

## STATUS OF NATIONAL NETWORKS / COMMITTEES

**Signatory State:** Kenya

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### National networks or committees:

Kenya Sea Turtle Conservation Committee has served as the national committee. But at the moment, Kenya Wildlife Service, the mandated authority, has launched a national task force, the National Sea Turtle taskforce (NSTTF) to oversee and coordinate all activities.

### Status:

NSTTF coordinates and oversees all efforts, while KESCOM is designated as Community Based Organisation, however there are advanced plans to turn it into a Trust.

### Lead agency / organization / institution:

Kenya Wildlife Service

### Representation in the national network / committee:

- **Government agencies:**
  - Fisheries Department, Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute, National Museums of Kenya
- **Academic and research organizations:**
  - Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute
- **Environmental NGOs:**
  - Wildlife Conservation Society, Baobab Trust, WWF, CORDIO, Watamu Turtle Watch
- **Development and human rights NGOs:**
  - Coast Development Authority
- **Private sector:**
  - Lofty Safaris
- **Fisheries:**
  - Fisheries Department
- **Tourism:**
  - Hoteliers e.g. Serena, Sun n' Sand, Nyali
- **Others:**
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**Specific resources for developing and maintaining the network / committee:**

A fully functional conservation authority with adequate manpower (KWS), infrastructure (offices), vehicles and boats

**Means of communication:**

Meetings, E-mail Newsletter

**Number of meetings held:**

- 2006: 4
- 2007: 4
- 2008: 2

**Most important topics of discussion:**

- State of affairs in turtle nesting grounds
- Information sharing and enforcement, collaborations
- Transforming the committee into a Trust
- Election of officials

**Most important advances and contributions of the network / committee's work:**

- Establishment of community turtle conservation groups who are trained to protect and relocate turtle nests
- Tagging of nesting turtles and recent genetic analysis of Kenyan turtles with assistance from Reunion
- Funded projects to enhance the conservation of turtles by UNEP and most recently USAID
- The establishment of a network of turtle conservation groups along the entire coastline

**Most important challenges and difficulties in the network / committee's work:**

Coordination and dissemination of findings and the enforcement of regulations to protect turtles. Importantly, resources are limiting.

**Plans for the future development of the network / committee:**

- Develop a central database on all turtle conservation efforts
- Harmonise working relations and collaborations between institutions
- Establish a turtle resource centre within KWS
- Expand the turtle conservation network and legally bind all stakeholders within KESCOM

**Other comments:**

KWS spearheaded the formation of a National Sea Turtle taskforce to provide a coordinated framework for conserving the species within the Kenyan territorial waters of WIO. One of the key tasks of the taskforce is to deliver a National Conservation and Management Strategy for sea turtles to guide the national and regional conservation initiatives.