



STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 - 2027

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Introduction

The natural ecosystems and landscapes in Tanzania are significant providers of livelihood for most indigenous communities and sustaining biological diversity outside of protected areas. Although about 35% of land in Tanzania is protected, indigenous communities own and manage vast lands that fall outside of any formal conservation status.

The lands managed by indigenous communities are regarded as uninhabited and subjected to disorganized governance. They have been impacted by a convergence of diverse interests such as investment and conservation, due to being dubbed as containing national interests. The indigenous and local communities partly own ecosystems that constitute approximately 2 million hectares exclusively outside of core protected areas, and they have used traditional knowledge systems to manage and protect the land for livestock, wildlife, and their culture.

For time immemorial, these ecosystems remained healthy and have supported wildlife, traditional cultures, and livestock. However, in recent years the

indigenous and traditional knowledge systems and management plans have been seriously undermined by the continued use of archaic conservation approaches. Unfortunately, these approaches have not been at all effective and therefore have produced negative results for conservation of nature and people.

The ecosystems and landscapes are deteriorating in quality and shrinking in size due to poor governance and systematic denial of the contribution of indigenous knowledge systems in the conservation and management of land and natural ecosystems. This has created and widened a gap between indigenous communities and conservation authorities. It is threatening peaceful co-existence between people and wildlife as well as becoming a source of regular conflicts between different land users, as well as conflict between indigenous traditional systems and modern contemporary systems and has created negative stereotypes for the indigenous communities. These issues have caused tremendous deterioration of habitat and human rights violations to the extent that co-existence is gradually collapsing, making immediate action necessary to reverse this negative trend.

TEST exists therefore to fill the gap: to re-create, restore, and rejuvenate the ecosystems for people and wildlife.

Who We Are!

Traditional Ecosystems Survival Tanzania (TEST) exists to facilitate sustainable approaches and understandings between people, land and wildlife through collaboration between local indigenous communities, conservation agencies, and governments. TEST is therefore established to foster friendly cooperation between traditional indigenous knowledge systems, proven scientific approaches, and enterprise-based solutions in managing natural ecosystems and landscapes in Tanzania.



Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

We envision a world in which people, livestock, wildlife, and natural resources co-exist in peace, health and harmony.



