

Update on the CABI Landscapes Initiative

October 2025

Training of pastoralists on baling of hay at TingaTinga village, Longido, Tanzania. TingaTinga is one of the partner villages in the Native PEP project. Community members prioritize forage production as an intervention that helps pastoralists to increase resilience to climate change.

The CABI Landscapes Initiative last shared an update in April this year. The following is meant to keep you informed about our most recent key developments. Several fundraising activities are ongoing, and we have also expanded our network of collaborators. You will find more information about this and more below.

Update on projects and other on-the-ground activities

Native Plants for Environment and People (Native PEP)

The Native PEP project (<https://nativepep.org/>) aims to strengthen livelihoods and ecosystem health in Kenya and Tanzania affected by rangeland degradation, deforestation, and invasive alien shrubs and trees by taking a community-based approach.

For this purpose, we promote – together with relevant stakeholders – native plant species for regeneration of rangeland and community forests in areas targeted for the sustainable management of the invasive tree *Prosopis juliflora*. Target areas include Baringo and Isiolo Counties in Kenya, and an area west of Mt Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

Phase 2 of the Native PEP project, launched in March 2025, builds on earlier work to strengthen community-based restoration using native plants for rangeland and wetland restoration, spring rejuvenation, community forest regeneration, and fodder production. This phase addresses challenges identified in Phase 1, particularly stakeholder engagement, upscaling at community level, and improving monitoring and performance metrics.

Recent activities include stakeholder meetings in Baringo and Isiolo counties in Kenya, to align restoration priorities with National and County policies, alongside

field visits to restoration sites. Highlights include ongoing *Prosopis* clearance along the water canal and tree nursery development in Kiborgoch conservancy, fodder trials covering 20 acres in Tiaty, and spring rejuvenation work in Leparua and Nasuulu conservancies.

Engagements with Baringo County Executives and Members of County Assembly (MCAs) yielded strong political support, including a pledge for financial support towards *Prosopis* control and restoration, and interest in drafting a *Prosopis* control bill.



Restored spring in Leparua Community Conservancy, Isiolo County, Kenya. The community identified rejuvenation of natural springs as a key intervention to restore degraded habitats in the conservancy. The community implemented by-laws which also prevented overgrazing of the land outside the fenced spring area.



Meeting with the community in Pinyinyi to inform them about the mission.

Prosopis management in Tanzania

In 2024, we reported on a Darwin Initiative funded project in Tanzania's Lake Natron basin (<https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DARCC013/>). The two-year project included a wide range of stakeholders and community members, with whom we co-developed an area-wide management plan for *Prosopis juliflora*. This fast-spreading invasive tree has become one of the most pressing ecological and livelihood challenges in the Lake Natron basin.

Its invasion has reduced grazing land, blocked homesteads and water points, and caused injuries to livestock. If left unchecked, *Prosopis* threatens not only pastoral livelihoods but also tourism, biodiversity, and settlement patterns in the area.

The project led to the adoption of a *Prosopis* management plan (<https://tinyurl.com/p2p3e6cr>) and inclusion of invasive plant species management

in annual plans and budgets of Districts and Arusha Region. Communities in Pinyinyi and Wosi Wosi have been at the frontline of manual control efforts.

In Wosi Wosi, households collectively contributed the equivalent of TSHS 2,800,000 (USD \$1,217 equivalent) in form of goats to support clearing work, while others offered their labour. Importantly, all households benefited equally from reopened grazing lands and routes.

The Pinyinyi community has embraced early detection and rapid response, uprooting *Prosopis* seedlings whenever they appear. This was motivated through visiting a heavily *prosopis* infested area in KAHE district in Moshi and witnessing its impacts first hand.

Between 14 and 21 of September, the two communities were engaged in an exercise of documenting community experiences, capture lessons learnt, and identify pathways to integrate *Prosopis* control into wider land-use planning.



Community members collecting non infested cladodes of the invasive cactus and placing them in buckets for rearing of the biocontrol agent *Dactylopius engelmannii* in screen houses.

Naibunga Conservancy, Laikipia, Kenya

Members of the Naibunga Community Conservancy – especially pastoralists – are negatively impacted by the aggressive invasion of the cactus *Opuntia engelmannii*. The cactus reduces the area available for grazing, leading to overgrazing and subsequent land degradation, especially soil erosion, further reducing grazing land. To break this vicious circle, CABI launched a biological control initiative in close collaboration and participation with the local community. Based on the successful biological control of *Opuntia stricta* in Laikipia, and with support from The Nature Conservancy (TNC), mass rearing facilities for a biocontrol agent specific to *O. engelmannii* were established in 2024. The agent is a highly specific cochineal insect that reduces flowering and fruit production, and in many cases even kills the cactus.

Workshop in Baringo

In late September / early October, a workshop was held in Baringo County, one of the landscapes in Kenya prioritized for the CABI Landscapes Initiative during the in-country workshop held 2024. The workshop brought together some 50 locals (chiefs, managers of community conservancies, members of community-based organisations), county (government, county assembly, NGOs) and national (local representatives of national organisations, researchers) stakeholders. The objectives of the workshop were to share information on the Landscapes Initiative more widely among stakeholders in Baringo County, to jointly reflect on the most critical challenges for people and nature in the lowlands of the county, and to brainstorm on the most feasible collaborative and partnership networks with the potential to address the challenges. The information gathered during the workshop will be used to draft concept notes for Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) projects in Baringo County.



CABI Landscapes Initiative workshop held with local, county and national stakeholders in Marigat, Baringo County, from 30 September to 1 October 2025.

