



THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



MARINE PARKS AND RESERVES UNIT

**CONSERVATION PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD
FROM JULY 2025 TO MARCH 2026**



APRIL 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	3
1.0 INTRODUCTION	7
1.1 MPAs as tool for conservation.....	7
1.2 Major challenges to MPAs, globally	7
1.3 Brief history of MPAs in Tanzania and genesis of MPRU	8
1.4 MPRU managed MPAs	8
1.5 Roles and Functions of MPRU	8
1.5.1 The roles:	8
1.5.2 The functions:.....	9
1.6 The current implementation.....	9
2.0. IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES	1
2.1. Protection and conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity	1
2.1.1 Surveillance and Law Enforcement Patrols	1
2.1.2. Monitoring of Resources Status.....	2
2.1.2.1 Benthic monitoring	2
2.1.2.2 Mangrove monitoring	2
2.1.2.3 Seagrass Status Assessment.....	3
2.1.2.4 Fish catch assessment	3
2.1.2.5 Monitoring of Endangered, Threatened, and Protected Species (ETPs) ..	4
2.1.3 CRRI and TASFAM projects - implementations	6
2.2 Community awareness and stakeholder involvement.....	7
2.3 Promotion of alternative income generating activities.....	10
2.4 Promotion of Eco-Tourism	11
2.4.1 Tourist Visitation	12
3.0 MPRU – HQ (conservation section) collaboration with its stakeholders	12
3.1 Activities participated/or coordinated	13
3.2 Activities conducted /or coordinated	13
4.0 KEY CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS.....	14
4.1 Key Challenges.....	14
4.2 Strategic Recommendations	14
5.0 CONCLUSIONS	15

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BMU	Beach Management Units
CDTF	Conservation and Development Trust Fund
DMRs	Dar es Salaam Marine Reserve System
FY	Financial Year
GMP	General Management Plan
HRs	Honorary Rangers
HQ	Head Quater
MIMP	Mafia Island Marine Park
MPAs	Marine Protected Areas
MPRU	Marine Parks and Reserves Unit
SP	Strategic Plan
TZS	Tanzania Shillings
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
MBREMP	Mnazi Bay–Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park
TACMP	Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park
TMRS	Tanga Marine Reserve System
MMR	Maziwe Marine Reserve (MMR),
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
VPO	Vice Presidents Office
VLC	Village Liaison Committees

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the implementation status of activities across Tanzania's Marine Parks and Reserves Unit (MPRU) for the period from July 2025 to March 2026 in financial year 2025/2026 covering Mafia Island Marine Park (MIMP), Mnazi Bay–Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park (MBREMP), Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park (TACMP), and Dar es Salaam Marine Reserves System (DMRS). Activities were guided by the MPRU Strategic Plan, General Management Plans, and the Marine Parks and Reserves Act of 1994. Focus of implementation was on biodiversity conservation, community engagement, monitoring, administration, and ecotourism development.

Key Achievements

I. Strengthened conservation programmes

- (a) Mangrove restoration activities: During the respective period, a total of 8950 mangrove seedlings were planted in the MPAs. Of which, 5,950 mangroves were planted at TACMP in collaboration with VLCs while 3000 mangrove seedlings were planted at MBREMP in collaboration with Action For Ocean (AFO) and with some community groups of Ruvula and Mtandi villages.
- (b) Coral reefs restoration activities: A total of 7,224 coral fragments has been planted in TACMP through WCS under the funding of Blue Action Fund (BAF). Furthermore, WCS in collaboration with TACMP under the support of EACOP is conducting a coral reef restoration at TMRS of which, a total of 12,500 coral fragments has been planted since September 2025.
- (c) Beach Clean-up activities: MPAs staff, local communities and other stakeholders (i.e. hotels, resorts, dive centres) at various periods participated in the organized beach clean- up activities by collecting solid waste, particularly plastic waste. A total of 1787.6 Kg beach trash mainly dominated by plastic bottles was collected at DMRS (1242 Kg) and MIMP (545.6 Kg).
- (d) Assessment of resource status: Coral reef assessments were conducted where hard coral cover at DMRS was 48.44%, MBREMP (36.67%), MIMP (26.3%) and TACMP (22.3%) compared with the recommended Western Indian Ocean region value of 25%. Furthermore, mangroves and sea grasses of all MPAs were generally in good condition with low disturbance.