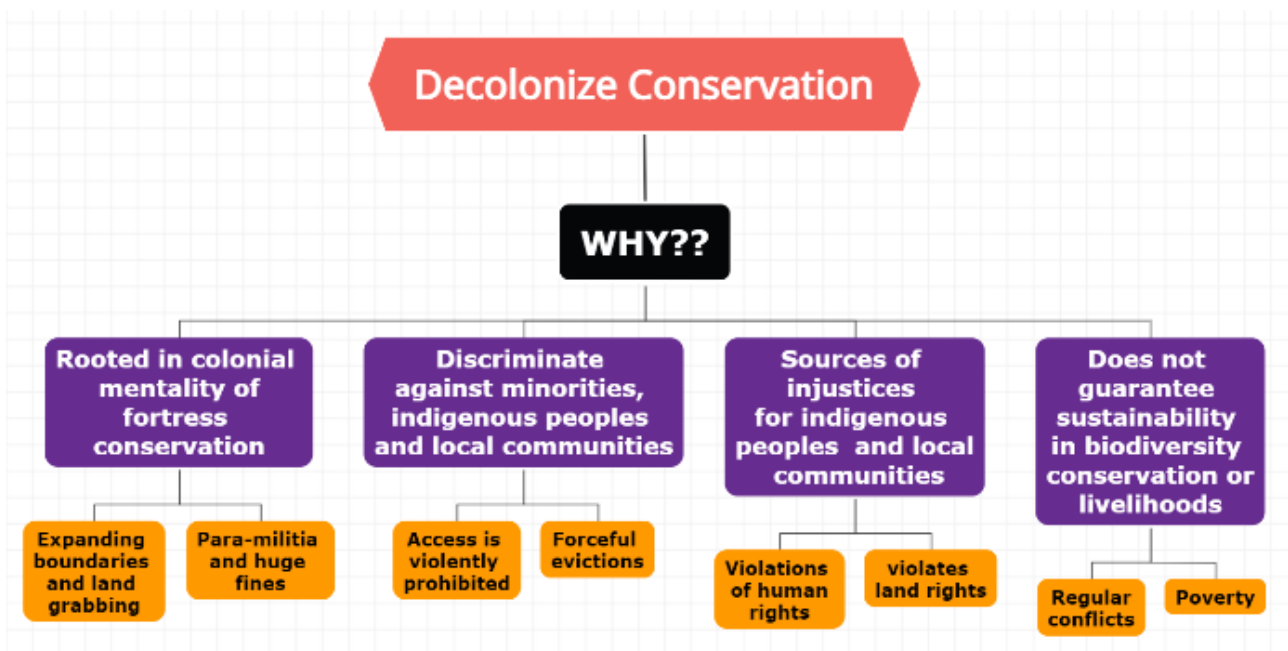
Our Mission

Our mission is to facilitate effective collaboration that integrate external technical expertise with indigenous knowledge and skills to improve management of natural resources, and enhance the sustainable well-being of local people, livestock and wildlife in natural ecosystems.

Our Values

- Honesty and integrity
- Passion and creativity
- Respect for indigenous society values
- Apolitical: without allegiance to any political party
- Environmental, social and economic sustainability in all our work
- Committed to coexistence of livestock, people and wildlife

Campaigning for our Cause



To decolonize conservation will facilitate the achievements of the 2030 Global SDGs. Good governance in conservation will:

- ensure sustainable management of natural and traditional resources,
- enhance sustainable livelihoods,
- provide for ecosystem resilience
- create positive stakeholder partnerships.

In order to improve the practice of conservation, TEST is striving to build partnerships that will propel the achievements of this desire and of the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



The second significant outcome that will be achieved from these partnerships is the dissemination of knowledge from indigenous peoples and re-affirming of their role in the governance of ecosystems, landscapes, and the future health of our planet.

We believe that greater involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities through their ecological knowledge systems and practices will ensure peaceful and friendly co-existence, sustainability and support livelihoods for the people and wildlife in large landscapes/ecosystems.

Geographic Focus & Partner Communities

The main “geographic” focus of the TEST program is foremost in the minds and hearts of our partners. It is important to establish the concept of ecosystems within the perspectives of the community before it is applied to geographic locations.

Geographically, our programs will be implemented in North, Central and Southern Tanzania. We will work with indigenous communities (pastoralists, hunter and gatherers and agro-pastoralist communities) occupying landscapes and ecosystems in these parts of the country. These communities live and share their lands in Tanzania with wildlife in globally critical ecosystems. We will also work with the government and conservation agencies to develop effective partnerships in these ecosystems.



Programme Description

Goals and Objectives

Our aim is to empower stakeholders through knowledge, tools and resources to promote sustainable conservation in ecosystems and landscapes owned and occupied by indigenous communities in Tanzania. TEST will promote traditional knowledge systems and proven scientific solutions that support good land governance, sustainable natural resource management and the livelihoods of indigenous peoples.

