



**STORIES OF CHANGE:
HOW CIVIL SOCIETY IS DELIVERING
ON NATURE, CLIMATE AND
PEOPLE 2021-2025**

WWF-Norway

“Collectively, these stories demonstrate that strong civil society, backed by credible evidence and strategic advocacy, can shape markets, policies, and finance.”

Bradley Stuart Smith, Conservation Director Programmes

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1. THE PORTFOLIO

The portfolio consists of stories of change from five programmes. The stories illustrate some of the positive changes that WWF-Norway's 'Civil Society Delivering on the SDGs for Nature, Climate and People 2021-2025' have contributed to. The report collects several stories of change across the five programmes, showcasing how WWF plays a crucial role in policy advocacy, civil society engagement and grassroots efforts, and engaging the private sector in the green-blue financing space.

Three thematic areas are highlighted in the portfolio: fisheries, infrastructure and energy.

This programme portfolio aligns with Norad's core development priority of strengthening the capacity of local civil society organisations (CSOs) and the broader civil society space in Africa and China to advance sustainable, inclusive, and climate-smart development. It is designed to support local CSOs and contribute to the achievement of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The portfolio has focused on three thematic areas - fisheries, infrastructure and energy - and directly targeted associated relevant SDGs (7: Clean Energy; 9: Resilient Infrastructure; 13: Climate Action; 14: Life Below Water).

The portfolio has been made up of the following five programmes:

- Africa Energy Transition (AET), implemented in China, Kenya, Madagascar, Tanzania and Uganda;
- Africa Sustainable Infrastructure and Investment (ASI), implemented in China, Kenya, Madagascar and Tanzania;
- China Climate and Energy Transition (CET), implemented in China;
- Promoting Sustainability in Chinese Fisheries in the Yellow Sea and Southwest Indian Ocean (CF), implemented in China; and
- Unlocking a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Southwest Indian Ocean (SWIO), implemented in Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa and Tanzania.

The outcome goals of the programmes have been that:

- The capacity of **CSOs** in China and the six African countries active in the thematic domains is strengthened so that they can influence change.
- **Sustainable policies** in the three thematic domains are developed, adopted and implemented in the seven programme countries and/or at the regional level.
- **Companies** in China and the six African countries operating in any of the three thematic domains adopt and implement sustainable standards and practices.
- Similarly, **financial institutions** in those countries adopt and implement sustainable principles and standards, and this is reflected in their actual investments.

2. LIST OF ACRONYMS

Abbreviation	Definition
AET	Africa Energy Transition Programme
ASI	Africa Sustainable Infrastructure and Investment Programme
BCMada	Barefoot College Madagascar
CAPPMA	China Aquatic Products Processing and Marketing Alliance
CCICED	China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development
CET	China Climate and Energy Transition Programme
CF	Promoting Sustainability in Chinese Fisheries in the Yellow Sea and South West Indian Ocean
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance
EV	Electric Vehicle
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FMSY	Fishing Mortality at Maximum Sustainable Yield
FOCAC	Forum on China–Africa Cooperation
GEV-EVsGoGreen	Electric Vehicle Charging and Battery-Swapping Green Initiative and Pilot Platform
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (fishing)
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MoE	Ministry of Energy
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NDRC	National Development and Reform Commission (China)
NEP	National Energy Policy (Tanzania)
NRES	National Renewable Energy Strategy (Tanzania)
NbS	Nature-based Solutions
PBC	People's Bank of China
PSMA	Port State Measures Agreement
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisation
SBCC	Social and Behaviour Change Communication
SBE	Sustainable Blue Economy
SBEFP	Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles
SBTi	Science-Based Targets initiative
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEAK	Sustainable Energy Access Association of Kenya
SEF	Sustainable Energy Forum (Tanzania)

SWIO	South West Indian Ocean
SWIOFC	South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission
SWIOSBE	South West Indian Ocean Sustainable Blue Economy Programme
TNFD	Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures
TPR	Technical Progress Report
TuFAK	Tuna Fisheries Association of Kenya
TuNA Alliance	Tuna Network Alliance (Tanzania)
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

A photograph of a beach at sunset. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with scattered clouds. In the foreground, there are several makeshift structures made of dark plastic sheeting supported by wooden poles on a sandy beach. A large, weathered boat is beached in the middle ground. In the background, several other boats are visible in the calm water. The overall mood is serene and somewhat desolate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a portfolio of Stories of Change demonstrating how WWF, working with and through civil society organisations (CSOs), has contributed to sustainable, inclusive, and climate-smart development across Africa and China. The portfolio responds directly to Norad's core priority of contributing to reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development, with strengthening civil society capacity and influence as a key tool towards this, while advancing progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDGs 7, 9, 13, and 14.

Between 2021 and 2025, WWF implemented five interlinked programmes spanning energy transition, sustainable infrastructure, fisheries governance, sustainable finance, and the blue economy. Across these programmes, WWF's role has consistently accelerated important processes by strengthening CSO capacity, convening coalitions, generating credible evidence, and enabling sustained engagement with governments, companies, and financial institutions.

The stories highlight policy and system-level change driven by civil society influence. In Africa, CSO coalitions supported by WWF have shaped national renewable energy strategies, halted environmentally harmful infrastructure projects, strengthened county-level energy planning, and influenced sustainable finance principles now adopted across entire banking sectors. In China, WWF's long-term policy engagement has contributed to major reforms in fisheries governance, renewable energy procurement, corporate climate commitments, seafood traceability, and the integration of biodiversity and ocean considerations into national green finance frameworks.

A recurring theme is the integration of grassroots experiences and appeals with national and international decision-making. WWF supported community-led and inclusive approaches, particularly involving women, youth, and coastal communities, while ensuring that local evidence and lived experience informed policies, standards, and investment decisions. This has resulted in more legitimate, implementable, and durable outcomes.

The portfolio also illustrates WWF's growing influence on financial systems, where civil society engagement has helped redirect incentives, strengthen environmental and social safeguards, and unlock investment for climate- and nature-positive development. From sustainable finance principles in Tanzania to blue finance taxonomies in China, WWF has helped translate sustainability commitments into operational frameworks.

Collectively, these stories demonstrate that strong civil society, backed by credible evidence and strategic advocacy, can shape markets, policies, and finance. WWF's contribution lies not only in achieving individual results, but in strengthening the enabling conditions for long-term, systemic change – ensuring that development pathways increasingly benefit nature, climate, and people together.



STORIES OF CHANGE

4. STORIES OF CHANGE

4.1 AFRICA ENERGY TRANSITION PROGRAMME (AET)

From Sunlight to Power: Women Driving Real Change

Barefoot College Madagascar is empowering women to become local solar engineers - expanding clean energy access and livelihoods – while WWF’s communications support has boosted the initiative’s visibility, funding, and long-term financial sustainability.

Many of the rural communities in **Madagascar** lack access to basic services such as electricity, severely limiting opportunities for development and quality of life. This is an issue that disproportionately affects women in these communities, who often face fewer economic and social prospects. Since 2017, Barefoot College Madagascar¹ (BCMada) aims to change this by providing training to women from these communities to build, install, maintain and repair solar systems, transforming them into local solar engineers. BCMada equips these women with the skills to bring sustainable solar energy to their villages, thus turning them into agents of change within their communities through micro-enterprise. Between 2021 and 2025, the organisation trained and equipped 120 solar technicians across Madagascar. The initiative is part of the National Program for rural electrification in Madagascar, implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy.

WWF-Madagascar supported BCMada in scaling its impact by helping develop a communication strategy and implement a communication plan. Through this collaboration, targeted newsletters were produced for villages to maintain the existing networks, along with materials for online use, partner engagement, and event presentations. This partnership focused on offering support and guidance in reaching not only existing villages and beneficiaries, but also a wider audience to increase programme awareness, expand outreach and arouse interest from potential future collaborators. In part through this developed communication strategy BCMada was able to mobilise locally available and international funding such as PISSCA² (via the French embassy), the US embassy and the Honnold Foundation.

This increased visibility has also helped to significantly grow customer numbers and incomes for the associated Tsiafajavona eco-lodge in Ambatolampy. The lodge generates revenue for BCMada’s solar training center, helping to secure the long-term sustainability of the initiative, whilst also exemplifying an environmentally positive business model in its own right.

¹ Barefoot College Madagascar, website. Available at: <https://bcmada.org/en/home/>

² PISSCA (*Project Innovants des sociétés Civiles et Coalitions d’Acteurs*) is a civil society programme funded by the French Embassy in Madagascar, to conserve the Ambodivoasary forest. One of the main areas of focus for the PISSCA programme is the capacity building of female journalists in the service of the climate emergency in Andasibe, Madagascar. The English translation of the PISSCA title is *Innovative projects from civil societies and coalitions of actors*. More information available at: <https://voi-fitama-andasibe.mg/index.php/nos-projets/projet-pissca>

Sustainable Energy Forum: Driving Tanzania towards affordable, reliable renewables
WWF's AET programme helped build and strengthen Tanzania's Sustainable Energy Forum into an effective national advocacy coalition that influenced key renewable-energy policy (including NRES 2023) and is contributing to a rapid shift in the country's energy mix toward renewables.

The Sustainable Energy Forum (SEF), a national advocacy coalition in Tanzania with more than 30 members, was founded and began effective operations with WWF support. Since the inception of the Africa Energy Transition (AET) Programme in 2021, with the guidance of WWF-Tanzania, SEF-Tanzania began engaging the Government of Tanzania through the Ministry of Energy to advocate for a renewable energy policy that provides a national statement, commitment, and direction toward transitioning to renewable energy.

The aim of the policy is to provide access to clean, affordable, and reliable energy for every citizen. The AET Programme has capacitated the forum through various training sessions on evidence-based advocacy, high-level policy engagement and negotiation skills, networking, and the preparation of policy briefs and policy papers for forum members.

Based on AET Programme support to the Forum, in 2022, the government, through the MoE, engaged and worked very closely with SEF-Tanzania in a series of meetings and forums for designing and preparing the National Renewable Energy Strategy (NRES 2023), which provides strategic action for the implementation of the National Energy Policy (NEP, 2015). The forum platform prepared and shared several policy actions and recommendations to ensure the strategy is inclusive and addresses critical community needs, including affordability and reliability of clean cooking solutions.

The outcome of the assessment of the level of engagement (LoE) of the Forum indicated significant capacity development of SEF-Tanzania, increasing from level 1 to level 3³. This means more strategic lobbying and representation, increased receptiveness of decision-makers, and new relationships and influence being established. Key decision-makers are now more aware of WWF and partners' positions, and WWF and partners are more informed about key decision-makers' plans, constraints, and procedures.

