



# Lamu Environment Foundation

Part of the Conservation Collective

## Introduction

The Lamu Environment Foundation (LEF) is a new charitable entity aimed at raising funds from people and businesses who have a strong connection to Lamu. These funds will then be distributed to the best organisations in the local area to work on conservation and environmental projects. The fund will specifically be looking to protect and restore the environment of the Lamu archipelago.

The LEF will not only be beneficial to the environment but will also offer the opportunity to bring economic and social benefits to the community.

The fund will focus on all aspects of conservation, including, protecting Lamu archipelago's diverse marine environments and its unique species, protecting the vital mangrove coverage across the area, enabling proper waste management and recycling and many other sustainable practices.

We hope to offer the first grants this year!

LEF will be part of the Conservation Collective, a global network of fourteen locally-focused environment foundations, emerging from mankind's innate instinct to protect what it loves. The Conservation Collective facilitates funding for the most effective grassroots environmental initiatives, with world-class oversight, management and programme aid.

Currently, there are fourteen members of this network, from Ibiza to Sri Lanka. The LEF will follow the Conservation Collective's proven model of environmental grant-giving that is nimble, non-bureaucratic, and highly effective.

An initial scoping report was commissioned by Ben Goldsmith (Conservation Collective chair and founder) and was undertaken by Hannah Evans (a local environmentalist and activist) between April and May 2021. The aim of the report was to highlight the different ecosystems in the Lamu archipelago, the environmental threats that each of those ecosystems faces and showcase the people and groups doing something to tackle those issues. Please let us know if you'd like to see the full report.

**This document is an Executive Summary of the report and identifies the potential early actions.**



## Lamu Archipelago?



- The Lamu archipelago covers a diverse range of environments, including 130km of coastline and over 60 small islands. The environments range from mangrove forests and scrubland to seagrass beds and coral reefs.
- Lamu archipelago is well known for its untouched sandy beaches, lush vegetation, mangrove-lined channels and vibrant underwater life. Within these are many ecological hotspots and important areas in need of protection.
- Lamu archipelago has some protected areas including Kiunga Marine Reserve - managed by the Kenya Wildlife Services - at the north of the archipelago, multiple locally managed marine areas (LMMAs), one marine protected area (MPA) with another on the way. These areas have been protected due to the biodiversity and ecological importance at each of these sites. However, there are more areas that could be protected.
- The rich environment of Lamu archipelago faces multiple threats, these include population pressures, pollution, mismanagement of resources, unsustainable fishing practices, urbanisation and development and finally, climate change. These factors pose a serious threat to the Lamu Archipelago's environment and must be acted on now.

## How does it work?

- Already across the Lamu archipelago, there are multiple promising grassroots organisations and established organisations undertaking exciting work to protect the environment. However, many of these organisations are working on a volunteer 'hand-to-mouth' basis and lack the critical funds to undertake long-term projects to see lasting change. If their funding could be boosted it would make a huge difference to their work, the environment and community empowerment.
- The principle aim of the LEF is to recognise the most pressing environmental threats, identify and sustain the best grassroots initiatives to combat them, and facilitate the creation of future initiatives that bring long-term net benefits to Lamu's environment and biodiversity.
- Drawing on the enormous passion for the Lamu archipelago, through private donations and fundraising events, the aim is to raise a minimum of \$100,000 per annum to go directly to the most effective local initiatives, chosen by way of an independent scientific advisory board and a donor-advised steering committee.



Little funding can go a very long way to help these groups realise their goals, often enabling them to expand or share best practice in order to replicate their success in neighbouring areas.

## What will the LEF support?

The LEF will actively look to support projects and initiatives in these main areas of interest:

### Waste Management

With the efficient management of waste across the archipelago the biodiversity of land and marine areas can be protected while also creating a local industry and much-needed jobs. Plastic pollution awareness and education would be undertaken as well as supporting local recycling and collections.