II. Enhanced stakeholders' engagement

To ensure communities and other stakeholders are well-informed and supportive of the conservation and management initiatives of MPAs, a range of outreach, education, and awareness programs were conducted during the respective period reaching a wide variety of audiences. A total of 3,286 stakeholders namely, local communities, hoteliers, NGOs, marine transporters were engaged in beach cleaning programs and on the awareness on the importance of MPAs resources protection and management. Furthermore, MPRU worked closely with conservation partners particularly World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association-(WIOMSA), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and MWAMBAO, Global Environmental Fund (GEF) and World Bank.

III. Improved enforcement of laws and regulations

A total of 938 patrols of 6566 man-hours were conducted across MPAs. During the patrols 388 offenders were apprehended for illegal practices that included unlawful owning of 70 pieces of mangrove trees, 180 pieces of mangrove timber, 15 monofilament nets, 13 mosquito nets and sea turtle meat of approximately 100kg, Also, 2 motorcycles, 4 knives, one panga, 37 fishing vessels without permits, 73 beach seines, and 6 mesh traps. In addition, collaboration was strengthened between MPRU and honorary rangers in laws and regulations enforcement which resulted to improved compliance in MPAs.

IV. Development of National Coral Reef Database

The National coral reef database which currently is used by the Marine Parks and Reserves Unit is important for the centralization of data of marine critical habitat in Tanzania, thus enabling informed decisions and timely intervention in the management of marine resources and its associated biodiversity.

V. Development of the National Coral Reef Hub (NCRH) and The National Action Plan for the Conservation of the Resilient Coral Reef (NAPCRCR 2026 - 2031).

The development of the Hub and plan which are at their initial stages of operationalization will enable the coordination of various stakeholders towards the management and conservation of marine critical habitats in MPAs.

Key Challenges

- I. Financial constraints limiting full implementation of planned activities as a result MPRU faces shortage of tools such as patrol vessels, diving gears, monitoring equipment, outdated General Management Plans (GMPs) and transformation to digital conservation
- II. Existence of conservation and community conflicts example at Nyororo Island and Namponda Island
- III. Encroachment and illegal activities such as fishing, mangrove cutting, and sand mining
- IV. Limited technical skills including ecosystem restoration and demarcation of MPAs
- V. Inadequate infrastructures for eco-tourism activities especially in the Marine Reserves.

Strategic Recommendations

- I. Diversification of revenue sources including carbon credit, pollution charges, enhance ecotourism and proposal writing.
- II. Promote community awareness and participation in conservation strategies including provision of alternative livelihoods.
- III. Strengthen enforcement using community-based approaches and modern surveillance technologies.
- IV. Strengthen MPRU staff and community capacity on relevant technical skills on conservation.
- V. Collaborate with private sector in investing in ecotourism infrastructure.

Conclusion: For sound conservation of MPAs in the country, strengthening investment in skills, technology and stakeholder collaboration particularly with coastal communities and private sector is crucial. Despite financial and operational challenges, MPRU has demonstrated progress in conservation through enforcement of laws and regulations and community engagement.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 MPAs as tool for conservation

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is considered as one of the most effective management tools for coastal and marine resources management. Tanzania has established several protect areas for the sake of managing and conserving marine and coastal ecosystems. MPA designations under the Marine Parks and Reserves Unit have been categorized into two management approaches which are Marine Parks and Marine Reserves.

The obvious legislative difference between the two approaches is that, while Marine Parks includes human settlement with regulated resource use under designated zoning schemes, the Marine Reserves have been designated only for conservation, tourism, research and education purposes, with restricted permanent settlement and exploitations of resources.

Existence of MPA allows the recovery of degraded resources and habitats, biodiversity enrichment, food provision to community, spillover effect and sustainability of resources. Moreover, MPA provide opportunities for research, education, tourism activities, reduces conflicts among resource users and employment opportunities. The communities living inside and adjacent to MPA are key beneficiaries of the marine resources and services provided by MPA.

The Tanzania's Marine Protected Areas are endowed with rich biodiversity that are National, regional and international importance both in socio-ecological and, economical. The existence of pristine critical habitats such as coral reef, sea grass beds, extensive mangrove forest together with endangered flora and fauna such as Coelacanth, Dugong, Whale shark, Sea turtles and Sharks signifies the uniqueness and bio-sensitivity nature of Marine Protected Areas of Tanzania.