These important strategies are already starting to have an impact on the ground. Between 2021 and 2025, Tanzania's energy mix has shifted from being majority (64%) fossil fuels to majority (nearly 70%) renewables.

³ The WWF Civil Society Level of Engagement tool is a tool used by WWF partners to track and measure the depth of engagement with decision-makers and stakeholders throughout an influencing process, ranging from 0 – the starting point of influencing a process, to 4 - Policy/Practice Issue gains Firm Position on Political/Corporate Agenda

Nairobi Summer School on Climate Justice: Empowering Youth

WWF's support to the Nairobi Summer School on Climate Justice is building a network of empowered young leaders who are applying practical skills on just energy transition to drive community-level renewable energy action and advocacy across multiple African countries.

With WWF support, the Nairobi Summer School on Climate Justice - an initiative run annually by the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance⁴ – equips young people with knowledge and skills related to climate justice and sustainable development through an interdisciplinary approach. WWF supports the programme along with other partners including Swedish International Development Coordination Agency, UK International Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands, the Nature Conservancy amongst others. The event covers 14 days of training for around 250 participants from across the continent annually, with the AET programme supporting the Energy Day. Since 2022, WWF has initiated and led a specific module focused on just energy transition and supported increased participants numbers by making the course 'hybrid' (in-person and online). The impact of the summer school is being felt across the continent. Jasper Kasoma and TienTega Wendpayangde - alumni of the school in 2023 - have applied their skills across Namibia, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Niger.

Jasper is now working to address energy poverty in his home country Namibia through a vibrant civil society organisation, the Namibian Youth on Renewable Energy⁵. In collaboration with other civil society organisations, educational institutions and local authorities, they are training communities on renewable energy and just energy transition and how they relate to Namibia, a country that imports 70% of energy and has 43% of the population without energy access. Jasper is now a key national voice challenging environmental degradation that could contradict sustainable development goals, often interrogating topics such as Namibia's oil exploration.

TienTega Wendpayangde founded the Young Energy Actors Association⁶ to encourage young people into the energy transition space in his home country Burkina Faso. He launched the Energy Debates - a platform dedicated to discussing issues of energy, environment and sustainable development. His National Forum of Young Energy Actors is an event that supports the development of the renewable energy and energy efficiency sector while improving health and preserving the environment.

⁴ Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance, a civil society consortium of more than 2000 organisations from 54 African countries. Available at: <https://pacja.org/>

⁵ The Namibian Youth on Renewable Energy, Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/theNayore/>

⁶ Youth Energy Actors Association, Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/jae.enegies>



He also hosts the National Forum of Energy Actors and Renewable Energy for Agri-food Industry - a program that aims at empowering women and promoting agricultural products through energy hybridisation and training. The program began with a training of 30 women from the rural commune of Oubriyaoghin located in the central plateau on the production of ecological charcoal to help reduce deforestation and generate income. His association is also recycling used electrical equipment for the manufacture of basic solar kits and is popularising clean cooking technologies to combat deforestation in Burkina Faso and Niger. The association is currently collaborating with Attaib Aoussouk Islamane (another WWF partner organisation) with the aim of launching the Nigerian branch of Young Energy Actors.

Forum on China-Africa Cooperation 2024: WWF's key wins

WWF and African civil society partners successfully used FOCAC 2024 to push for concrete recommendations for greener, more inclusive and accountable China–Africa cooperation – especially on renewables.

The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was hosted by the Chinese government in Beijing in September 2024, gathering African delegates, including 80 ministers, from 44 countries and 17 international organisations to discuss how China and Africa should strengthen collaboration on investment and trade. During the event, the WWF offices of Uganda, Kenya, Zambia, Madagascar and Norway, in partnership with Africa-based civil society organisations, developed a position paper contributing to policy recommendations on five priorities for China-Africa cooperation. These priorities are Environmental Sustainability, Civil Society Participation, Governance and Accountability, Inclusive Economic Growth, Capacity Building and Technology Transfer.

During the Forum, WWF called upon all actors to ensure that all prospective projects to be implemented in Africa are aligned to Africa's Sustainable Development Goals, including in renewable energy development. Additionally, WWF-China translated and submitted the position paper to the Chinese Ministry of Ecology and Environment. WWF also presented these recommendations during the launch of the Initiative for Strengthening China-Africa Cooperation for Green and Sustainable Development.

These recommendations were well received by government officials and dignitaries, aligning with the Beijing Declaration and Action Plan from the FOCAC Summit. During the FOCAC Summit which came after the launch, it was announced in [the FOCAC Beijing Action Plan \(2025-2027\)](#) that China will implement 30 clean energy and green development projects, and encourage investments in renewable energy across Africa, including solar, wind, green hydrogen, hydroelectric, and geothermal power. China and African countries will promote exchanges of expertise, best practices, and innovative solutions, and carry out capacity-building programmes to empower African professionals, entrepreneurs, and communities in the renewable energy sector. The Action Plan also highlights continued cooperation with international and non-governmental organisations.

During the event, WWF-China co-sponsored a matchmaking event to discuss the implementation of the Beijing Action Plan. The event brought together African ambassadors, Chinese state-owned enterprises, and financial institutions. Key discussions focused on increasing investments in infrastructure, renewable energy, and improving local communities' well-being. Chinese companies showcased their commitment to good environmental, social and governance practices, with two companies presenting their alignment with the Taskforce on Nature Related Financial Disclosures⁷ and plans for sustainable investments in Africa.

⁷ Taskforce on Nature Related Financial Disclosures, Available at: <https://tnfd.global/>

In full alignment with WWF's three-stage FOCAC advocacy efforts, the prospects for China-Africa cooperation in the renewable energy sector have expanded significantly, and finance and impact is seen already. According to the follow up brief on FOCAC from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'From the Summit to the end of March 2025, the revenue of the contracted clean energy projects in Africa by Chinese enterprises reached RMB 21.18 billion yuan'⁸, along with multiple other wins in renewable energy and other environmental causes. Through policy advocacy, capacity building, collaboration with civil society, and finance matchmaking, WWF will continue to promote civil participation and renewable energy investment in Africa.



Photo: WWF

⁸ Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *From the Summit to the end of March 2025*. Available at: https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/wjbz/hd/202506/t20250611_11646041.html

Enabling County-Led Energy Transitions in Kenya: the Kilifi Case

WWF has helped Kenya's counties shift from biomass to clean energy through stronger, locally led planning with lasting change as a result.

Across Kenya, many counties continue to face persistent energy challenges driven by heavy reliance on traditional biomass fuels such as firewood and charcoal. These energy systems contribute to deforestation, environmental degradation and serious health risks, while limiting economic growth and deepening poverty. Recognising that a sustainable energy transition must be locally owned yet nationally aligned, WWF has played a catalytic role in strengthening county-level energy planning and policy influence, bridging grassroots realities with long-term, system-level change.

In Kilifi County, WWF-Kenya partnered with the County Government to support the development of a comprehensive County Energy Plan aimed at addressing these interconnected challenges. WWF's value-add lay not only in technical expertise, but in facilitating an inclusive, participatory planning process that placed energy end users, particularly at the grassroots, at the centre of decision-making. Through community consultation workshops, targeted technical support and close collaboration with county officials, WWF helped translate local needs and renewable energy potential into a clear, actionable roadmap.

Launched in August 2025, the Kilifi County Energy Plan sets out a strategic pathway to reduce dependence on environmentally damaging energy sources while scaling up clean and climate-resilient alternatives such as solar power, energy-efficient cooking technologies and biogas. The plan commits the county to improving energy infrastructure, expanding rural energy access and prioritising investments that deliver both socio-economic and environmental benefits. As a result, Kilifi has emerged as a recognised leader in renewable energy planning at county level.

A critical outcome of WWF's approach was strengthening trust and shared ownership between county authorities and communities. By ensuring that energy users were actively engaged throughout the process, WWF helped surface practical barriers to access, affordability and reliability, thus creating solutions that are more likely to be implemented and sustained. This collaborative model has empowered Kilifi County to move from fragmented energy challenges towards a more resilient, forward-looking energy system.

Beyond individual counties, WWF has amplified impact by supporting national advocacy through the Sustainable Energy Access Association of Kenya (SEAK). With WWF's support, the association developed and implemented an advocacy strategy that enabled civil society actors to engage meaningfully in national and county policy processes, including the National Energy Policy, the Integrated National Energy Planning Framework and county energy planning. Through this partnership, WWF supported SEAK to assist counties, including Kilifi, Taita Taveta and Bomet, to develop County Energy Plans that place renewable energy access and socio-economic development at their core. By embedding renewable energy priorities into democratically approved and legally recognised plans, WWF has helped ensure that progress is institutionalised, investable and sustainable over time.

This combined strategy of linking community-driven county planning with coordinated national advocacy has strengthened Kenya's enabling environment for renewable energy. The importance of this role was recognised in 2024, when SEAK received an SDG 7 award at the Annual SDGs Kenya Forum. As Kenya seeks to reignite progress in its renewable energy transition, WWF's contribution has been pivotal in turning policy ambition into locally grounded, lasting change.

Towards Green Finance: Building Banking Sector Capacity and Appetite

WWF has launched a practical four-module eLearning programme to help banks and other financial institutions in East Africa build core green-finance skills. Several institutions are using the platform, and The Tanzania Bankers Association has invited WWF to help develop a more advanced eLearning platform that builds on this introductory course and expands sector-wide capacity.

In 2025, WWF rolled out a practical eLearning initiative helping banks, microfinance institutions and savings and credit cooperatives (SACCOs) across East Africa translate sustainability goals into concrete lending action.

A four-module, foundational eLearning course now empowers loan officers, risk analysts, finance managers, and product teams in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania with the knowledge to identify, evaluate, and finance green opportunities. The course introduces key concepts of green finance, including environmental and social risk management, renewable energy lending, good environmental, social and governance principles, and carbon markets. Each module offers concise lessons with real-world examples and interactive quizzes, making technical topics accessible to banking professionals at all levels. The complete learning journey - Introduction, Core Principles, Renewable Energy, and Financing Green - ends with a certificate of completion indicating readiness for climate-aligned banking.



Photo: Shutterstock

Over ten financial institutions are active on the platform, with others participating in upcoming rounds. Banks and SACCOs have shown strong interest, driven by increasing compliance and disclosure requirements under International Financial reporting Standards (IFRS) S1 and S2⁹, as well as the business opportunity of green lending. For several key East Africa banks (Postbank, Equity Bank and ABSA), eLearning has been supplemented with targeted group training sessions covering product design, credit assessment, and risk management for renewable energy clients.

