



STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION THROUGH MANGROVE PLATFORMS

Mangrove Best Practices



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The issue

Over decades, a diverse community—civil society, government, private sector, and local communities—has worked to conserve and restore mangroves, strengthening their impact and investment case. However, persistent barriers limit scalability and sustainability. Many programs operate in isolation, lacking shared strategies across stakeholders. This fragmentation hinders transformative change and large-scale, lasting impact in mangrove landscapes.

▶ THE SOLUTION

Wetlands International drives **transformative collaboration through inclusive mangrove platforms and committees**. We bring together grassroots groups, governments at various levels, indigenous communities, scientists, and youth, around a shared vision. As such, we help create an enabling environment for mangrove conservation. Platforms and committee members work together to strengthen governance, build capacity, raise awareness and resolve conflicts. In regions like Senegal, Kenya, Tanzania and Guinea Bissau, scaling up mangrove action requires strong stakeholder networks and effective governance. These collaborative structures are essential to achieve the scale and sustainability needed for impactful mangrove restoration and conservation.



The process

The exact set-up of national and subnational mangrove networks and committees vary by country, shaped by the local context, presence of key organisations, and stakeholder needs. While adaptable to specific circumstances, the following core steps are recommended to guide the development of successful mangrove collaboration platforms:

1) Create shared understanding:

- Map stakeholders & projects: identify government, NGOs, community groups, and ongoing mangrove initiatives, assess political will and opportunities for collaboration.
- Spot knowledge & capacity gaps: evaluate access to data, application of best practices, and existing institutional and technical capacities and gaps.
- Review policies & governance: analyse laws, agencies, and commitments (e.g., NDCs, NBSAPs). Flag barriers & opportunities.

2) Co-create a shared vision and action plan:

- Agree on goals and craft a joint narrative on the value of mangroves and develop a workplan with priorities, assigned roles, and create action groups.
- Define the governance structure of the mangrove platform or committee and how it will be sustained in time.

3) Coordinate implementation of the action plan

Organise working groups and effective stakeholder engagement, monitor progress through agreed KPIs.

4) Align & mobilise funding

- Collectively identify opportunities for increasing investment in mangrove initiatives, and join efforts to develop high-quality proposals and projects.
- Mobilise resources for the sustainability of the platform.
- Align funds with national strategies

5) Engage & Adapt

Encourage continuous stakeholder exchange and feedback, monitor progress, and refine strategies as contexts evolve



Cacheu National Park, Guinea Bissau @Wetlands International

Impact in the field

Across the world, Wetlands International has played a catalytic role in establishing national and landscape level mangrove platforms, aligning stakeholders, and embedding mangrove conservation into government strategies. By convening civil society, government, and private sector actors, we have strengthened collaboration, mobilized knowledge, and advanced policies and commitments that ensure mangroves are better protected and restored.

Senegal

Through the **National Mangrove Platform**, also serving as **Senegal's National Global Mangrove Alliance chapter**, we coordinate over 20 NGOs, to scale up successful restoration and sustainable livelihood practices across the country. Established in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and other national partners, the Platform facilitates policy dialogue, promotes the replication of proven restoration and livelihood interventions, and supports their integration in government-led plans. Wetlands International co-led the development and adoption of **Senegal's National Mangrove Strategy**, which sets ambitious targets for conservation, governance, and finance. Wetlands International also leads the Senegal chapter of the Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA).

At the landscape level, we established the **Saloum Mangrove Platform**, bringing together CSOs, NGOs, and government in the delta. We have also launched a **Casamance Mangrove Platform** to deepen collaboration in another critical delta.

We regularly convene or support workshops to align mangrove initiatives at regional levels (Casamance, Saloum delta, Senegal River), ensuring project portfolios complement each other rather than overlap.

Capacity-building is central: we train policymakers, marine protected area staff, and local communities in monitoring techniques, including the use of Global Mangrove Watch tools.

Tanzania

In Tanzania, Wetlands International catalysed the creation of the **National Mangrove Platform**, a body uniting NGOs, government, and the private sector to coordinate mangrove efforts and scale best practices nationally. We also supported the establishment of the **National Wetlands Stakeholders Platform**, advancing wetlands policy reform with mangroves as a key focus.

At the landscape level, we built a **civil society network of 35 groups** in the Rufiji Delta, empowering them with training and advocacy capacity, anchoring mangrove stewardship firmly at the grassroots. We also supported the update of the **1991 Rufiji Mangrove Management Plan**, which incorporates co-management, climate adaptation and biodiversity priorities and prohibits illegal logging and clearing of mangroves. To support its enforcement, we facilitated dialogue among rice farmers, pastoralists, and conservation actors to reduce conflicts in the Rufiji Delta, while also training 20 policymakers on Community-based Ecological Mangrove Restoration.

