

TOOLKITS FOR INVASIVE PLANTS IN LAIKIPIA, KENYA

Locations	Kenya
Dates	01/01/2013 - 31/03/2017

Summary

Many exotic plant species introduced to Laikipia County, Kenya, have escaped cultivation and threaten biodiversity. Little is currently known however, about the presence of invasive species or their impact. Without this type of information, it is unlikely that various stakeholders will take action to effectively manage this threat. This project aims to fill some gaps and increase knowledge of invasive species in Laikipia for pastoralists and those actively involved in biodiversity conservation.

The problem

Invasive species pose the second greatest threat, after habitat destruction, to biodiversity resources and livelihoods. East Africa’s biodiversity resources are now under threat from the spread of invasive alien plants.

A number of exotic plant species introduced to Laikipia County, Kenya, have escaped cultivation and now threaten biodiversity. This threat is poorly understood, however, with little currently known about the presence of invasive species or their impact.

Without this type of information, it is unlikely that various stakeholders will take action to effectively manage this threat.

What we are doing

This project aims to fill some gaps and increase knowledge of invasive species in Laikipia for pastoralists and those actively involved in biodiversity conservation.

The project will take place in Laikipia County, Kenya, an area renowned for its wildlife conservancies and iconic species such as wild dog, reticulated giraffe, Grevy's zebra and gerenuk and its pastoralist communities who depend on productive pastureland for their survival.

The project team will do this by developing toolkits which will include identification guides and information on different management options. These will be distributed to stakeholders in the area to improve their ability to identify and control invasive species that threaten biodiversity here.

To achieve this, the project team is seeking to identify and fill gaps in existing knowledge on the presence of invasive alien plants and their threat to biodiversity in Laikipia.

The team will put together comprehensive data on identifying and managing the invasive alien plants in Laikipia and make these freely and widely available

We also want to encourage the use of these information resources by landowners, communities, conservation organizations, and other biodiversity stakeholders.

This work will contribute to the global knowledge pool on the presence and distribution of invasive alien plants and also assist countries in meeting their obligations to various international conventions/ treaties.

So we will:

- undertake surveys to determine the presence and distribution of invasive and potentially invasive plants in Laikipia
- synthesize results into a database, managed by the Mpala Research Centre, to be maintained on an ongoing basis
- integrate findings into CABI's Invasive Species Compendium (ISC
- produce distribution maps for identified invasive or potentially invasive plant species, made freely available online
- produce an identification toolkit for invasive alien plants in Laikipia
- undertake a high profile launch of dataset and the toolkit to raise awareness among key stakeholders and the general public
- carry out training workshops on identification of invasive plants and their threats to biodiversity

Results so far

Appropriate informatics resources will provide those responsible for conservation in Laikipia with critical resources to identify and control invasive alien plants, resulting in reduced introduction rates and more effective management. This will help to preserve ecosystems and indigenous flora; as well as the fauna which depend on them.

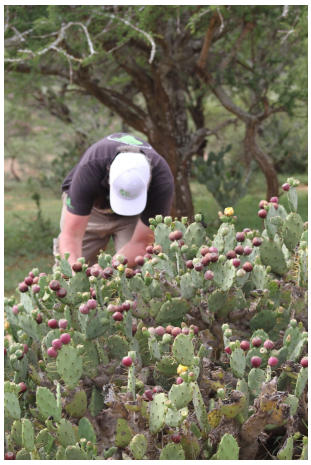
The data will also be used to influence stakeholders, resulting in strengthened invasive alien species policies and allocation of resources for their management at a wider national scale.

Donors Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme

Partners Mpala Research Centre

CABI Project Manager

Arne Witt



https://www.cabi.org/what-we-do/cabi-projects/