The impact extends beyond individual institutions. The Tanzania Bankers Association has invited WWF to help develop a more advanced eLearning platform that builds on this introductory course and expands sector-wide capacity. This next phase will strengthen the region's ability to mainstream climate considerations into everyday banking. It will turn knowledge into tangible financial resources for a cleaner, more resilient economy.

⁹ IFRS Foundation, *IFRS S1 General Requirements for Disclosure of Sustainability-related Financial Information*. Available at: <https://www.ifrs.org/issued-standards/ifrs-sustainability-standards-navigator/ifrs-s1-general-requirements/>

4.2 AFRICA SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME (ASI)

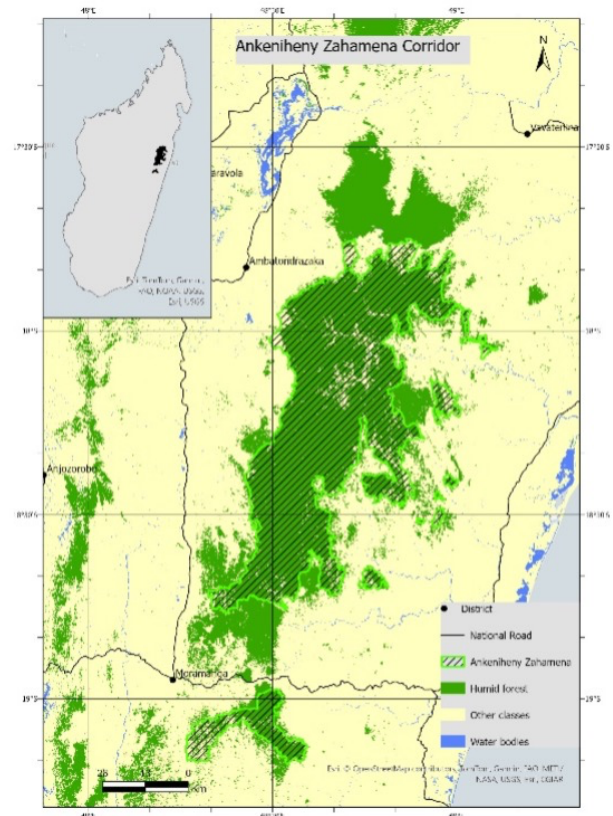
Influencing Infrastructure: Halting Harmful Projects through WWF Advocacy

WWF's advocacy in Madagascar and Kenya shows how strengthening civil society and using evidence-based engagement can improve infrastructure governance and stop harmful projects.

Across Africa, infrastructure investment is a key driver of economic development, but weak environmental and social safeguards mean that poorly planned projects can undermine biodiversity, water security, and the rights and livelihoods of local communities. WWF's advocacy work in **Madagascar and Kenya** demonstrates how targeted civil society strengthening and evidence-based engagement can contribute to more accountable infrastructure governance and measurable changes in decision-making.



In **Madagascar**, WWF contributed to improved infrastructure governance by strengthening civil society’s capacity to engage in policy dialogue and oversight. Infrastructure planning had largely excluded environmental and community perspectives, limiting accountability and transparency. WWF addressed this by convening eight national and more than 20 regional civil society organisations¹⁰ and supporting them to operate as a coordinated advocacy platform. Through training on sustainable infrastructure standards, including UNEP’s Principles of Sustainable Infrastructure, environmental and social impact assessment processes, and nature-based solutions, WWF strengthened partners’ technical knowledge and advocacy skills. As a result, civil society organisations were better equipped to analyse infrastructure proposals, articulate sustainability concerns, and engage constructively with government institutions and investors.



This capacity development contributed directly to an outcome-level change when plans emerged for a major highway through the Ankeniheny-Zahamena Corridor, a protected forest landscape of global biodiversity importance. With WWF’s coordination and technical backing, a broad coalition of civil society organisations¹¹ mobilised to engage decision-makers through public statements, media outreach, and direct dialogue with authorities. The proposed route through the protected area was ultimately halted, preventing irreversible environmental damage. Beyond this immediate result, the process led to increased recognition of civil society as a legitimate stakeholder in infrastructure planning, with government authorities opening new space for structured dialogue on environmental and social considerations in future projects.

¹⁰ These organisations included: CNPE (Coalition Nationale de Plaidoyer Environnemental) – A leading environmental advocacy coalition in Madagascar ; Transparency International Initiative Madagascar – Specialists in promoting transparency and combating corruption; TAFO MIHAAVO - a network of local communities/Fokonolona in Madagascar that manages natural resources in a collaborative and sustainable manner; MANONDROALA is a non-governmental organization for environmental conservation; OSCIE (Organisations de la Société Civile sur les Industries Extractives) – A network focusing on governance in the extractive sector ; ONG Lalana – A long-established NGO with expertise in road infrastructure and sustainability.

¹¹ This included: WWF-Kenya; Conservation Alliance of Kenya; African Wildlife Foundation; Green Belt Movement; East Africa Wildlife Society; Rhino Ark; National Environment Civil Society Alliance of Kenya; National Environment Management Authority; Kenya National Highways Authority; Kenya Wildlife Service; Environmental and Land Court in Nyeri

In **Kenya**, WWF has contributed to similar outcome-level change by supporting civil society and conservation actors to challenge environmentally high-risk infrastructure development through legal and public advocacy. The proposed Ithite – Ndunyu Njeru highway through the Aberdare National Park and Forest Reserve threatened a critical water catchment supplying millions of people. WWF worked with a broad coalition of organisations to generate and present technical evidence on environmental impacts, engage the public, and pursue legal remedies. When conditional approval was granted in early 2024, WWF and partners escalated their advocacy, reinforcing the long-term risks to water security, biodiversity, and climate resilience.



Photo: Shutterstock

These efforts contributed to the extension of court conservatory orders in 2025, halting construction while legal proceedings continue. The case has strengthened jurisprudence and public debate around infrastructure development in protected areas, reinforcing the role of the judiciary and civil society in holding authorities to account for compliance with environmental safeguards.

Across both countries, WWF's contribution lies not only in stopping individual projects, but in strengthening the enabling environment for sustainable development. By building civil society capacity, fostering coalitions, and sustaining evidence-based engagement with policy, legal, and public institutions, WWF has contributed to more transparent, inclusive, and accountable infrastructure decision-making. These outcomes align with Norad's results focus on strengthened civil society, improved governance, and systemic change, with impacts expected to extend beyond the lifetime of individual interventions and shape future infrastructure investments for the benefit of both people and nature.



*Civil Society Representatives delivering a press conference on the proposed Antananarivo to Toamasina.
Photo: WWF-Madagascar, Henintsoa Rahjarimanana*

Madagascar Sustainable investment platform: Shaping Climate and Nature-Positive Finance

WWF is helping catalyse sustainable finance reform in Madagascar by convening a multi-stakeholder working group with the Ministry of Finance to build awareness, technical capacity, and momentum for a national framework.

Madagascar's financial sector has long operated without a clear framework for sustainable finance, limiting the ability of financial institutions to drive responsible investments. Without regulations and incentives to integrate environmental, social, and governance criteria, investment decisions have often prioritised short-term economic gains over long-term sustainability. Recognising the urgent need for change, WWF has built a transformative initiative to build momentum toward a sustainable finance framework in Madagascar.

In a move to influence financial sector reforms, WWF partnered with the Ministry of Finance within the National Coordination of Inclusive Finance. Together, they created a sustainable finance working group, which at the end of 2025 included 27 key members from banks, mobile money providers, fintech companies, NGOs, investment firms, financial regulators and other relevant stakeholders, to collaboratively shape the future of sustainable finance in the country. Unlike previous fragmented efforts with no real commitment from financial regulators, advocacy efforts to create this platform have ensured that sustainability considerations are increasingly becoming an integral part of financial decision-making.

This working group's mission is clear: raise awareness, build technical expertise, and push for policies that incentivise sustainable investments. Training sessions on "Green finance, from theory to practice" and "Environment and finance sector" were organised to equip financial institutions with knowledge of sustainable finance principles, climate risk assessment and environmental, social and governance integration. These sessions not only enhanced financial actors' understanding but also provided them with practical tools to assess and manage sustainability-related risks in their portfolios.

Beyond capacity-building, the initiative actively engaged with the finance regulator to push for policy development. Madagascar currently lacks regulations on sustainable finance, making it crucial to establish a roadmap that provides a clear direction for financial institutions. Through strategic advocacy, data-driven recommendations, and engagement with policymakers, the working group has been instrumental in positioning sustainable finance as a national priority.



Capacity building for financial institutions in sustainable finance. Photo: WWF-Madagascar.

One of the significant outcomes of this initiative has been the shift in perception among financial institutions. Previously, sustainability was viewed as an external concern, disconnected from financial performance. Today, major banks and investment companies increasingly recognise the risks associated with unsustainable practices and the opportunities offered by green finance and are developing projects that incorporate environmental, social and governance criteria. Major banks such as BNI Madagascar and investment firms like Miarakap Madagascar have launched pilot projects incorporating ESG criteria and sustainability principles. The momentum created by the sustainable finance working group has laid the foundations for a radical change that will integrate sustainability principles into Madagascar's financial system.

Looking ahead, the goal is to establish a comprehensive and enforceable regulatory framework that not only redirects financial flows with Madagascar's sustainability objectives but also embeds environmental and social safeguards into the country's financial system. WWF and its partners are working to institutionalise sustainable finance, ensuring that all future investments actively contribute to climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and inclusive economic growth. This initiative represents a turning point in Madagascar's financial governance, creating a model for responsible investment that directly benefits both people and nature.

Bank of China Adopts the Taskforce on Nature-Related Financial Disclosures (TNFD)
WWF's long-term advocacy has helped embed nature and biodiversity risk in China's financial sector, highlighted by the Bank of China becoming the first Chinese institution to join the TNFD in January 2025.

In January 2025, the Bank of China became the first Chinese financial institution to join TNFD¹², marking a significant milestone in the mainstreaming of biodiversity considerations within China's banking sector. This achievement reflects WWF's years of dedicated advocacy in advancing green finance and biodiversity risk management. This commitment was made in conjunction with the 11th China-UK Economic and Financial Dialogue was held in Beijing, co-chaired by Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng and UK Chancellor Rachel Reeves. Recognizing the significance of risk management and investor disclosure for nature-positive outcomes and climate action, both parties welcomed the work of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures and encouraged the integration of its framework into international sustainability standards.

