



## LANDSCAPE PROFILE

# Makuli-Nzau

## Restoring Kenya's Makueni County

The 75,000-hectare Makuli-Nzau landscape is home to the two major water catchments in Makueni County: Nzau and Makuli forests. This is the County's food basket, the source of its water, and the base of incomes and livelihoods for thousands of households.

Over the years, these water catchments, which supply the Kaiti, Mwilu, Kikuu, and Thwake rivers, have been severely deforested and degraded, causing the loss of vital biodiversity, erosion and sedimentation downstream, and the steady decline of local incomes and water and food security.

To address these challenges, the County Government of Makueni, Kenya Water Towers Agency, Kenya Forest Service, Water Resources Authority, Green Belt Movement and World Resources Institute have partnered to restore and protect this vital ecosystem. This partnership has established a multi-stakeholder coordination platform to coordinate the planning and implementation of integrated landscape restoration. That work will have impacts far beyond its borders: The areas downstream are more arid and vulnerable to climate change, making the essential ecosystem services that these catchments provide even more important for local people.

## Why restore the landscape?

- Enhance the recovery, protection and conservation of forests and accelerate tree planting on farms to boost water security, energy supply and incomes
- Restore degraded land for improved agricultural productivity
- Strengthen the resilience of the landscape to climate risk and shocks like drought

## What does success look like?

- **Biodiversity and climate change**
  - » Reintroducing native trees to the landscape will boost biodiversity and ecosystem services, like clean water and healthier soils, that build up climate resilience.
- **Water access**
  - » Restoring the cloud forest will help capture more moisture in the soil, which will flow down to the rivers and provide more water to rural and urban communities.
- **Food security and livelihoods**
  - » Growing fruit trees and encouraging farmers to better conserve the soil will improve food security and generate more income for households.

### KEY STATS

- Makueni County meets **less 50% of total demand for water**
- **96% of households** rely on wood fuel for energy and cooking
- **78% of households'** income are derived from agriculture
- **7% of forest cover** was lost between 1988 and 2019

## What have we accomplished together?

- We founded a coordination platform for collaborative planning and knowledge sharing
- We developed a restoration action plan with shared goals, targets and vision that provides a roadmap for the landscape restoration.
- We built a restoration and conservation investment plan that lays out investment opportunities and business cases in the landscape.
- We mobilized financial resources to help farmers restore the landscape with 1.2 million indigenous and fruit trees.



## What comes next?

- **In the short term:** Increase financial flows for restoration in the landscape by connecting investment packages with potential investors.
- **In the medium term:** Build up the capacity of local communities, NGOs, entrepreneurs, and government departments to restore more land, faster.
- **In the long term:** Continuously innovate, monitor, and share knowledge to prove success and replicate what's worked in landscape throughout the County and beyond.

### CONTACT

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