

Politics of Partnerships

New Governance of Natural Resource Management

The Mount Kenya Ewaso Water Partnership

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Introduction

During the summer of 2016 I worked under **IMPACT** a non-governmental organization based in Nanyuki, Kenya. I worked with them under the **Institutional Canopy of Conservation (I-CAN)**. During this time I was part of the final meetings leading up to the October 2016 launch of the Mount Kenya Ewaso Water Partnership (MKEWP). While representing IMPACT and the interests of Pastoralists I was able to note in which ways this partnership represented a new form of inclusive governance through the co-management of natural resources involving an array of different stakeholders.

I-CAN Program: Institutional Canopy of Conservation

- A 7-year research initiative led by the African Conservation Centre and McGill University
- Addresses the challenge of combining biodiversity protection and strengthened livelihoods.
- Goal: Identify the most effective designs for future community-based conservation programs.
- Where: Kenya and Tanzania

Host Organization: IMPACT (Indigenous Movement for Peace and Conflict Transformation)

- A peace building, human rights, governance, land rights, policy advocacy and community development organization.
- Works with pastoralist communities to address the major problems faced by minority and indigenous people including the loss of land rights, historical land injustices, and exploitation of resources without participation or accruing benefits.
- Focuses on problems and challenges relating to government biased development policies, social exclusion, corporate injustices and discrimination
- Where: Counties of Laikipia, Isiolo, Marsabit, Turkana and Samburu

Mount Kenya Ewaso Water Partnership

- **Problem:**
 - Uneven distribution of water through out the Ewaso Ng'iro North Catchment Area
 - Intensive use of resources leading to competition and conflict over existing water resources
- **Action:**
 - Address challenges surrounding water allocation and use management, and resource infrastructure development.
- **Goal:**
 - A partnership of public, private and civil society organizations working toward the socially acceptable, economically favourable and environmentally sustainable management of water resources.
- **Where:**
 - The Ewaso Ng'iro North Catchment area, approximately 15, 000 square kilometers.
- **Who:**
 - Initiated by County government of Laikipia, Mount Kenya Growers Groups, Kenya 2030 Water Resources Group
 - 29 Partners from Water Resource Users Associations, Community Forest Associations, County governments of Laikipia, Meru, and Nyeri, civil society groups, private sector (commercial growers), parastatals, research institutions, conservancies, and water service providers.

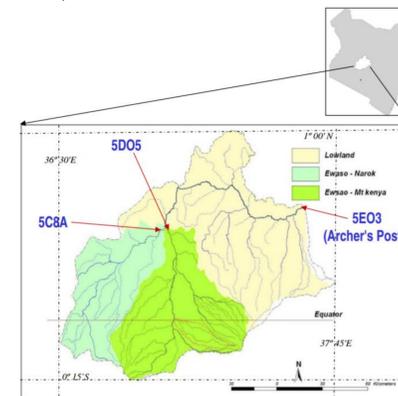


Fig.1 Map showing the location of the upper Ewaso Ng'iro North basin, Kenya

Partnerships as Governance

- ✓ There is a shift from government to governance by the increase in participation by the reshaping of social and political spaces to allow this collective action.
- ✓ These partnerships represent an important means of governing that usually bring together government agencies, business, community and non-profit organisations.
- ✓ It is through these partnerships that social networks, through which social co-ordination is achieved, are formalised as an organizational structure.
- ✓ These multi-agency partnerships create a holistic approach to local decision-making giving more of a voice to excluded communities to state their interests and concerns
- ✓ Partnerships allow the co-management of common-pool resources through power sharing arrangements between the state and an array of resources users.
- ✓ In natural resource management there is a push to encourage other forms of knowledge other than science based.
- ✓ NGOs (such as IMPACT) are seen as creators of vibrant civil societies that are restructuring the relationship between society and government as they create new links with each other, with state agencies, with social movements, and with international development agencies

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