Joint mission to Ethiopia

CABI took part in the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Partial Supervision Mission of the Participatory Agriculture and Climate Transformation (PACT) Programme, conducted from 12-18 June in Ethiopia providing its expertise in Integrated Landscape Management (ILM).

This partial mission aimed to assess progress in addressing the identified implementation bottlenecks and to provide targeted technical support. Jointly undertaken by IFAD, the Government of Ethiopia, and technical partners, the mission involved consultations with federal and regional coordination units, as well as intensive field visits to selected project landscapes. CABI's participation focused primarily

on supporting Component 1, which emphasizes community-led climate-smart productive landscapes. Specific areas that CABI was assigned included reviewing the status of the Landscape Development Investment Plan (LDIP), assessing the establishment of watershed user cooperatives, and evaluating the implementation of soil and water conservation (SWC) and agroforestry practices. CABI also contributed recommendations to strengthen community-based monitoring and evaluation, improve the design and bundling of landscape interventions, and enhance participatory governance mechanisms.

We submitted a concept note to IFAD for potential future involvement of CABI in the PACT Programme.

Fundraising

Competitive funding calls

This year, we have been developing and submitting several concept notes (CNs) together with partners to expand our work in ILM including ecosystem restoration, climate resilience and community empowerment.

Two CNs were submitted in partnership with a Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) called Traditional Ecosystems Survival **Tanzania** (TEST). The first one was for a World Wildlife Fund (WWF) USA initiative under the Global Environment Facility (GEF 8) Heart of Conservation Initiative, building on TESTS's ongoing work in the Serengeti-Mara Landscape project. It aims to integrate traditional knowledge and customary land management practices into broader climate adaptation and conservation efforts. The second one is a long-term 15-year proposal to the Legacy Landscape Fund to

support 'Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities for Area-Based Conservation'.

A CN was also submitted to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) under its programme to 'Build Resilience for Food and Nutrition Security in the Horn of Africa' (including **Kenya** and **Ethiopia**), and a World Bank proposal focussing on 'Optimizing restoration for Ecosystem Services and the Economics of transitioning to Sustainable Land Management' in **Uganda**. The latter was accepted and a full proposal submitted on 1 October. Although Uganda is not part of our original four focal countries in Eastern Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania), Uganda is a CABI member country and the call text very much aligns with ILM. We remain flexible to include other countries as the opportunity arises.

We have also joined a consortium led by the International Potato Center (CIP) to a Horizon Europe call around accelerating regenerative soil health in East and Southern Africa, including **Kenya, Ethiopia and Malawi**.

Together with partners we had submitted two CNs to the Global Centre on Biodiversity for Climate (GCBC), a UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) programme. One was accepted, and a full proposal submitted on 26 September.

The title of the proposed project is 'Native Plants for People and Environment' (NatPlan) and aims to enhance climate resilience of communities in Kenya's semi-arid lands by restoring native plant diversity in degraded rangelands, crop fields, forests and wetlands, and by diversifying sources of income.

Finally, discussions are underway with various countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) around a proposal to the next GEF cycle (GEF-9 in 2026). This would concentrate on invasive alien species, but with clear elements of an ILM approach.

We recently received a letter of support from the SADC Secretariat and positive feedback from various countries. Similar discussions are underway in Ethiopia for a GEF project in collaboration with IUCN.

Non-competitive funding opportunities

We reported previously on our positive interactions with the Oak Foundation. We have now been invited to submit a CN, which will be reviewed by their Board of Trustees in November.

Full proposal development is foreseen in the beginning of next year, with funding becoming likely available in mid 2026. Considering ongoing project work and the geographic focus of Oak Foundation, proposed activities will likely concentrate on Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania.

MoU with NETFUND signed

An MoU between the National Environment Trust Fund (NETFUND) and CABI was signed to enhance ecosystem and landscape management in Kenya by jointly designing and implementing projects focused on restoring degraded landscapes and promoting Nature-Based Solutions (NbS). The signing took place during the Review Conference of CABI Member Countries in Nairobi in June this year in the presence of the CEO of NETFUND Mr. Samson Toniok and the Manager, Research and M&E, Mr. Chrispine Omondi. He reiterated the commitment of NETFUND to work with CABI on climate, landscapes and nature-based solutions.



Signing of the MoU between NETFUND and CABI. Left: Mr. Samson Toniok, CEO of NETFUND, right: Dr. Morris Akiri, Senior Regional Director Africa of CABI.

Concluding remarks

We hope you enjoyed reading this update. We are thrilled by the wealth and diversity of ongoing activities and deeply encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment of our partners and donors.

Despite the very challenging global funding environment, the CABI Landscapes Initiative continues to grow and make meaningful progress towards its goals. We are looking ahead with optimism and are eager to strengthen our collaboration with you in 2026 – through joint fundraising efforts and impactful action on the ground.

For more information on the initiative please contact **Dr Daniel Karanja** (D.Karanja@cabi.org) or **Dr Harriet Hinz** (H.Hinz@cabi.org).

CABI centres in Africa

Africa HQ

Canary Bird
673 Limuru Road
Muthaiga
PO Box 633-00621
Nairobi, Kenya

T: +254 (0)20 2271000/ 20
E: africa@cabi.org

West Africa

CSIR Campus
No.6 Agostino Neto Road
Airport Residential Area
PO Box CT 8630, Cantonments
Accra, Ghana

T: +233 (0)302 797 202
E: westafrica@cabi.org

Southern Africa

5834 Mwange Close
Kalundu
P.O. Box 37589
Lusaka, Zambia

T: +260967619665
E: southernafrica@cabi.org