1.2 Major challenges to MPAs, globally

Apart from benefits of MPAs there are some challenges including use of unsustainable fishing gears, low level of community engagement and participation in management of coastal and marine resources, low level of self-compliance to the set of regulations, illegal marine resources use, conflicts among stakeholders, over dependency of marine resources, shortage of fund, illiteracy, natural gas exploration, amongst others.

Increased population and over dependence of coastal and marine resources is posing unprecedented challenge in resource use trends in meeting people's demand for their livelihood and thus causing unwanted destruction of the same marine and coastal habitats that are very important in supporting livelihood and other environmental services. The ever-increasing demands of food and building materials to cater for the increasing populations has direct negative impacts on the resource's sustainability and consequently jeopardized effective management initiatives instituted by Government.

1.3 Brief history of MPAs in Tanzania and genesis of MPRU

The history of Marine Protected Areas in Tanzania dates back in the mid-1970s when eight (8) sites were gazetted as marine reserves under the Fisheries Act No. 6 of 1970. However, there was no dedicated management mechanism to effectively manage those areas. It was not until 1994 when Marine Parks and Reserves Unit (MPRU) was established by the Act No. 29.

The MPRU is a semi-autonomous Government Institution charged with establishing, developing, managing and administering of Marine Parks and Reserves in the mainland Tanzania. The MPRU operates under the Board of Trustees which oversees implementation of its activities. The Board of Trustees is under the auspice of the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries (MLF).

Since the establishment of MPRU, various initiatives and mechanisms have been instituted to ensure sustainability of the coastal and marine resources, protection of critical habitats, improvement of well-being of local community living standards and their overall economic contribution to the development of the country.

1.4 MPRU managed MPAs

Currently, there are 18 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) that are under control of Tanzania Government through Marine Parks and Reserves Unit. These MPAs include three (3) Marine Parks namely; Mafia Island Marine Park (MIMP), Mnazi Bay Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park (MBREMP), and Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park (TACMP). Also, includes Seven (7) Marine Reserves systems located in Dar es Salaam referred to as Dar es Salaam Marine Reserve system – DMRs, three (3) Mafia Marine Reserves System – MMRs and five (5) Tanga Marine Reserve system – TMRs.

1.5 Roles and Functions of MPRU

The roles and functions of the Unit are provided in **Part VI Sect. 10 (a – f)** of the Marine Parks and Reserves Act No. 29 of 1994.

1.5.1 The roles:

- I. to protect, conserve and restore species and genetic diversity of living and non-living marine resources and the ecosystem processes of marine and coastal areas;
- II. to stimulate rational development of underutilized natural resources;
- III. to manage marine and coastal areas so as to promote sustainability of existing resource use, and recovery of areas and resources that have been over-exploited or otherwise damaged;
- IV. to ensure that villages and other local resident users in the vicinity of, or dependent on, marine parks or reserves, share in the benefits operation of the protected areas, and have priority in the resource use and economic opportunities afforded by the established by the marine park or reserve;

- V. to promote community-oriented education and dissemination of information concerning conservation and sustainable use of marine parks and reserves; and
- VI. to facilitate research and to monitor resource conditions and uses within the marine park and reserves.

1.5.2 The functions:

The functions of the Unit are provided under **Part II 3 (3) (a-e)** of the Marine Parks and Reserves Act No.29 of 1994 as follows:

- I. to establish and monitor the control, management and administration of marine parks and reserves;
- II. to seek funds for the establishment and development of marine parks and reserves;
- III. to expand such funds in the furtherance of the establishment and development of marine parks and reserves;
- IV. to implement and enforce the provisions of this Act and subsidiary legislations pursuant to Section 18 and 38 of the Act; and
- V. to do all such other things which are necessary and within the powers of the Unit.

1.6 The current implementation

This report outlines the status of activities implementation by the Marine Parks and Reserves (MPRU) for the period from July 2025 to March 2026. The activities were implemented in MPRU head office and its four (4) centres including Mafia Island Marine Park (MIMP), Mnazi Bay–Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park (MBREMP), the Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park (TACMP) and the Dar es Salaam Marine Reserves System (DMRS). Figure 1 shows the MPAs gazetted under the MPRU framework.

The implemented activities were aligned with the MPRU's Strategic Plan (SP), the respective MPAs General Management Plans (GMPs), approved annual budgets for FY 2025/2026, the Marine Parks and Reserves Act No 29 of 1994 and other applicable management frameworks and legislations. Furthermore, the report presents the achievements, challenges faced, recommendations, and future directions.