### How can the LEF help?

*Local organisations are already working to combat the harms of litter in our oceans and urban areas. However, with limited funding, they are unable to create a large impact and create robust systems. Though with direct funding from LEF, these organisations will be able to expand their work to create more robust collection and recycling services. While also providing vital education and awareness.*

### Sustainable Fishing Practices

By creating opportunities for education around the need for more sustainable fishing practices and creating a robust network of patrols and bylaws we can see a boom in biodiversity across Lamu's waters. As well as supporting artisanal fishermen for generations to come.

### How can the LEF help?

*In some parts of the archipelago more sustainable fishing practices are being encouraged, however, this education is limited to remote areas. By supporting more education and the opportunity for gear exchange programmes across the archipelago, we can lessen the problems of unsustainable fishing. Also as off-shore trawling is a large problem by supporting organisations that can advocate stopping this activity more marine species will be protected.*

### Marine Protection + Coral Restoration

More marine protected areas and dedicated coral nurseries can see the damaged coral reefs of Lamu archipelago bounce back. To do this, more MPAs and a dedicated coral nursery would be established.

### How can the LEF help?

*In other parts of coastal Kenya, coral nurseries have been established and are proving to be a good option for the rebuilding of damaged corals. By supporting this work we can protect corals for years to come.*

*The LEF can also support the establishment of more MPAs and ensure these are properly funded and managed to ensure the protection of biodiversity.*



### Mangrove Reforestation

With 68% of Kenya's mangrove coverage, Lamu is in a prime position to establish better management of mangrove forest as well as the potential of creating a sustainable offset project.

How can the LEF help?

*Funds from the LEF can support more reforestation projects and advocacy to ensure that the mangroves can be protected. Also by leveraging funds already available to the project a protected area of mangroves can be established and an offset programme established.*

### Water Management

By encouraging better management of vital resources such as water through better protection of catchment areas and the encouragement and support of collecting rainwater the longevity of life on Lamu can be extended.

How can the LEF help?

*There is an established environmental advocacy organisation on Lamu Island, with financial support, more pressure can be put on the protection of vital natural resources that are currently mismanaged. There is also an organisation that has installed two large rainwater harvesters in local schools - they aim to install more in public locations.*

### Protection of Indigenous Birds

With the invasion of non-native birds, many of the archipelago's indigenous birds are under threat and causing a serious threat to biodiversity. With a controlled culling of invasive species such as the Indian Crow - which attacks and eats many of the indigenous birds - more local species can be protected.

How can the LEF help?

*Funds can be used to have managed culling programmes to ensure the natural biodiversity of the archipelago.*

**For the success and longevity of these projects, the engagement of the youth must be harnessed, the direct participation of communities encouraged and more science-based research conducted.**



## Next Steps

You can help preserve Lamu's unique natural environment and conserve key ecosystems by contributing to the LEF and/or supporting its projects with an annual donation and/or making introductions to those in a position to do so.

## How will it work?

The governance structure will be straightforward - we will hire one full-time local executive director (who will combine a grant-making and fund-raising role), a steering committee (who will review and decide on grant recommendations and contribute to the fund-raising effort) and an advisory board (who will support the ED in sourcing and assessing grant proposals).

Steering committee members pledge to donate \$10,000 per year, for a minimum of three years.

**At this stage, we're looking for donors, projects, lovers of Lamu and cheerleaders!**

We're aiming to raise a minimum of \$100,000 per year and are about halfway there, with Ben Goldsmith (the founder of Conservation Collective), and a further group who have committed funds so far. A group of 5-10 founding donors will join the steering committee.

Anyone interested should get in touch with Jade or Hannah:

- Jade Brudenell: [jade@conservation-collective.org](mailto:jade@conservation-collective.org) (Executive Director, the Conservation Collective)
- Hannah Evans: [hannah@hevanswrites.com](mailto:hannah@hevanswrites.com)