

# Strategic Environmental Assessment – Kenya

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) Energy Task Force (ETF) is a multi-stakeholder platform that works towards reconciling energy developments with the conservation of migratory species. **As an ETF member, Power Africa-USAID alongside the Kenyan Ministry of Energy and Kenya Bird Conservation Consortium supported the development of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for Wind Power and Biodiversity in Kenya.**



## Overview

The Wind Energy and Biodiversity SEA sought to integrate biodiversity considerations into decisions that relate to wind power development in Kenya. The SEA assessed biodiversity sensitive areas, including those critical for bird species, in relation to onshore wind power potential and recommended appropriate mitigation measures and other best practice management actions.

**Sensitive environmental components:** 144 sensitive species, including bats, migratory and resident soaring birds (vultures, eagles and crowned cranes highest in vulnerability). Sensitive sites such as Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) (including Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs)), migratory routes, protected areas (including conservancies), wetlands, slopes, ridgelines, bat roosts, vulture nest and roost colonies.

**Project partners:** The Biodiversity Consultancy (TBC) in partnership with BirdLife International, Nature Kenya, and The Peregrine Fund (collectively, the Kenya Bird Conservation Consortium). Additional support from Habitat Info, Maasai Mara University, National Museums of Kenya, North Carolina Zoo and the University of Utah.

## Key findings of the Kenyan SEA

- ✓ There is a favourable policy environment for wind power development in Kenya.
- ✓ There is a large number of planned wind energy developments, most of which target locations where potential biodiversity impacts are likely to be low or manageable.
- ✓ There are large areas of economically viable wind potential in Kenya of low or manageable biodiversity risk, with only 17% of economic wind areas classed as very high sensitivity for species and sites such as IBAs.
- ✓ Poorly planned wind power can have significant cumulative impacts, especially on wide-ranging or migratory, collision-prone bird and bat species.
- ✓ Avoidance of impacts to biodiversity through proper site location should be emphasized, following the mitigation hierarchy approach and use of sensitivity mapping.



## Enabling Conditions for Success

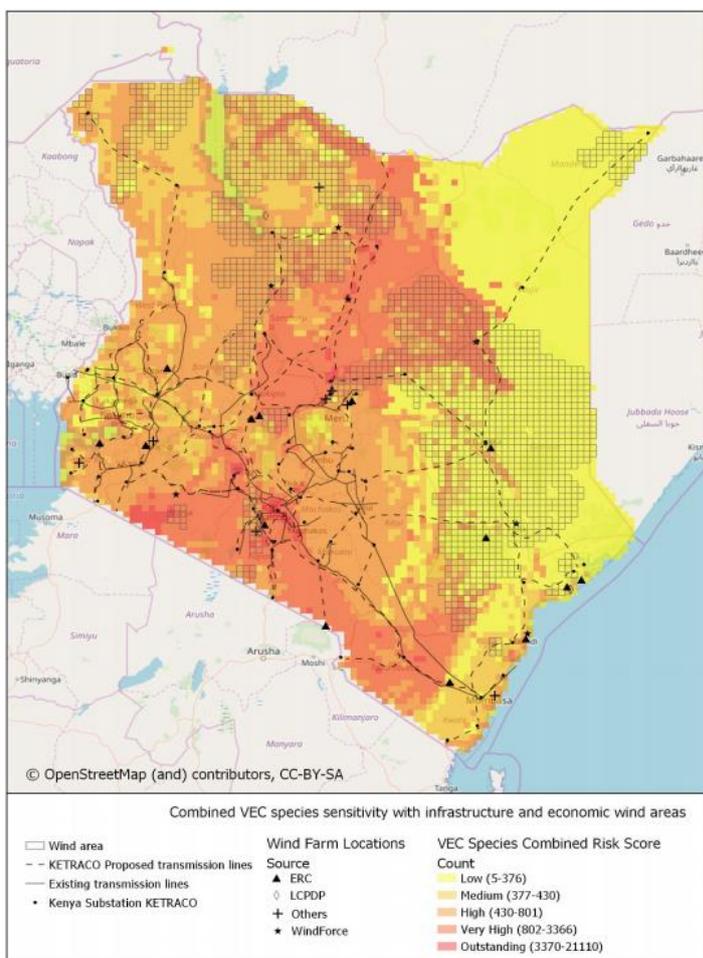
- ✓ Government support for the SEA and willingness to encourage renewable energy uptake through enabling policies and strategies.
- ✓ The SEA was a highly participatory process providing opportunities for government agencies, civil society and wind-power developers to contribute throughout the assessment process.
- ✓ Willingness by the sector to avail resources to develop the SEA and availability of technical expertise provided by the consortia to implement various components of the SEA and sensitivity mapping.
- ✓ Future success depends on implementation of actions proposed in the project's Environmental Management and Monitoring Plan (overseen by Ministry of Energy, Kenya) and sector-wide risk screening of future energy developments against SEA sensitivity maps.

## Next Steps

- ✓ Applying the SEA: the document is the first of its kind in Kenya and acts as an important decision support tool to guide wind energy projects and infrastructure deployment in the country. It should be made widely available and accessible to county-level governments, planners and other stakeholders.
- ✓ Further strengthening of the SEA: Further research is required to bring together technical, economic, social and environmental data for analysis to refine locations for wind development in Kenya. This can be achieved with industry support, through developing agreements and mechanisms to share biodiversity survey and monitoring data and developing training programs for national consultants.

## About CMS and the ETF

CMS is multilateral environmental treaty of the UN providing a global platform for the conservation and management of migratory animals and their habitats through the negotiation and implementation of agreements, initiatives and species action plans. The ETF brings together governments, multilateral environmental agreements, investors, the private sector and non-governmental organizations with an aim of avoiding and minimizing negative impacts of energy development on migratory species.



## Getting Involved

If you wish to learn more about the work of the ETF, become a member or engage otherwise, please contact the ETF coordinator:

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Convention on Migratory Species