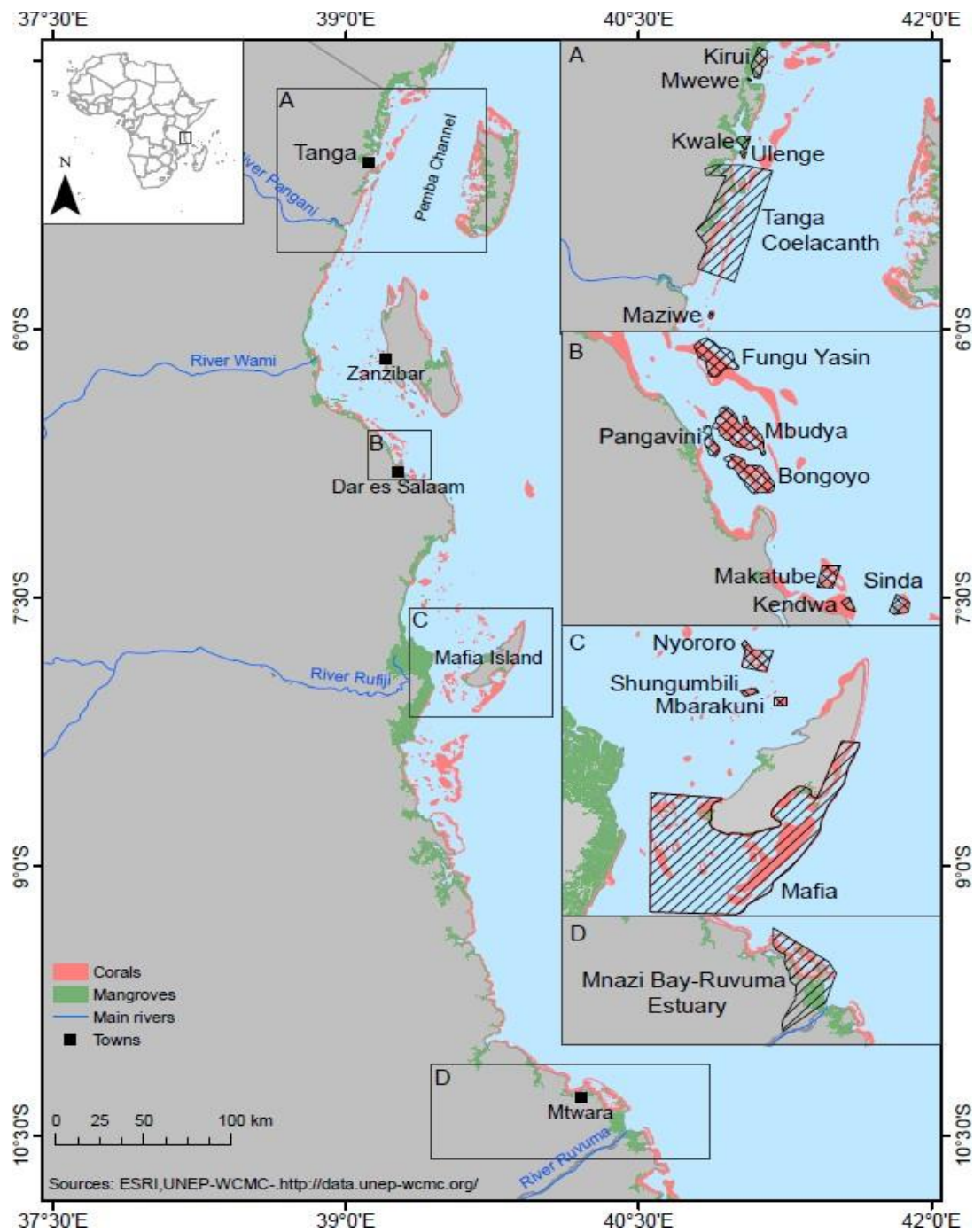


Figure 1: Map of the Tanzanian Mainland Marine Protected Areas.

2.0. IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES

During the reporting period, several activities focused on protection and conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity, monitoring of ecological and socio-economic conditions, community awareness and stakeholder involvement and promotion of alternative income generating activities were implemented. Also, in the review period, promotion of eco-tourism activities was carried out in the respective MPAs.

2.1. Protection and conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity

The objective of conserving biodiversity and ecosystem processes within Tanzania's MPAs is to maintain healthy, resilient and connectivity of marine ecosystems that sustain ecological functions, species diversity, and essential ecosystem services over time. The MPA network protects representative habitats and key species to support natural processes such as reproduction, migration, nutrient cycling and food-web dynamics, while enhancing resilience to climate change and other human pressures. Key activities implemented during the reporting period include surveillance and law enforcement patrols, monitoring of resource status, restoration of ecosystems as well control through licensing and permit systems to regulate resource use.

