

Case Study: Dakatcha Woodland

Dakatcha Woodland Important Bird Area in Kilifi County is the northernmost *Brachystegia* (Miombo or Mrihi) Woodland in Africa. Several threatened species live in this woodland – which is really a forest. The most important of them is Clarke’s Weaver (*Ploceus golandii*), which is only found in Kilifi County – and nowhere else in the world. Clarke’s Weaver and Sokoke Pipit, found mainly in *Brachystegia* forest; Sokoke Scops Owl, found mainly in *Cynometra* thickets in Dakatcha; and Golden-rumped Sengi (elephant-shrew); are all considered globally Endangered – in danger of extinction unless their habitat is conserved.

Efforts have been made to protect this forest by Nature Kenya and Dakatcha Woodland Conservation Group together with Kenya Forest Service and A Rocha Kenya over the past 10 years but threats stills persist. Threats include conversion of the entire IBA into commercial crops, commercial charcoal production, extraction of other forest products and shifting farming, which together threaten the existence of biodiversity.

In order to save the endemic Clarke’s Weaver and many others, it is critical that the remaining *Brachystegia* and *Cynometra* forests in Dakatcha Woodland Important Bird Area are conserved. This includes community land and the area that falls within the neighbouring Galana Ranch.

Interventions

In 2009-2011, through intense advocacy campaigns, Nature Kenya successfully stopped mass conversion of Dakatcha Woodland into *Jatropha curcas* plantations.

The Dakatcha Woodland management plan was formulated in consultation with all stakeholders

Nature Kenya supported the local community to identify seven community conserved areas to serve as nuclei for the conservation of threatened species.

Publications on Dakatcha Woodland include a *Checklist of the Birds*, several brochures and magazine articles, and a life-cycle assessment of producing biofuels from *Jatropha curcas* plantations in Dakatcha Woodland.