated community rangers from the Amboseli Tsavo Community Rangers Association to attend a dialogue forum with the National Advisory Committee for the transfer of the Amboseli National Park to share their views and contribution to conservation in the ecosystem. The rangers shared with the advisory committee their efforts in tackling poaching and human wildlife conflict, adding that the bulk of wildlife is within the community conservancies, so the move of the national park to communities will enhance the benefits to conservancies without rising the risk to wildlife.



→ Commemorating World Environmental Day

AET collaborated with the African Conservation Centre to celebrate women groups from across the Amboseli landscape who are involved in the grass seed bank program, a nature-based enterprise project that restores degraded rangelands through the reseedling of Indigenous grasses.

The women from the Loirero grass seed bank gave a demonstration to the guests and community on seed harvesting, care, and monitoring. Mr. Paul Wambi, Assistant Director of KWS Amboseli National Park, praised the efforts of the women groups for their dedication to the restoration program, as they joined in folk song and dance to celebrate their achievements.

Community leaders, including the Eselengei Group ranch official and the chairperson of the Ramat Wildlife Society, called upon the community to stop rampant land sales and encouraged the formation of community conservancies for biodiversity protection.



b) Strengthen land restoration work in degraded areas to support ecosystem integrity

→ **Rangelands zonal meetings**

AET hosted leaders from OOGRA grazing committees for a zonal sensitization and cluster meeting to coordinate pasture management ahead of the expected dry seasons, to secure rangeland productivity for both livestock and wildlife through out the season.

A highlight of the meeting was the introduction of a new zone in Oloilalei area to the existing ten grazing zones encompassed in the grazing plan, this addition reinforces efforts to effectively manage grazing in the replenished rangelands that are crucial habitat areas for wildlife and community livestock.



Conservancies Development:

- a) Build strong conservancies in the Amboseli ecosystem



→ Eselengei Conservancy Management Plan

Supported by USAID in partnership with Ifaw under the 'Sustainable Management of Amboseli Tsavo Landscape' project, AET, guided by the University of Nairobi, worked with the Eselengei Group ranch community and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive Eselengei Conservancy Management Plan.

AET held a stakeholder's workshop with the Eselengei Community members and other conservation partners to contribute towards the completion of the Eselengei Conservancy Management Plan.

Established in 1997 and covering over 12,000 acres, the Eselengei Conservancy is a pioneer community conservancy in the Amboseli landscape, well known for its rich diversity of wildlife and beautiful tapestry.

The conservancy management plan is essential to strengthening the operations and governance of community conservancy by providing a clear framework for effective management and coordination.

AET's conservancy development program is instrumental in ensuring the ecological value and economic potential of conservancies are amplified and communities are supported to enhance their operations and management.

- b) Strengthen governance for the management of designated rangeland areas to ensure maintain ecosystem integrity

→ **IWT Training:**

The Amboseli Ecosystem Trust facilitated the training of 7 female and 27 male rangers on Illegal Wildlife training. The role of rangers in the Amboseli ecosystem is rapidly changing, forcing rangers to continuously seek training to adapt to their evolving working environment. The training covered the identification and monitoring of target species, anti-poaching techniques and strategies for community engagement in enhancing human wildlife coexistence.



Enterprise Development and Tourism

- a) Empower community groups, targeting women, youth, and other marginalized groups to engage in nature-based enterprises to realize equitable and sustainable development

→ A Great Harvest: Women Grass seedbanks Photo

The women groups involved in our grass seed bank program have harvested an impressive 470 kgs of grass seeds this season, a significant increase from previous years when their yields were much smaller.

This is no small fete. After months of reseeding, weeding, and monitoring, the women of Meshenani, Lenkisir, and Noonkotia grass seed banks have a reason to be proud of their efforts.

These women are part of our grass seed bank program, a landscape restoration intervention & enterprise project supported by JustDiggIt under the Amboseli Sustainability Program III, which works with local Maasai women from the Olgulului community in the Amboseli landscape.

The grass seeds will be distributed to restore degraded rangelands in the Amboseli Ecosystem to enhance their productivity, ecological viability and sustainability as natural resources that support wildlife and community livestock.



→ Energy saving jikos

AET conducted trainings on the establishment and installation of 50 energy saving jikos for women groups in Kuku, Eselengei, Olgulului and Kimana group ranches. Energy saving jikos help to reduce the reliance on traditional resource intensive methods of cooking and improve energy efficiency leading to sustainable environmental practices. The program will develop a network of trainers who will disseminate knowledge and skills within their communities creating a livelihood for their families.

→ Kitchen Gardens:

In an effort to strengthen communities' resilience to climate change and diversify their livelihoods, AET continued to train women on the establishment and management of kitchen gardens in areas of Matepes in Rombo, Nasaru Olosho Conservancy, Loosotok in Motikanju Conservancy, Kuku Group ranch.

→ Purchase of tents and Chairs for Community Groups

To enhance community groups livelihood, the Amboseli Ecosystem Trust under the IWT grant donated three tents and 150 chairs to grass seedbanks for Ilmarba livestock group, Osiligi and Osotua women group.

The communities of the Amboseli incurred heavy losses during the recent losses so these interventions to diversify the livelihoods of the local communities building their resilience to climate change.