2.1.1 Surveillance and Law Enforcement Patrols

During the reporting period, a total of 938 patrols each of averagely 7 hours were conducted across all MPAs. These patrols led to the identification of 388 incidents of illegal and unsustainable use practices. Additionally, number of illegal items were apprehended including 70 pieces of mangrove tree and 180 mangrove timbers, 15 monofilament nets, 13 mosquito nets, sea turtle meat (approximately 100kg), 2 motorcycles, 4 knives, one panga, 37 fishing vessels, 73 beach seines, and 6 mesh traps. During the patrols, total of TZS 27,260,000/= was collected as fines. A summary of enforcement data is shown in Table 1.

The patrols were also used to raise awareness to fishing communities and other stakeholders on compliance to laws and regulations governing management of MPAs.

Table 1. Summary of enforcement data

MPA	No. Patrols	Patrol Hrs	Culprits encountered	Collected fine (TZS
MIMP	275	1925	269	2,000,000
MBREMP	100	700	28	0
TACMP	453	3171	81	25,260,000
DMRs	120	840	10	
TOTAL	938	6566	388	27,260,000

2.1.2. Monitoring of Resources Status

During the reporting period, MPAs in collaboration with stakeholders conducted monitoring activities which focused on benthic cover, seagrass, mangroves, fish catch, plastic pollution and endangered species including sea turtles and whale sighting.

2.1.2.1 Benthic monitoring

During the period benthic monitoring was conducted on the MPAs on quarterly basis. In monitoring sites percentage hard coral cover, coral healthy, invertebrates and other microalgae was monitored. The highest average coral cover was recorded at DMRs, reaching 48.44%, followed by MBREMP with 36.67% and TACMP with a value of 22.3% (Table 2). The lowest coral cover recorded at TACMP was mainly due to post coral bleaching effects.

However, the coral cover in our MPAs is in good condition with percentage above the standard of < 25% set for WIO.

Table 2. % Benthic Cover Categories for MPAs

MPA Name	Hard coral cover (%)	Level of coral bleaching (%)			Monitored sites
		Healthy	Partly Bleached	100% bleached	
MIMP	26.3				Chawe, Jiwe Dogo, Msumbiji, Mwamba Saidi, Kitutia, Mange, and Kome
DMRs	48.44	71.67	2.24	50.19	Mbudya, Bongoyo, Sinda and Makatube
MBREMP	33.75	96	4	0	Matenga, Membelwa, Rasmo and Kieti
TACMP & TMRS	22.3				Shenguwe, Taa, Makome, Kwale and Maziwe

2.1.2.2 Mangrove monitoring

A rapid mangrove assessment conducted across the MPAs revealed minimal disturbance, with low mortality rate and cutting. TACMP exhibited the highest density of 24.9 adult trees per 100m², while MIMP recorded the highest density of 1,030.93 seedling per 100m², though it showed the lowest density for seedlings. Overall, the mangrove status was found to be in good condition, with minimal damage as shown in **Table 3** below.

Table 3. Mangrove data

MPA Name	Average cover (density per 100m ²)					Sampled sites
	Adult	Sampling	Seedling	Cut tree	Dead tree	
MIMP	18.38	23.7	1,030.93	0.8	0.7	Utende and Kiegeani,
TACMP and TMRs	24.9	25.0	76.1	-	-	Geza, Mafuriko and Kirui
MBREMP	0.2	0.3	-	-	-	M&P, Namponda Island, Membelwa Island, Kipondo, Kilindi, Hyuvi, Lyongo A, Lyongo B and Likungu

2.1.2.3 Seagrass Status Assessment

Monitoring of seagrass status within the MPAs was conducted using quadrants with 25 cm by 25 cm or 0.25 m by 0.25 m (0.065m²) where species composition and density were recorded (Table 4).