WWF's efforts in this space began in earnest during the Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 in Kunming, 2021, where 36 systemically important Chinese banks, including the Bank of China, committed to the "Joint Declaration of Banking Sector to Support Biodiversity Conservation", co-created and co-led by WWF and the China Banking Association. Building on that momentum, during COP 15 in Montreal in 2022, the Joint Action Initiative for the Chinese Banking Sector to Support Biodiversity Conservation was announced, further pushing Chinese banks to mainstream biodiversity into their decision-making.

WWF will aim to continue leveraging key platforms such as the Mechanism for International Sustainable Infrastructure Promotion and COPs to deepen engagement with financial institutions, enhance capacity-building, and further integrate nature-related financial disclosures into China's financial system, driving long-term sustainable finance reforms.

¹² Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosure, *TNFD engagement deepens in China as Bank of China joins the Taskforce*. Available at: <https://tnfd.global/tnfd-engagement-deepens-in-china/>

Strengthening Sustainable Finance in Tanzania through Civil Society–Led Partnership

The Bank of Tanzania launched Sustainable Finance Principles, with all 43 member banks committing to adopt them – marking a major step toward more sustainable and transparent lending. Developed through a collaborative process supported by WWF and other civil society partners, the principles embed ESG and climate and nature risk into banking operations and are already influencing lending decisions and sector-wide coordination.



The eighth Governor of the Bank of Tanzania, Hon. Mr. Emmanuel M. Tutuba (center) attended the event alongside representatives from across the financial and banking sector. Photo: Tanzania Bankers Association.

In February 2024, the Bank of Tanzania launched the Sustainable Finance Principles¹³, marking a major step toward integrating environmental and climate considerations into the country’s financial system. With all 43 member banks of the Tanzania Bankers Association (TBA) now committed to adopting the principles, Tanzania’s banking sector is beginning a shift toward more responsible, transparent, and sustainable lending practices.

This milestone was achieved through a collaborative process in which WWF and other civil society organisations played a central enabling role. As Tanzania’s financial sector faced growing exposure to environmental and climate-related risks—reflected in rising non-performing loans and negative impacts on ecosystems—there was increasing recognition of the need for a coordinated, sector-wide response. International regulatory expectations and national policy priorities further underscored the urgency of embedding sustainability into financial decision-making.

¹³ Sustainable Finance Principles for Tanzania, 2024. LinkedIn and [pdf] Available at: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/faith-jelagat_sustainable-finance-principles-for-tanzania-activity-7163813852302823424-Uiqm/

In response, the Tanzania Bankers Association initiated the development of the Sustainable Finance Principles. WWF provided critical financial and technical support throughout this process, ensuring that environmental sustainability, biodiversity protection, and climate risk management were firmly embedded in the principles from the outset. Drawing on its global experience in sustainable finance and conservation, WWF supported the integration of environmental risk considerations, natural capital stewardship, and alignment with national and international policy frameworks.

Civil society organisations, including WWF and partners such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), contributed independent expertise and credibility to the process. Their engagement helped bridge the gap between financial institutions, regulators, and environmental stakeholders, ensuring that the principles reflected both financial sector realities and sustainability imperatives. This inclusive approach strengthened ownership among banks and enhanced the technical robustness of the final framework.

TBA, and representatives from the banking sector, and were formally launched by the Governor of the Bank of Tanzania, Hon. Emmanuel M. Tutuba. Covering Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues, financial inclusion, risk management, natural capital, innovation and technology, compliance, and transparency, the principles are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, Tanzania Vision 2025, and the country's Nationally Determined Contributions.

Since their launch, the Sustainable Finance Principles have driven tangible change. All TBA member banks have now integrated the principles into their operations, increasing awareness and consistency across the sector. Banks are beginning to apply sustainability criteria in lending decisions, including restricting financing for projects that pose high environmental or climate risks. The principles have also improved transparency and strengthened collaboration between regulators, financial institutions, and civil society.

By embedding sustainability into the core of banking operations, the Sustainable Finance Principles are expected to deliver long-term benefits for both the financial sector and the environment. Improved risk management reduced environmental degradation, and increased support for inclusive and sustainable economic development are anticipated as implementation deepens. WWF's leadership and civil society engagement were instrumental in moving the sector from recognition of risk to concrete, system-wide action, laying a strong foundation for lasting change in Tanzania's financial system.

Tanzania: Upscaling Nature-based Solutions and Conserving Water Through Spices

WWF helped Morogoro district replace restrictive riverbank enforcement with community-backed, nature-based restoration—stabilising degraded banks and improving livelihoods through clove tree planting. 30 000 seedlings were planted and long-term income opportunities for more than 2000 households were created.



Two beneficiaries of the 10 000 clove seedlings distribution to communities in the wards of Konde, Kinole, Tegetero, Tawa, and Mtombozi. Photo: Japhart Kiwanga/WWF-Tanzania

Through WWF's leadership and sustained engagement with government and civil society, decision-making around riverbank protection in Morogoro District has shifted towards nature-based solutions that deliver both environmental and livelihood benefits. Under a WWF-implemented Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) project, more than 2,000 households have benefited from landscape restoration along degraded riverbanks, where 30,000 clove seedlings were planted to restore ecosystems while creating long-term income opportunities. The initiative demonstrates how inclusive, evidence-based collaboration can align environmental regulation with community needs, turning conservation challenges into locally supported solutions.

WWF led the project in close collaboration with the Morogoro District Council, regional and local authorities, Wami Ruvu water basin offices, Agriculture Growth Corridor of Tanzania, civil society organisations such as Sustainable Holistic Development Foundation Tanzania and other key stakeholders. Through this convening role, WWF created a structured platform for joint decision-making, bringing together government authorities, basin regulators and civil society to identify

restoration options that were both legally compliant and socially acceptable. A consultant was commissioned by WWF to develop a detailed nature-based restoration plan, which served as a shared technical reference for stakeholders and informed local and regional decision-making on land use within protected riverbank zones. The Basin Water Board played a vital role in approving clove trees as a suitable species for the sixty-meter buffer zones, a decision influenced by evidence generated through the restoration plan and consultations facilitated by WWF and civil society partners, which demonstrated that cloves could meet both conservation and livelihood objectives. Morogoro Regional Administrative Secretary, Dr. Mussa Ali Mussa, publicly acknowledged and supported the efforts during a seedling distribution ceremony, signalling high-level political endorsement of the approach and reinforcing its legitimacy within regional governance structures.

Communities in the Konde, Tegetero, Kinole, and Mtombozi wards of Morogoro District have long faced environmental degradation and livelihood challenges. Key upstream rivers such as the Mtombozi, Mbezi, and Mfizigo, that form the Ruvu River had suffered from erosion, flooding, poor agriculture practices and siltation. To protect these vital water sources under the Tanzania Natural Resources Management Act No 11 of 2009, farming was prohibited within sixty meters of riverbanks, leading to the removal of farmers from these areas. In the mountainous terrain of Morogoro, where arable land is limited, this created serious food security issues for affected households. Civil society organisations played an important role in articulating these community concerns and ensuring that local realities were reflected in discussions with authorities.

As part of the NbS project, WWF and partners implemented landscape restoration by distributing 30 000 clove tree seedlings to communities across four wards. The trees were planted within the sixty-meter buffer zones to restore riverbanks and stabilise soil. A restoration plan was developed by a commissioned consultant under the NbS framework. Clove trees were specifically selected and approved by the Basin Water Board due to their suitability for combining environmental protection with economic value. This decision marked a shift in how buffer zone regulations were operationalised, moving from exclusionary enforcement towards a negotiated, incentive-based model shaped by WWF's technical guidance and sustained engagement with regulators and civil society. The initiative included full stakeholder involvement to ensure buy-in and compliance with environmental laws while supporting community needs.

The clove trees are helping to restore environmental flows, stabilize degraded areas, and prevent further erosion and siltation in the Ruvu River basin, a critical water source for Tanzania's coastal regions, including Dar es Salaam. The long-term economic potential of the cloves, which can be harvested for over 20 years, offers communities a sustainable livelihood option. Speaking at the seedling distribution, Dr. Mussa Ali Mussa, Morogoro Regional Administrative Secretary, stated: "I am deeply impressed by WWF's invaluable collaboration in our shared mission to protect the environment, particularly in safeguarding critical water sources. Together, we are committed to improving community well-being by promoting sustainable agriculture, especially through the cultivation of environmentally friendly cash crops such as cloves. I believe our joint efforts – especially the restoration initiative involving spice seedlings – hold great promise for the people of rural Morogoro. With proper care and management, this initiative has the potential to deliver long-lasting, multi-dimensional benefits."¹⁴

¹⁴WWF-Tanzania, Upscaling Nature based Solutions through spices growing. Available at: <https://www.wwf.or.tz/?48223/Upscaling-Nature-based-Solution-through-spices-growing>

The project is designed for long-term sustainability. Clove trees offer continuous harvests for more than two decades, providing households with a stable and environmentally friendly source of income. The initiative also enhances environmental flows, improves biodiversity, and helps communities align with legal requirements regarding land use. By demonstrating a viable, community-supported pathway for implementing environmental regulations, the project has influenced how local authorities approach riverbank protection, positioning nature-based solutions as a practical policy tool rather than a constraint. Additionally, clove farming may open up new avenues for financial inclusion by allowing households to access credit against future yields, further strengthening resilience and economic security¹⁵.

¹⁵ A full documentary video on the initiative is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMx-FSP1cAQ>

4.3 CHINA ENERGY TRANSITION (CET)

Renewables at Scale: Corporate Chia Steps Up to Reduce Emissions

WWF helped create domestic demand for renewables in China by training companies and promoting practical procurement tools and principles. 32 companies joined the initiative and 17 launched pilots, collectively installing about 78 million MWh of renewable electricity and supporting a unified green power trading market.

China has in recent years become a leading producer and exporter of renewable energy technology. It's still necessary to increase the share of solar and wind in China's own electricity mix, however, from only 8.6% in 2019 (this programme's baseline year), including through creating domestic demand. Through WWF efforts, by the end of 2024, 32 companies of various sizes have engaged in renewable energy initiatives, adopting the Renewable Energy Buyers' Principles, and 17 companies have launched pilot projects. Participating companies include Wuxi Murata Electronics, Aisen/Rudong Chemical, Jiangsu Kunyi Energy, Procter & Gamble Jiangsu, Star EV Charging, among others.¹⁶ These participating companies range from globally recognized multinationals like Procter & Gamble to influential regional leaders and innovative mid-sized enterprises in China's manufacturing and energy sectors, representing a diverse cross-section of the market. Participating CSOs and other impactful non-governmental partners were the One Planet Foundation and think tank South China Low Carbon Institute. These actions have driven the transition towards clean energy and contributed to significant emissions reductions in China.