Activities

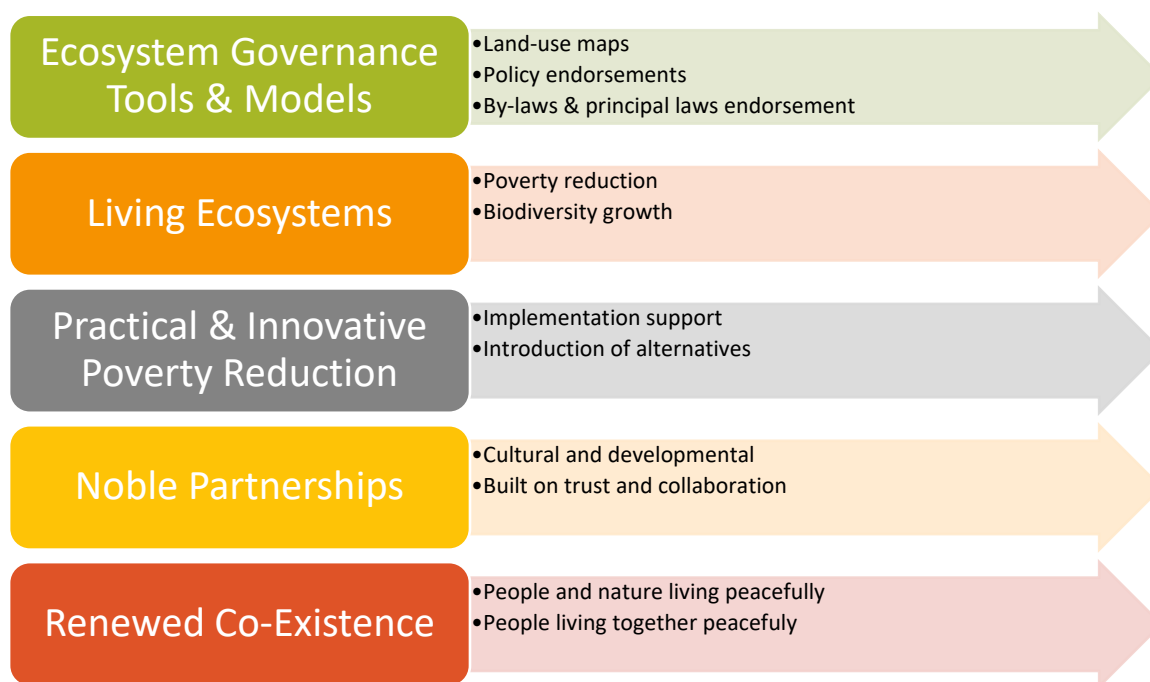
TEST's will facilitate action-based research that aims to generate solutions for sustainable ecosystems governance and sustainable livelihoods as both have great bearing on enhancing sustainable biodiversity conservation.



Action Plan

<u>LIVING ECOSYSTEMS PROGRAM</u>	<u>LIVELIHOODS ACCELERATOR PROGRAM</u>
Facilitating research on challenges facing ecosystem governance and tenure arrangements	Facilitating Community Needs Assessment through annual fellowship programme
Stakeholders Engagement (To restore passion, commitment and resources) to address ecosystem and land governance challenges	Drafting and presenting the analyzed options including proposed operational models to stakeholders for approval and selection of preferred options
Designing living (sustainable) ecosystem governance models and tools	Organizing and facilitating the development of Business Plans for the selected options
Sustained policy and legal framework advocacy and engagement on Research Resultsadvocating for their adoption and implementation in key ecosystems	Mobilizing the required resources (funding and human resources) for the implementation of the selected options

Results



Outcomes

Through this Strategic Plan, TEST will open a space for dialogue between local communities – including indigenous peoples – and governments, from regional to international. It will democratize governance of natural resources, such as land and water, as well as strengthen the economic resilience of indigenous communities.

The program will open a space for learning and research while providing an alternative route for addressing pressing land and conservation challenges, such as climate and ecological degradation, as well as the corresponding threats that indigenous people face against this backdrop; the loss of their cultural way of life, which is a global loss of human knowledge and cultures.

The expected tools that will be produced from this program have the potential to influence the reform of policies and laws that govern our natural resources and the lives of indigenous peoples.

Indigenous peoples' knowledge will promote the reversal of ecological collapse while instilling resiliency which serves to improve the lives of people, wildlife, and livestock that reside within these landscapes. Empowering indigenous knowledge will ensure their quality of life is improved and their cultures are maintained while safeguarding and enhancing natural resources for future generations.

Timeline

This a 10-year plan implemented over two five-year terms.



The first task will be to lay the foundation by undertaking research and studies on Biodiversity Conservation Alternatives. The main activities include research, documentation, and amplification of biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction models based on indigenous knowledge and science in resource management. In this term, extensive policy advocacy work both within and outside the country will be carried out to promote the results of our research.

During this term, the Program will identify and create partnerships for biodiversity conservation and connect indigenous communities across Tanzania.

We will develop tools and instruments for landscapes and ecosystem governance and for poverty reduction in the second term. In this later term, key partnerships among strategic stakeholders will be established to pursue the idea of ecosystem governance and poverty reduction which goes beyond generic methods.

In the second term, the program will be scaled up to undertake actual ecosystem planning, management, and supervision.



TEST

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