Guinea Bissau

In Guinea-Bissau, Wetlands International was instrumental in creating **PLANTA, the National Mangrove Landscape Platform**, which unites ministries, government agencies, NGOs, and international partners to coordinate mangrove action. PLANTA has already contributed to the drafting of a new national law on mangroves and a forthcoming National Mangrove Strategy. We contributed to a national digital restoration database to align and track projects across the country and trained PLANTA members in CBEMR and Global Mangrove Watch applications.

In 2024, we supported the launch of the **Guinea-Bissau Global Mangrove Alliance Chapter**. Operating under PLANTA, this chapter will benefit from the GMA's global resources, including funding, scientific knowledge, and best practices for mangrove management. This also helped the country to join the Mangrove Breakthrough, committing to global conservation and restoration goals.

At the landscape level, we also catalysed the **Jeta-Pecixe- Cacheu landscape stakeholder platform**, further embedding collaboration in key mangrove regions.



“The National Mangrove Management Committee has become a cornerstone for advancing Kenya’s mangrove agenda — guiding policy, aligning stakeholders, and ensuring that mangrove conservation is embedded in national strategies. Its success is proof that collaboration between government, research institutions, conservation organizations, and communities is the key to safeguarding these vital ecosystems”

Judith Okello

Chairperson, National Management Committee Kenya



Kenya

In Kenya, Wetlands International and our partners IUCN TNC and WWF are active members of the **National Mangrove Management Committee**, which guides national policy frameworks and work plans under the National Mangrove Ecosystem Management Plan (2017–2027). Through this stakeholder coordination, Kenya adopted a 2023 work plan prioritising **County Mangrove Management Committees** and the development of national mangrove restoration guidelines. We are also an active partner in the **Kenya National Chapter of the Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA)**.

Apart from these formal committees and platform, we have strengthened partnerships and technical capacities around Community-based Ecological Mangrove Restoration (CBEMR) and the Global Mangrove Watch (GMW) of key stakeholders to strengthen restoration efforts and patrol coordination. This includes County Governments, the Kenya Forest Service, research institutes, and community organisations.

Case study: Kenya's National Mangrove Management Committees

As Kenya’s mangroves were disappearing faster than they could recover, the government, NGOs, scientists, and communities often worked in isolation. Restoration efforts were fragmented, and policies lacked local ownership and coordination. The lack of a national mangrove strategy and dedicated governance structures to oversee policy, planning and practical initiatives at national and subnational levels meant efforts to protect, manage and restore mangroves were unable to reach full potential.

That changed in 2017 with the creation of the National Mangrove Management Committee (NMMC), established to implement the National Mangrove Ecosystem Management Plan (2017–2027). For the first time, all the key players including government agencies, research institutions, NGOs such as Wetlands International, and community forest associations sat around one table.

Together they created a common vision for mangroves, designed restoration guidelines, set up 5 county-level mangrove management committees, aligned local and national policies and introduced the use of tools like GMW to track changes in mangrove cover. Wetlands International played a vital role in bridging science and practice, training local champions, and ensuring community voices were heard.

Today, the NMMC has strengthened protection for thousands of hectares of mangroves, restored degraded sites using best-practice methods like CBEMR, guided national policy, and supported livelihoods for coastal families.

In Kenya, the NMMC has become a powerful model of how stakeholder platforms can transform mangrove action.



The National Mangrove Management Committee has shown that when institutions, communities, and partners come together, we can turn strategies into real impact. By aligning efforts under the National Mangrove Ecosystem Management Plan, we are building a legacy of sustainable mangrove management that benefits both people and nature.

James Mburu,
Coast Regional Forest
Conservator, Kenya Forest
Service, Secretary to the NMMC

Contact us

To find out more about Mangrove Platforms, please get in touch with Elise Allély-Fermé, Senior Technical Officer, Coasts and Deltas, Wetlands International: elise.allely@wetlands.org.

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Lessons learned

Multi-stakeholder platforms are game-changers. By convening government, civil society, the private sector and local communities, we help overcome fragmentation and build a joint vision and trust among stakeholders. Mangrove platforms have proven to be critical for aligning restoration efforts, embedding mangrove priorities in national strategies, and ensuring that local voices inform national decision-making.

As platforms are evolving structures, it is critical to adapt to the needs and aspirations of its members. Ownership of these structures by the different stakeholders is necessary for the continuity of efforts.

We have also learned that capacity-building is essential: equipping members of the platform, both policymakers, NGO's and community champions with best practices in mangrove restoration and tools like Global Mangrove Watch strengthens shared understanding, collaboration, prioritisation, implementation and monitoring.

Creating space for dialogue — for example in the Rufiji Delta or Senegal's Casamance region — has shown that conflicts can be transformed into opportunities for joint solutions.

Replication and scalability

The mangrove platforms established in Senegal, Tanzania, Kenya, and Guinea-Bissau demonstrate a **scalable model for mangrove governance and restoration**. These formalised multi-stakeholder structures are important mechanism to support project coordination, knowledge sharing and policy development and implementation. They can be replicated to other key landscapes and countries.



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