Renewable energy sources need to take a greater share of China's energy mix, if China is to successfully fight climate change and stop air, soil and water pollution. The main challenge addressed here is the need for Chinese companies to significantly increase the share of renewables in their energy consumption, rather than just adding to the overall energy mix. For renewables to effectively replace fossil fuels, companies must actively purchase and/or produce renewable energy from sources like solar and wind. This will also send a signal to energy producers and the government that the demand is real and growing.

By the end of 2024, WWF experts had provided training and workshops to 404 companies nationwide, empowering them to adopt renewable energy strategies. The initiative also promoted the Renewable Energy Buyers' Principles; a set of actions companies can take to showcase their commitment to renewable energy. WWF has developed the Self-Evaluation Manual for Enterprise Participation in Green Electricity Trading to help enterprises assess their own status, understand the requirements for green electricity trading, and navigate the participation process effectively.

¹⁶ [Wuxi Murata Electronics Company](#) is a Chinese subsidiary of the Japanese Murata Group, a global leader in the design, manufacture and supply of advanced electronic materials.
[Aisen/Rudong Chemical Company](#) is a Chinese subsidiary of the Japanese Aisen Group, which develops and manufactures parts and materials for cars.
[Jiangsu Kunyi Renewable Energy Company](#) is a Chinese company which develops solar energy technology including panel, batteries and more, for private consumers and others.
[Procter & Gamble Jiangsu](#) is a Chinese subsidiary of the multinational P&G company, and the largest consumer products company in China, employing more than 8000 people.
[StarCharge](#) is a Chinese companies which provides charging infrastructure for electric vehicles and microgrid solutions:

Companies were invited to implement pilot projects, financed by the companies themselves, to test and scale up renewable energy procurement strategies. By 2024, the programme saw 32 companies joining the initiative and 17 of the 32 launching renewable energy pilots, contributing additional renewable energy capacity to the grid.

The impact of this initiative has been significant. By 2024, participating companies had procured and installed a total of 78,454,600 MWh of renewable energy (equivalent to annual electricity usage for 3.9 million Norwegian households!), with 17 companies actively running renewables pilot projects. Drawing on insights from these pilot deals, WWF put forward a policy recommendation advocating for a unified renewable energy trading market through the Beijing Committee of the China National Democratic Construction Association.¹⁷ This recommendation was subsequently accepted by the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

The adoption of renewable energy by these businesses helps reduce China's carbon emissions, aligning with the country's goals for sustainable development. The programme contributes to several SDGs, including Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7), Climate Action (SDG 13), and Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8). WWF played a critical role by providing the necessary training, resources, and platforms for knowledge exchange, helping companies make informed decisions to drive the energy transition.

The sustainability of the changes is evident in the long-term commitment from companies to continue investing in renewable energy. The programme's success in raising awareness and facilitating actionable steps has embedded a culture of renewable energy procurement within the corporate sector, ensuring that once the programme concludes, the momentum for change will continue.

¹⁷ The China National Democratic Construction Association is one of eight minor political parties in China, with seats in Congress. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_parties_in_China

SBTi: Chinese Companies Commit to Science-Based Emissions Reduction Targets
WWF helped mobilise Chinese companies to adopt 1.5°C-aligned SBTi targets by providing guidance and training and working through key partners. By end-2024, 330 companies had joined SBTi and 174 had approved targets in 2024, with spillover effects across supply chains

WWF collaborated with industry associations, consultants, and civil society partners to drive corporate commitments to 1.5°C-aligned targets under the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi),¹⁸ exceeding 2024 goals with 174 approved targets.¹⁹ WWF has engaged directly with some companies, and has, through training, outreach and awareness raising alongside other organisations, contributed indirectly to recruiting many more companies in China.

WWF partnered with industry associations, consultant companies, and non-governmental partners, such as China Electricity Council, South China Low Carbon Institute, and Saixi Standardization Institute to engage leading Chinese companies, including BOE Technology Group, Linyi Lingong Machinery Group, and JA Solar Technology, in committing to science-based greenhouse gas reduction targets.²⁰ Qingdao Haier Special Freezer set a net zero target.²¹

SDG 13.2 aims to integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning, and reducing emissions from business and industry are key to this. China's energy-intensive industries faced mounting pressure to align with the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement, yet many lacked structured guidance on emissions reductions. This effort aligns with WWF's efforts to inspire and support major corporations to adopt climate targets.

WWF collaborated with the One Planet Foundation and other partners to develop sector-specific guidance, organize workshops, and build capacity around the SBTi. Key actions included: Hosting training events, by 2024 with 645 corporate attendees, to raise awareness; Working with the alliance Green Partnership of Industrial Parks²², consultants and certification firms to extend outreach to industrial parks and logistics companies; Developing sectoral emission reduction roadmaps for textiles, information technology and logistics.

¹⁸ The Science-based targets initiative: <https://sciencebasedtargets.org/>

¹⁹ [Companies taking action under the SBTi](#)

²⁰ BOE Technology Group is a Chinese electronic components producer and one of the world's largest manufacturers of LCD, OLEDs and flexible displays. <https://www.boe.com/en/>

Linyi Lingong Machinery Group is one of the four leading groups in China's construction machinery industry, consisting of four core and 18 other member companies. <http://en.lgmggroup.com/about/intro.jsp>

JA Solar Technology is a leading global supplier of photovoltaic power generation solutions, normally referred to as solar panels, with products at present available in 178 countries and regions.

<https://www.jasolar.com/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=lists&catid=58>

Qingdao Haier Special Freezer produces household and commercial appliances, including for "smart homes".

https://smart-home.haier.com/en/gsgk/?spm=inverstor.en_gsls_pc.irheader_20200506_1.1

²¹ TÜV Rheinland, 20 Sept 2024, "[TÜV Rheinland Supports Haier Freezer in Achieving SBTi Validation for Emission Reduction Targets](#)".

²² The GPIPC is an industry alliance representing 50 leading technology and industrial development zones with a focus on green development: <https://www.greendev.org.cn/home>

By the end of 2024, a total of 330 Chinese companies had joined SBTi, with 174 having their 1.5°C-aligned targets approved in 2024.²³ This surpasses the target for the whole programme period, which was 20.²⁴ These companies became role models in their sectors, contributing to the global push toward climate-resilient business practices.

At the Zero-Carbon Mission International Climate Summit, WWF awarded certificates to these companies in recognition of their official commitment to setting ambitious targets through the Science Based Targets initiative. Chinese companies appear to consider the certificate an honor. For example, BOE Technology Group featured the certificate in its 2022 Sustainable Report.

WWF has played a key role in driving emission reductions across entire supply chains by encouraging leading companies to commit to the SBTi. Through these companies' efforts to reduce emissions in their value chains (so-called scope 3 emissions), the impact has extended to other industries, particularly upstream sectors. For example, electric vehicle manufacturer NIO made its SBTi commitment in the first half of 2023, setting a strong example for the industry.²⁵ This has influenced upstream companies, such as EV battery producers Sunwoda and Leoch to start the process of making their own SBTi commitment.

The momentum generated by this programme is set to persist as companies incorporate SBTi-aligned targets into long-term operational plans. Ongoing engagement by WWF and partners ensures the sustainability of these changes, enabling companies to contribute meaningfully to the Paris Agreement goals.

²³ [Companies taking action under the SBTi](#)

²⁴ There are several reasons for this overachievement. Initial target-setting was challenging due to the unpredictability of corporate interest in the programme, including by what time and how many companies would want to join the SBTi. When the ball started rolling and some targets were met early, subsequent targets were raised, thus enabling greater positive climate impact. Next, in 2024, public disclosure of inactive companies by the SBTi heightened reputational pressure, prompting renewed corporate action. Lastly, the shift to virtual meetings during the pandemic increased participation and became standard practice, allowing a greater geographic spread of interested stakeholders.

²⁵ [NIO](#) is a Chinese electrical vehicle manufacturer.

Charging in China: First National Map of Green Charging and Battery Swapping Stations

China's EV market is rapidly growing, but much of the electricity used for charging still comes from fossil-fuels and people are unaware of the resulting emissions. To address this, WWF-China and the China Electricity Council launched a national map showing green EV charging and battery-swapping stations—helping consumers identify operators that purchase renewable electricity.

One in ten cars on Chinese roads is now electric, and 11 million electric vehicles (EVs), were sold in the country in 2024.²⁶ WWF and partners want to make it easy for the owners of these cars to run their cars on renewable energy. In June 2023, the China Electricity Council and WWF-China launched a map of green EV charging and battery-swapping stations, to inform the public and drive demand for electricity based on renewable energy.²⁷

As of December 2023, China had more EV passenger cars than any other country, with 20.4 million units, almost half of the global fleet in use, and the country also dominates the market for electric light commercial vehicles and electric bus deployment. Still, those 20.4 million cars made up only 7.6% of the total number of cars (compared to 29% in Norway) and the electricity they use comes from the grid, which is still 65% fossil fuel based. The public are generally not aware that their EVs still contribute to carbon emissions when they use electricity from the general grid. As China accelerates its transition to clean energy, EV owners face challenges in accessing green charging and battery-swapping stations. The lack of clear information on station locations and operators makes it difficult for consumers to actively participate in green electricity consumption, slowing progress in reducing carbon emissions in the transportation sector. With this map, EV owners know which charging companies have purchased green electricity from power trading centers.

A dynamic green electricity map was developed by WWF-China and the China Electricity Council, displaying the location, form, and operators of charging and battery swapping stations providing electricity based on renewable energy. Information on the map was submitted to the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) in 2023, more precisely its special working group on Green Electricity and Green Certificates which now serves as a policy advocacy channel, ensuring that future policy recommendations related to EV green electricity can be submitted and considered at a national level.

The Electric Vehicle Charging and Battery-Swapping Green Initiative and Pilot Platform (GEV-EVsGoGreen) was launched to support green and low-carbon travel. It enhances public engagement through various media channels and promotes green electricity purchases and usage within the EV industry.

²⁶ IEA, 2025: "Global EV Outlook 2025 – Executive summary":
<https://www.iea.org/reports/global-ev-outlook-2025/executive-summary>

²⁷ The 2024 National Map with the charging location in a range of Chinese cities can be accessed here:
https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/AdP2C_qV9-yHIX4_lehYGw

The initiative has made green electricity more accessible to EV owners, providing them with a clear and actionable medium to support sustainable energy use. By making information on green charging and battery-swapping widely available, the project encourages greater public participation in China's clean energy transition. On a broader scale, this effort contributes to reducing carbon emissions in the transportation and energy sectors, reinforcing China's commitment to green and sustainable development; to promote the consumption of green electricity in the transportation sector, facilitate the realization of green zero-carbon transportation, and the coordinated development of electric vehicles and clean energy.

