

Presentation on a Proposed Site (Rufiji Delta and Mafia Island Sea scape) for Inclusion in the IOSEA Marine Turtle Sites Network



National IOSEA Marine Turtle Focal Point
Tanzania

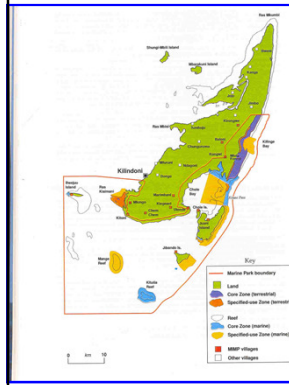
Physical description of the Proposed site (Rufiji & Mafia)



- ❑ The total area of the site to be included in the network is 3,950 km²
- ❑ The proposed area is characterized by network of marine and coastal habitats found nowhere else in Tanzania
- ❑ Those habitats include but not limited to;
 - extensive seagrass beds,
 - coral reefs,
 - mangrove forest and,
 - coastal wetlands (estuary/delta)

2

Physical description cont'd...



- ❑ Rufiji is a RAMSAR site while,
- ❑ Mafia Island is Tanzania's marine biodiversity hotspot area and;
- ❑ Marine Protected Area since 1995, with an area of 822 Km²
- ❑ In Mafia there are also three (3) Marine Reserves namely; Nyororo, Shungimbili and Mbarakuni

Values of the Rufiji and Mafia

- ❑ **High level of Biodiversity**
- ❑ The site supports the largest green turtle rookery in Tanzania;
- ❑ provides foraging and breeding habitat for critically endangered hawksbill turtles;
- ❑ the last known refuge for dugongs in Tanzania;
- ❑ internationally important site for water birds and cetaceans and;
- ❑ monkeys, crocodiles, hippos; diverse range of flora.

4

Resources found in the proposed site



Values cont'd.....

Ecological Connectivity

- ❑ The site provides ecological connectivity between important marine turtle habitats in the region.
- ❑ For example, Rufiji Delta provides foraging grounds for green turtles from regionally important nesting grounds such as;



- Seychelles,
- Mayotte,
- Comoros,
- French Eparses Islands

- ❑ This is based on evidence from flipper tag recoveries and satellite telemetry studies


Ecological Connectivity cont'd...

- Stranding records and by-catch studies provide evidence that the site provides foraging grounds and/or migratory corridors for;
- marine turtle species considered rare in the WIO region i.e.
 - loggerheads,
 - olive ridleys and,
 - leatherbacks

7

Values Cont'd....


- Community Involvement**
 - Communities are actively engaged in marine and coastal resource conservation and protection initiatives at the site.
 - Existence of Community Conservation Officer network which has been monitoring and conserving marine turtles for the past 14 years is an added advantage.
- Communities are also engaged in fisheries co-management, monitoring of dugong by-catch and mortalities as well as mangrove and coral management.



8

Socio-economic Profile

- Economic/livelihood activities within the area include;
 - Fishing (artisanal fishers)
 - Farming
 - Eco-tourism ventures
 - Petty business



9

Existing Programs

- Education and awareness programs**
- Education and capacity development programs are currently being implemented in the area by MPRU, NGOs and Fisheries Division.
- These programs promote community stewardship of marine resources including;
 - marine turtles conservation,
 - participatory approaches to marine conservation,
 - creation of sense of ownership
 - good governance and,
 - strong leadership

10

On-going turtle conservation programs



11

Thanks for your Attention