Advancing Women and Youth Inclusion in Conservation and management of natural Resources



→ AET Tournament: #Score4Nature

In an effort to enhance youth awareness and participation in environmental conservation, AET organized the AET tournament, a football and volleyball event that brought together 16 teams from 10 schools to compete for the AET Cup. The event dubbed #score4Nature was anchored on involving the youth, both boys and girls in sports to nurture their talents and also build their awareness on conservation in the Amboseli landscape. The winners were the Christ the King Secondary school in both football and volleyball and they took home cash rewards and a trophy. Sports provide a pathway to connect with the youth in schools and the community and increase their awareness in conservation fostering environmental ambassadors and stewards.





→ National Conservancies Women Forum

The Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association held this year's National Women Conservancies forum a platform established to enhance the voices of women in conservancies and raise awareness on gender issues.

The Amboseli Ecosystem Trust facilitated women from the Amboseli conservancies to participate in the national event which facilitates women empowerment, mentorship and training opportunities on leadership, governance and entrepreneurship encouraging more women participation and engagement in conservancies.

→ Social Analysis and Action Training for AET's Secretariate

Under the Resilient Inclusive Sustainable Environment (RISE) program implemented by the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association, the Amboseli Ecosystem Trust staff underwent a training on Social Analysis and Action, a social tool used to explore and challenge the social, gender, and power norms and practices that shape lives, following an iterative cycle of reflection, planning, action, and review.

In the past, conservation policy and programming paid little attention to the contribution of women and youth in biodiversity governance and decision-making.



Today, the reality is that for conservation to succeed the inclusion of women and youth in decision-making and benefit-sharing should be given priority.

This training enhances AET's efforts to advocate for gender inclusion by improving gender responsiveness in policy, governance, and mainstreaming of programs, which will lead to improved inclusion of women and youth in decision-making and governance of biodiversity in the Amboseli landscape.

The training also included representatives from Taita Taveta Wildlife Conservancies Association, Northern Rangelands Trust, Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association and the Baringo County Conservancies Association.



→ Training of Community Gender Champions

The RISE project facilitated the training of 20 gender champions from the Kitirua conservancy on gender inclusivity social analysis and action approaches that foster gender equity for sustainable development. Gender champions facilitate dialogues that enhance transformative changes in their communities by challenging social norms and barriers that hinder the participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities in decision making and natural resource governance.



Corporate Growth

a) Strengthen internal administrative and leadership capacity

→ Validation of AET's Safeguarding policy

Amboseli Ecosystem Trust (AET) is committed to ensuring the safety, well-being, and protection of all individuals involved in its activities, including employees, volunteers, beneficiaries, and partners. AET recognizes the importance of safeguarding in the context of its conservation and community development work within the Amboseli ecosystem in Kenya. Our Safeguarding Policy outlines the principles, procedures, and responsibilities that guide AET in preventing and addressing any form of harm, abuse, or exploitation. We commit to protect people, particularly children, at-risk adults, and beneficiaries of assistance from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with AET programs and staff.

b) Strengthen communication and M&E to entrench AET's brand image and widen the reach

→ M&E Training in Naivasha

Regular training for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) officers is crucial to ensure that they stay updated with the latest technologies, methodologies, and best practices, which enhance the ability to design robust data collection tools, perform rigorous data analysis, and generate actionable insights. The one-week long training organized by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in collaboration with the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Associations (KWCA) in Naivasha, brought together M&E focal points from all the

landscapes and a number of organizations in conservation space in Kenya, for a cross-learning workshop, fostering an environment for sharing ideas and best practices from diverse regions. The workshop was culminated with a training session on data management to equip the M&E personnel with skills to address emerging challenges in data collection and storage, adapt to evolving project requirements, and ultimately contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of organizational programs and initiatives through better decision-making and reporting.



c) Strengthen governance and leadership capacity to make decision-making more effective

→ Board and Governing Council Meetings

AET held its annual governing council meeting and quarterly board meeting to streamline its plans and objectives for 2024. The Amboseli Ecosystem Trust is steered by our two-tier leadership, comprising the Amboseli Governing Council and the Board of Trustees.

The Amboseli Governing Council is the highest level of authority at AET. The Council drives the overall direction of the Amboseli Ecosystem and facilitate the appointment of AET Board of Trustees. It ensures AET remains true to our vision and deliver on its mission for the benefit of the people and nature of the Amboseli Ecosystem.

AET's Board of Trustees brings together a broad range of proficiency, including community, scientific, conservation, media and business leaders with demonstrated commitment to sustainable conservation that safeguards nature and transforms the community. The AET Board supports the AET Secretariate to develop organizational strategic policies that work to enhance efficiency in delivery of the institutions mandate.





→ **AET Research Partnership
with William and Mary
University**

The Amboseli Ecosystem Trust and the William and Mary University – Institute for Integrative Conservation have partnered to implement a research-based program that works to give solutions to local problems facing the communities in the Amboseli Ecosystem.

In this quarter all preparations have been finalized, which includes the construction of additional facilities to accommodate the international students conducting the research.

These strategic partnerships improve biodiversity conservation which leads to increased benefits for both the ecosystem and the community.





Working together for the benefit of the people
and wildlife of the breathtaking Amboseli Ecosystem.

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