To ensure long-term effectiveness, the platform has established a mechanism for ongoing public communication and policy integration. Future policy recommendations related to green electricity for EVs will continue to be submitted through the NDRC's special working group, fostering continuous improvement in green electricity infrastructure and adoption. Next, at present, the premium for green electricity is primarily borne by the charging companies rather than fully passed on to EV owners. Therefore, the release of the map also serves as encouragement and credit for related corporate actions, as they will want to use it to attract more customers. Lastly, media outreach and public awareness campaigns will help sustain engagement, encouraging more individuals and business sectors to transition to low-carbon transportation solutions, as well as to promote the coordinated development of transportation and clean energy. WWF also think there is reason to believe that a private citizen who is choosing an EV over a traditional fossil car, is more open to taking steps to ensure the electricity the car runs on is based on renewable energy.



Photo: Shutterstock

4.4 PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY IN CHINESE FISHERIES IN THE YELLOW SEA AND SOUTH WEST INDIAN OCEAN (CF)

Advancing China's Adoption of the Port State Measures Agreement to Counter IUU Fishing

Since 2022, WWF-China has helped move China closer to ratifying the PSMA to combat IUU fishing by combining policy engagement, research, and international exchange. This has among other things supported a shift to a 2024 public statement that ratification is under consideration.

The Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) is a cornerstone of global efforts to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. As a major actor in pelagic fisheries, China's ratification of PSMA would significantly strengthen international fisheries governance.

Since 2022, WWF-China has played a catalytic role in advancing PSMA uptake by China. Through sustained policy engagement, evidence generation, and international exchange, WWF contributed to a measurable shift in government positioning, from China's reluctance to reference PSMA in 2022 to a public announcement in 2024 that ratification is under active consideration.

WWF supported informed decision-making by commissioning analytical studies with Zhejiang University on China's compliance capacity, identifying institutional gaps and providing actionable policy recommendations to align domestic systems with PSMA requirements. These findings were strategically amplified through high-level policy platforms, including China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED) special policy study groups and ministerial forums, enabling direct engagement with fisheries, in foreign affairs, and senior decision-makers.

In parallel, WWF strengthened readiness for implementation by building technical capacity among fisheries authorities. This included targeted seminars and peer learning exchanges, drawing on international experience from PSMA-implementing countries such as the UK and Nigeria. WWF also contributed to longer-term systemic change by advocating for stronger port controls and vessel monitoring within revisions to China's Fisheries Law.

As a result, China has begun aligning domestic regulations and infrastructure with PSMA standards, laying the groundwork for effective future implementation. Going forward, WWF will continue to act as a key facilitating partner, supporting policy adoption, enforcement readiness, and practical implementation— including through expanded electronic monitoring and pilot initiatives in key fishing provinces (Shandong, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong). These efforts position China to play a leading role in responsible fisheries management and global ocean governance.

Influencing Sustainable Fisheries Policy in China

WWF has helped drive reforms in China’s fisheries governance by combining research, pilots, and sustained policy engagement—work that was recognised by the State Council in 2023 and contributed to the revised Fisheries Law passed in 2025.

WWF has played a significant role in advancing sustainable fisheries governance in China by combining robust scientific research, practical pilot work and sustained policy engagement. Through the China Fisheries programme, WWF has positioned itself as a credible and trusted policy advisor, contributing to tangible improvements in national fisheries policy and legislation. This influence was formally recognised in 2023, when China’s State Council issued the *White Paper on Distant Water Fishery*. The White Paper explicitly acknowledged the government’s engagement with international NGOs such as WWF on sustainable fisheries management and action against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and confirmed that WWF’s proposals had been incorporated into national measures, including voluntary fishing moratoria on the high seas and conservation efforts for squid resources. This high-level recognition demonstrates that WWF’s recommendations are not only heard but actively used in shaping policy.

WWF’s policy influence is grounded in a strong scientific evidence base. Under the programme, WWF conducted in-depth research on IUU fishing and fisheries governance through interviews with fisheries authorities, distant-water fishing companies and academic institutions. WWF also analysed total allowable catch systems, traceability requirements and key data elements, and identified priority areas for fisheries subsidy reform. In partnership with Ocean University of China, WWF developed and tested an electronic monitoring system, providing concrete evidence of how monitoring and compliance could be strengthened. These findings were shared with policymakers and stakeholders through targeted policy dialogues and technical forums, ensuring that research translated into actionable recommendations. This evidence was consolidated during the revision of China’s Fisheries Law. During the public consultation on the revised draft in December 2024, WWF convened an expert workshop to synthesise research outputs, policy studies and lessons from pilot projects. WWF submitted detailed recommendations on critical provisions, including stronger measures against IUU fishing, improved port management, better management of plastic fishing gear, protection of juvenile fish, further reform of fisheries subsidies, and regulation of recreational fisheries. WWF also emphasised the importance of international cooperation and structured engagement with domestic organisations.

In December 2025 China passed a revised Fisheries law, marking the first comprehensive overhaul in nearly 40 years to promote high-quality development, sustainability, and tougher regulation of illegal fishing. This is set to take effect from 1st May 2026²⁸. WWF is well positioned to support its effective implementation. Building on its recognised advisory role, WWF will help translate the law into practical standards, capacity building and learning exchanges within China and internationally. Through this integrated approach, WWF has contributed to systemic change in China’s fisheries policy framework and laid the foundation for long-term sustainable fisheries management.

²⁸ Ministry of Justice of People’s Republic of China, *China Revises Fisheries Law*. Available at: http://en.moj.gov.cn/2025-12/29/c_1151133.htm

Strengthening Sustainability Across China's Seafood Supply Chain

WWF-China and partners are making China's seafood supply chain more sustainable and traceable through new industry guidelines and growing consumer demand.

China's seafood sector plays a critical role in global food systems, yet longstanding challenges like overfishing, biodiversity loss, and weak traceability have undermined its environmental sustainability. Addressing these risks requires coordinated action across the entire value chain, from production and processing to retail and consumption. Since 2022, WWF-China, working in close partnership with the China Aquatic Products Processing and Marketing Alliance (CAPPMA) and leading seafood companies, has played a catalytic role in driving this transformation.

At the core of this effort is the China Sustainable and Traceable Seafood Initiative, jointly launched by WWF-China and CAPPMA to embed sustainability and traceability as industry norms rather than niche practices. Supported initially by six major seafood companies, the initiative was designed to tackle structural barriers in the supply chain by aligning corporate action, industry standards, and consumer demand around shared sustainability objectives. A major milestone was reached in November 2024 with the release of the General Guidelines for Sustainable Traceability of Aquatic Products²⁹, officially endorsed by 11 seafood companies. These guidelines provide a unified framework for improving transparency, data accuracy, and accountability across the seafood supply chain. Notably, they are the first in China to integrate ecological and biodiversity considerations directly into traceability systems, moving beyond compliance toward measurable environmental performance. This represents a significant shift in how sustainability is operationalised within the sector.

WWF's role has been central to this change process. As a trusted civil society actor, WWF-China provided technical expertise, convening power, and long-term facilitation to bridge the interests of industry, associations, and sustainability standards. Through multiple rounds of expert consultation, stakeholder dialogue, and company engagement, WWF helped ensure that the guidelines reflect international best practice while remaining practical and scalable for Chinese businesses. Targeted capacity-building and training further supported companies and suppliers to pilot the guidelines and begin transitioning toward more sustainable sourcing and production models.

Beyond supply-side reform, WWF has also influenced market demand through evidence-based social and behaviour change communication (SBCC). Two WWF-China-led consumer studies show a clear upward trend in awareness and uptake of sustainable and traceable seafood. While only 11.14% of respondents reported purchasing sustainable aquatic products in 2022, this figure rose to 24.8%, alongside a growing willingness to pay price premiums³⁰. Overall awareness of sustainable and traceable seafood increased to 37%, demonstrating that WWF's consumer-facing work is helping convert interest into action. The studies also highlight the growing importance of digital platforms and short-form video in shaping purchasing decisions, informing more effective engagement strategies for both companies and policymakers.

²⁹ WWF, *Universal Standards for Seafood Traceability*. Available at: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/our-work/oceans/sustainable-seafood/universal-standards-for-seafood-traceability/#:~:text=In%202018%2C%20the%20Dialogue%20process.Originate%20with%20legal%20production%20practices>

³⁰ WWF-China, internal WWF-China survey data (2022, 2024)

Together, these interventions demonstrate how WWF and civil society can drive systemic change: influencing industry standards, strengthening corporate practices, and shaping consumer behaviour simultaneously. By prioritising certified and sustainably improved seafood, encouraging supplier transformation, and increasing transparency across the value chain, the initiative is reducing environmental risks while improving the resilience and credibility of China's seafood sector.

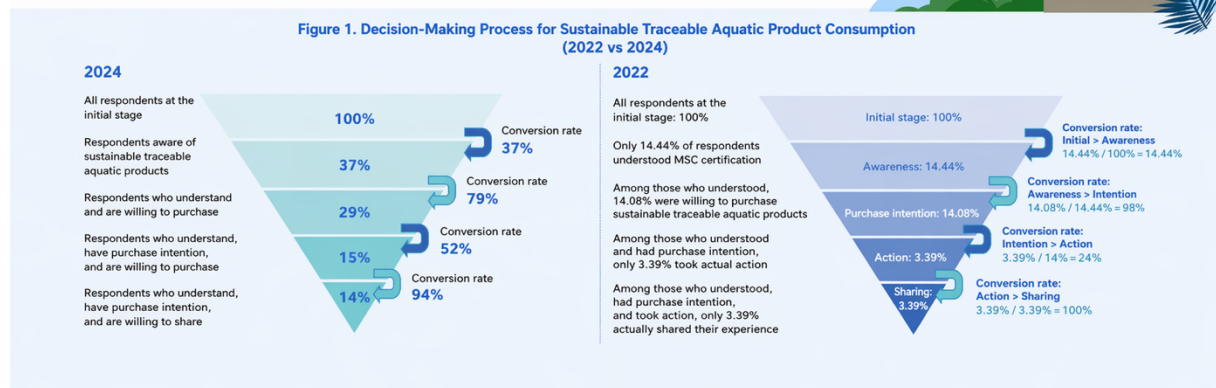
As more companies adopt the guidelines and consumer demand continues to grow, WWF-China's convening and advocacy role is helping lay the foundation for a seafood supply chain that supports biodiversity protection, responsible resource management, and long-term economic viability. This integrated approach shows how CSO leadership can translate sustainability principles into concrete market outcomes—benefiting both people and nature.

Enhancing Awareness and Driving Action Remain Key to Decision-Making

Data analysis of the decision-making process reveals that the proportion of consumers at each stage has decreased to a similar extent (Figure 1). The transition from "initial awareness to the recognition stage" and from "purchase intention to actual purchase" has improved year over year, but there is still room for further improvement. ¹



Figure 1. Decision-Making Process for Sustainable Traceable Aquatic Product Consumption (2022 vs 2024)



Embedding Sustainable Blue Finance in China's Financial System

WWF-China has helped move “blue finance” in China from a niche concept to an operational part of the financial system. By building an evidence base, adapting international principles, and engaging regulators, WWF supported the creation of China's first Sustainable Blue Taxonomy and influenced updates to green finance rules – most notably excluding IUU fishing from green-labelled finance.

Just five years ago, sustainable blue finance was virtually unknown in China. Financial institutions lacked definitions, standards, and tools to guide investment in ocean-related sectors, and marine industries were largely absent from green finance frameworks. Today, blue finance is firmly on the agenda of China's financial regulators, embedded in national catalogues and increasingly shaping how capital flows toward the ocean economy. This shift has been driven in part by WWF-China's sustained research, policy engagement, and capacity building across the financial system.

Beginning in 2020, WWF-China laid the foundations for change by translating and adapting the Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles (SBEFP) to the Chinese context, conducting risk assessments of unsustainable fisheries, and mapping financial flows in the marine sector. These efforts addressed a critical gap: without clear guidance, regulators and investors were unable to distinguish between sustainable and harmful ocean-related activities. WWF's research provided the evidence base needed to start a national conversation on blue finance.

This work culminated in 2024 with the publication of China's first Sustainable Blue Taxonomy, a comprehensive classification system for sustainable marine industries. The taxonomy provided regulators and financial institutions with a practical tool to identify investable blue economy activities and align them with sustainability objectives. Its release also marked a turning point in WWF-China's engagement with policymakers. Through direct dialogue with the People's Bank of China (PBC), WWF contributed to updating China's Green Bond Catalogue and integrating ocean-related considerations into national green finance frameworks. As a result, blue finance shifted from a niche concept to a recognized policy area within China's financial governance.

The most significant regulatory outcome came in July 2025, when PBC, together with the National Financial Regulatory Administration and the China Securities Regulatory Commission, released the updated Green Finance–Supported Projects Catalogue. For the first time, the catalogue explicitly excluded Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing activities, closing a major loophole that had allowed environmentally harmful practices to access green-labelled finance. The catalogue also incorporated WWF-China's technical recommendations across multiple marine sectors, including seawater utilisation, shipbuilding, marine biological resource use, and feed processing. This policy shift directly reflects WWF's engagement with the PBC Research Bureau following the launch of the Blue Taxonomy and is expected to redirect substantial financial resources toward a genuinely sustainable blue economy.

In parallel with national policy engagement, WWF-China worked to ensure that sustainable blue finance could translate into real investment on the ground. In the Yellow Sea Ecoregion, WWF built an inventory of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture projects, conducted market surveys, and trained more than 50 stakeholders to improve the bankability of conservation-driven enterprises. A matchmaking event in Shanghai connected financial institutions with vetted sustainable fishery projects, demonstrating that conservation and investment objectives can

align in practice. Two local governments have since adopted regional blue taxonomies, showing how national frameworks can be translated into sub-national action and setting precedents for wider replication.

Recognising that policy change alone is not enough, WWF-China also focused on equipping financial institutions with the knowledge and confidence to act. Since 2021, WWF has organised annual workshops, trained more than 100 finance professionals, and engaged with over 10 major financial institutions to showcase best practices and investment opportunities in marine sectors. Five financial institutions have formally joined the SBEFP, signalling a growing alignment between China's finance sector and international sustainable blue economy standards. More institutions are now actively exploring investments in sustainable seafood and fisheries, indicating a broader shift in market behaviour.

Together, these efforts have helped transform sustainable blue finance in China from an unfamiliar idea into an operational policy and investment framework. WWF-China is now regularly invited to provide technical support to the central bank, including on the development of new green bond policies, reflecting its established role as a trusted advisor in this field. By shaping standards, influencing regulation, and unlocking investment-ready projects, WWF-China has ensured that finance is increasingly part of the solution for ocean conservation, paving the way for long-term sustainability in China's blue economy.

4.5 UNLOCKING A SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY IN THE SOUTH WEST INDIAN OCEAN (SWIO)

Overfished No More: Yellowfin Tuna Recovery in the SWIO

Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna is no longer overfished, after science-based management reforms cut fishing pressure and helped rebuild the stock. WWF contributed to this turnaround by strengthening science-based decision-making at the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission – supporting catch limits, management procedures, and stronger coastal-state influence – while also helping drive broader ecosystem-based, multi-species management reforms.

After over a decade of overfishing, yellowfin tuna in the Indian Ocean has been assessed as no longer overfished or subject to overfishing in the 2024 stock assessment. This thanks to collective rebuilding efforts that reduced fishing pressure below fishing mortality at maximum sustainable yield (FMSY) and contributed to a 30% increase in spawning biomass since 2021.

The recovery of Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna was a central impact-level goal under the WWF's regional SWIO strategy to halt overfishing and ensure science-based fisheries governance. Despite some technical concerns around the data,³¹ there is little doubt that WWF's interventions made a direct and meaningful contribution to the turnaround. The project was rooted in the Sustainable Development Goal 14.4, aiming to restore fish stocks to sustainable levels. This multi-year initiative – primarily implemented by WWF under the Norad-funded SWIO-Sustainable Blue Economy Programme – pursued a theory of change focused on regional empowerment. By equipping coastal states and key stakeholders with the scientific, policy, and negotiation tools needed to influence decision-making at the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the project created the conditions for systemic reform. Efforts included advocating for evidence-based catch limits, enabling the adoption of a management procedure, improving representation of coastal voices, and fostering policy coherence with broader regional frameworks. The yellowfin recovery efforts were supported under the NORAD-funded Sustainable Blue Economy Programme, with WWF leading the regional advocacy and technical work, and complementary national investments and civil society led efforts under the same programme.

³¹ The 2024 stock assessment by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) confirmed that yellowfin tuna is no longer overfished and no longer subject to overfishing—marking the first time in over a decade that the stock has met these sustainability thresholds. While the recovery trajectory was broadly anticipated, the speed and magnitude of the change exceeded initial expectations, driven not only by management reforms but also by environmental and recruitment factors. Initially, the project assumed a multi-cycle recovery path, recognising the persistent overfishing since 2014 and the political hurdles that had stalled previous rebuilding plans. Although key Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) were adopted—thanks largely to the leadership of the G16 and Southwest Indian Ocean (SWIO) coastal states—objections and exemptions from major CPCs (including India, Iran, Indonesia, Madagascar, Oman, and Somalia) diluted their impact. Nonetheless, in 2024, new assessments showed the spawning stock biomass rising above BMSY and fishing mortality 25% below FMSY. WWF welcomed this outcome, but raised caveats. Significant uncertainties remain regarding CPUE standardisation, underreporting from artisanal sectors, and recruitment variability—making future projections sensitive to environmental fluctuations. Analysts such as Hoyle (2024) and Froese (2024) have questioned the methodological shifts in the stock assessment models, warning of potential over-optimism in the recovery trajectory.

Moreover, the ripple effects extended beyond yellowfin tuna. The programme helped initiate adoption of a Management Procedure not only for yellowfin but also for skipjack, bigeye, and even non-tuna species like swordfish – making IOTC the first regional fisheries management programme to adopt a non-tuna management plan. A new technical committee was established to integrate climate and ecosystem data into future management plan development, with blue shark management plan negotiations already underway.

In addition to measurable policy shifts, the project also received formal recognition from several coastal states. The Government of Maldives issued an official letter acknowledging WWF’s technical leadership and advocacy efforts in advancing sustainable tuna fisheries management in the Indian Ocean. These unplanned outcomes, particularly the shift toward ecosystem-based, multi-species management – highlight the broader systemic impact of WWF’s advocacy and underscore the importance of embedding science into decision-making processes.



A local fisherman poses with a fresh yellow fin tuna. Mafia Island, Tanzania. Photo: Green Renaissance / WWF-UK

Unlocking Kenya's Economic and Social Potential Through Sustainable Tuna Fisheries

Kenya updated its tuna strategy (2024–2028) to align with sustainability, enforcement, and traceability standards – driven by the Tuna Fisheries Association of Kenya (TuFAK) and supported by WWF.

Kenya has taken a major step toward sustainable and transparent tuna fisheries by revising its National Tuna Fisheries Management and Development Strategy (2024–2028). The new strategy aligns Kenya's tuna sector with global and regional sustainability frameworks, including the SWIOFC Minimum Terms and Conditions (MTCs), the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), and international traceability standards. This shift was driven by sustained civil society advocacy led by the Tuna Fisheries Association of Kenya (TuFAK), with financial and technical support from WWF through the NORAD-funded SWIO Sustainable Blue Economy (SWIO-SBE) programme.

Government audits had previously identified widespread challenges undermining tuna fisheries governance, including weak monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS), inadequate port inspections, unclear inter-agency coordination, and poor implementation of the PSMA – despite its domestication in national law. These gaps left Kenya vulnerable to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and reduced benefits for coastal communities. Recognising these risks, TuFAK mobilised its members and government institutions to push for reform. Through consultative dialogues, policy engagement, and technical input, TuFAK demonstrated that Kenya's outdated 2013–2018 tuna strategy was misaligned with key international obligations, including IOTC conservation and management measures and the SWIOFC MTCs.

With support from WWF under the SWIO-SBE programme, TuFAK engaged the State Department for Blue Economy and Fisheries in a structured review process beginning in 2023. Advocacy capacity strengthened further following WWF's regional training on ocean policy and negotiation, enabling TuFAK to engage government more strategically and effectively. A key milestone was TuFAK's independent pre-review of the old tuna strategy in 2023, which produced concrete recommendations submitted during the national review in 2024. Unlike previous processes, the revised strategy was developed through broad and inclusive stakeholder participation, with TuFAK and WWF Kenya actively engaged throughout. As a result, the new strategy prioritises stronger MCS systems, effective implementation of the PSMA and SWIOFC MTCs, improved transparency and traceability, value addition, and more equitable access for coastal fishers.

Crucially, the strategy's implementation framework formally recognises TuFAK and WWF-Kenya as key implementing partners – ensuring long-term oversight, accountability, and sustainability of reform outcomes beyond the project lifecycle. Improved trust and collaboration between government and civil society, highlighted publicly during national media coverage in 2024, underscores the lasting institutional impact of the SWIO-SBE programme in strengthening fisheries governance in Kenya.



Participants during the National Consultative / Stakeholder Feedback Workshop for the Kenya Tuna Fisheries Development and Management Strategy 2024 – 2029, at the North coast Beach hotel on the 25th of October, 2024. Photo WWF

In a live TV coverage by K24 television³² in Mombasa, on December 2024 during a workshop on Policy analysis organized by SWIOTUNA, a few TuFAK members accompanied by the secretariat participated in an interview, and many of the issues highlighted are likely to be addressed with the implementation of the strategy. TuFAK noted in the interview that the level of cooperation and collaboration between the government and the CSOs has greatly improved, referring to the review of the national tuna fisheries management and development strategy. This level of civil society engagement would not have been possible without the Norad SBE project funding.

³² How IUU Fishing, MCS, Climate Change & capacity gaps Impact Small-Scale Fisheries in Coastal Kenya, SWIOTUNA, Available at: https://youtu.be/t1Wow_kqnYE?si=1s2QGPJV5d8yb0bS; Driving Stakeholder Engagement in the Blue Economy at the SWIOTUNA Policy Analysis Training, SWIOTUNA, Available at: [https://youtu.be/9fLX8KmOGCE?si=0VryUpCGmdN1PPwP](https://youtu.be/9fLX8KmOGCE?si=0VryUpCGmdN1PPwP;); Kenya Tuna Fisheries Development and Management Strategy 2013-2018, Tuna Alliance of Kenya (TuFAK), [pdf] Available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1W3EWxdpKBeytkCzEnR3_sDIJWC9e4HS/view?usp=drive_link

Financing Tanzania's Fisheries and Aquaculture for a Sustainable Blue Economy

WWF-Tanzania and partners analysed blue-economy budgets and found the sector is economically important but still underfunded and heavily skewed toward infrastructure, with minimal spending on marketing/value addition; the work strengthened CSO advocacy and is now being replicated across the region.

WWF-Tanzania and the TuNA Alliance³³, with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, analyzed budget allocations to inform strategic investments and policy development for the blue economy sector, which has supported advocacy and a step change in finance towards the sector.

The assessment's scope involved reviewing budget allocations for development and core activities of the Ministry from 2022/23 to 2024/25. Understanding challenges in securing data, particularly financial data from government agencies, the implementing team (WWF Tanzania and TuNA Alliance) involved the responsible Ministry (Livestock and Fisheries) for collaboration.

Tanzania's Blue Economy represents 11.9% of Mainland Tanzania's GDP and 39.6% of Zanzibar's GDP during the same period. This highlights the essential role of the blue economy sub-sector in the nation. The blue economy activities generate approximately 16.22% relative to the national annual budget, of the yearly budget; however, despite its substantial impact on the national budget and GDP, yearly average budget allocations have remained stagnant at approximately 2.5%. The average annual revenue generated by the Blue Economy within the Southwest Indian Ocean region is approximately USD 2.5 billion per nation; however, annual budget allocations seldom exceed 2% of the total national budget. This disparity highlights the pressing need for more substantial and strategic investments. Enhancing governance frameworks, optimizing procurement processes, and improving inter-agency coordination are crucial measures to ensure that allocated resources are effectively utilized and converted into meaningful development outcomes.

The outcomes of this process identified strategic funding priorities within the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries. Among several thematic areas that the study examined, six emerged as the most funded priority areas for the Ministry, notably: Enforcement and Resource Protection, Infrastructure (ports development and processing zones), Research and Innovation, Capacity Building, and Marketing Coordination.

Through the analysis of the blue economy budget, the assessment team successfully identified key priority funding areas to enhance lobbying and sector influencing initiatives. The study indicates that budget allocations from 2022/23 to 2024/25 increased significantly from \$55.5 million to \$93.5 million, reflecting an approximate 58% increase over the three fiscal years. Despite this significant increase, disproportionate allocations were observed in infrastructure development, constituting approximately 91.84% of the budget. Marketing and value chain initiatives ranked last, underscoring the persistent stagnation of the fisheries marketing sector over the years. Furthermore, it highlights the issue of post-harvest loss, as the budget for marketing and value addition accounted for merely 0.22% of total allocations.

³³ Tanzania Tuna Fishery National Alliance (TuNA) is a network of Tanzania Civil Society Organizations/Private Sector (CSOs/PS) engaging in the marine fisheries sector. The Alliance provides a platform for the members to amplify their voices at national, regional, and international levels for sustainable fisheries and socio-economic development. Available at: <https://tunaalliance.or.tz/>

The extent of engagement of the CSO in the budget analysis helped achieve positive outcomes. The existing capacity gap among CSO partners in developing evidence-based advocacy and policy briefs for sector influence has significantly hindered the success of strategic alliances with governmental and private sectors. This engagement has been pivotal in ensuring that the TuNA alliance enhances its ability to formulate policy briefs and execute advocacy work, particularly in partnership with the private sector. Throughout this process, the TuNA alliance, under the mentorship of WWF-Tanzania, has led the execution of budget analysis and the formulation of a policy brief on Blue Economy budget allocations on a national scale. A technical officer with the TuNa Alliance stated that *“The budget analysis activity not only capacitated TuNA alliance on advocacy and developing policy briefs but also helped us to engage with government and earn their trust. This provided room for TuNA alliance and other CSO’s to review the budget allocations and deliver their recommendations to the ministry to be taken into consideration for the coming 2025/2026 budget allocation”*.

Given the necessity for science-based decision-making, the gap in blue economy budget allocations at the country level impeded initiatives to achieve sector-influencing work. This study bridged information gaps to amplify CSO voices to influence budget appropriation. As a result, the CSO network can engage widely to influence further increased allocations to areas that catch the interest of coastal communities, mainly marketing and value chain addition.

Tanzania became the first nation in the Southwest Indian Ocean region to conduct budget analysis; this process has served as the foundation for other countries to participate in similar studies. Towards the conclusion of 2024, SWIOTUNA commissioned analogous studies, extending them to Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Tanzania, thereby involving all countries in the region in the Blue Economy Budget analysis. Consequently, all Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the region will advocate and influence the sector regarding budget allocations and disbursement in the upcoming reporting period.

4.6 INCLUSIVE CONSERVATION AT THE HEART OF CONSERVATION

During the grant period (2021-25) WWF has itself undergone a cultural shift - towards placing people, especially Indigenous Peoples and local communities, at the heart of conservation. This transition toward inclusive conservation reflects a growing recognition that environmental stewardship cannot succeed without equity, justice, and local leadership.

From Protection to Partnership

Historically, conservation efforts tended to prioritise ecological preservation over human rights, sometimes resulting in exclusionary practices that marginalized local communities. WWF has acknowledged these shortcomings and committed to a changed practice, which recognises that quality and long-term sustainability of results are ensured through a rights-based approach, good processes and respect for local leadership and ownership. The WWF-Network has therefore developed several guidelines, standards, principles and tools to help with such practices, many of which were finalised in the grant period. A revised Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework and Statements of Principles³⁴, which after a thorough process of consultations and reviews, came into effect 1. July 2023 are examples of this. The Statements of Principles encapsulate WWF's social commitments to respect and promote human rights, foster gender equality, and uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples. They apply in relation to all activities that WWF undertake, including policy advocacy, research, partnerships and communications, while also respecting national laws and the role of the state. These principles and the framework to safeguard activities and do no harm has been developed as integral parts of inclusive conservation. Inclusive conservation guides the network in the *how*, as it emphasises equity, cultural respect, and shared decision-making to ensure conservation efforts benefit both biodiversity and human well-being. The Network has made significant strides since 2021 to better understand what inclusive conservation means for WWF and how to expand and strengthen its application to all aspects of WWF's work.

Inclusive conservation guidelines

Following a years-long, participatory process in the network and a meeting in January 2024 where WWF-Norway's CEO Karoline Andaur took part, senior leaders agreed on an overarching vision of inclusive conservation for WWF and initial elements of an Inclusive Conservation (IC) action plan for the Network. This was subsequently developed into a guideline to support the cultural shift towards more respectful, inclusive practices³⁵. It emphasizes:

- **Recognition of Indigenous and local rights:** WWF supports the recognition of territories of life—lands stewarded by Indigenous Peoples—as legitimate conservation areas.
- **Locally led decision-making:** Conservation strategies are co-developed with communities, respecting their knowledge systems and governance structures.
- **Equitable benefit-sharing:** Projects aim to deliver tangible benefits to both nature and people, ensuring that conservation contributes to community well-being.

³⁴ WWF International, Our Principles. Available at: https://wwf.panda.org/principles_and_safeguards/our_principles/

³⁵ WWF International, Inclusive Conservation Guidance, 13 June 2024. [pdf] Available at: <https://www.scribd.com/document/795302135/Inclusive-Conservation-Guidance-13-June-2024>

The guide outlines how inclusive conservation can be implemented in practice through nine areas of good practices that on the one hand reflect the current situation and future vision and which changes are needed in WWF conservation practice (1-6), and on the other how to build internal organisational culture, capacity and change to deliver equitable and long-lasting outcomes (7-9):



WWF’s nine interconnected good practices for inclusive conservation.³⁶

WWF-Norway has been one of the thought leaders in this ongoing shift, through engagement in various network fora and directly in drafting frameworks, guidelines and documents. Finally, WWF-Norway has also contributed to the drafting of a strategic framework for WWF’s work in fragile and conflict affected situations, which was endorsed by the Network Executive Team in January 2025. This outlines three areas of implementation: operational, conflict sensitivity and peace-positive conservation. Various workstreams are now developing next steps for all these areas.

³⁶ wwf-inclusive-conservation-vision.pdf

As required by all offices in the network, WWF-Norway has developed a strategy for how to follow up on the safeguards system and statements of principles, which was approved by the WWF- Norway leadership team in January 2024. The strategy provides a background and outlines objectives and key actions within five focus areas:

- knowledge and learning;
- integration/mainstreaming;
- accountability and compliance;
- external collaborations;
- and policy, advocacy and communication.

Implementation of this strategy is ongoing through various processes at different levels. Throughout 2025, WWF-Norway is also doing deep dives into WWF's newly updated core standards and exploring how to integrate these in our daily practice: [Network Standards and Policies – core standards](#).





A FUTURE IN WHICH
HUMANS LIVE IN HARMONY
WITH NATURE

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