Table 4. Seagrass density (number of stipes/shoots per 0.065m²) recorded in MPAs

MPA Name	Average cover (density)	Sampled sites
MIMP	58.58	Chawe, Chole channel, Jiwe kubwa, Marimbani
TACMP	247.5	Kigombe, Makoma, Sinawe, Taa
DMRS	106.75	Mbudya, Bongoyo, Sinda, Makatube
MBREMP	25.67	Matenga, Rasmo and Kieti

2.1.2.4 Fish catch assessment

Fish catch assessment was conducted to evaluate the ecological sustainability and economic viability of fisheries in the MPAs. The catch size was recorded by both number and weight, while fishing effort was measured by factors such as gear type, gear size and number, fishing grounds, and fishing capacity (including vessel type, number of fishers, and number of fishing trips). During the period under review, a total of 127,604.3 kg (approximately 127 tons) of fin fish and octopus were harvested, generating a total revenue of TZS. 655,590,030 as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Fish catch assessment and fishing returns information summaries

MPA Name	Catch (kg)	Fishing Vessels (effort)	Fishing gear frequency	Catch value (TShs)	Selected landing sites
MIMP	51,071	1,287		260,736,967	Bwejuu, Kiegeani, Kitioni, Usewe, Changarama and Walani
MBREMP	8,700			27,811,906	Liteembe, Mngoji, Ruvula, Kilambo, Mahurunga and Msimbati
TACMP	67,833.30		5,851	367,041,157	Deep Sea and Kigombe
TOTAL				655,590,030	

2.1.2.5 Monitoring of Endangered, Threatened, and Protected Species (ETPs)

During the period under review, three major ETPs such as whales, sharks, and sea turtles were monitored in MPAs. These species play vital roles in the marine ecosystem's food chain. However, their populations are threatened globally by hunting, coastal pollution, and habitat loss. To mitigate these threats and reduce mortality rates, MPAs are tracking the trends and migratory patterns of these species, aiming to develop strategies for their conservation.

During the reporting period, TACMP in collaboration with Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) conducted whale tagging survey along the Tanga coast within the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project area. The 13-day survey, carried out using two research vessels operating in separate zones, recorded 13 confirmed cetacean sightings. The most frequently observed species were Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops aduncus*), followed by spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*) and common bottlenose dolphins. Notably, a mother-calf pair of humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) was also sighted offshore, providing important data on species diversity, distribution, and regional migration patterns.

In MBREMP, from June - December a total of **441 whales** were sighted. Among the sighting **286** whales were adults and **155** were calves as shown in Figure 2.

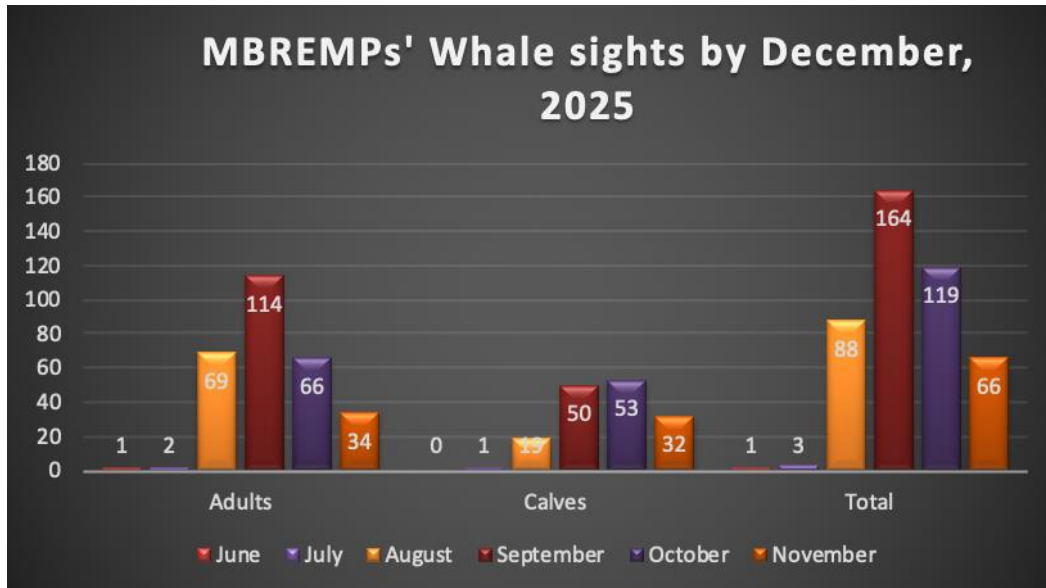


Figure 2: Recorded sights of Humpback whale visit trends by 2025.

Apart from the migratory humpback whales, dolphins were the most frequently observed species, with a notable peak in October, where over 700 individuals were sighted. This was followed by moderate sightings in June, August and September (figure 3).

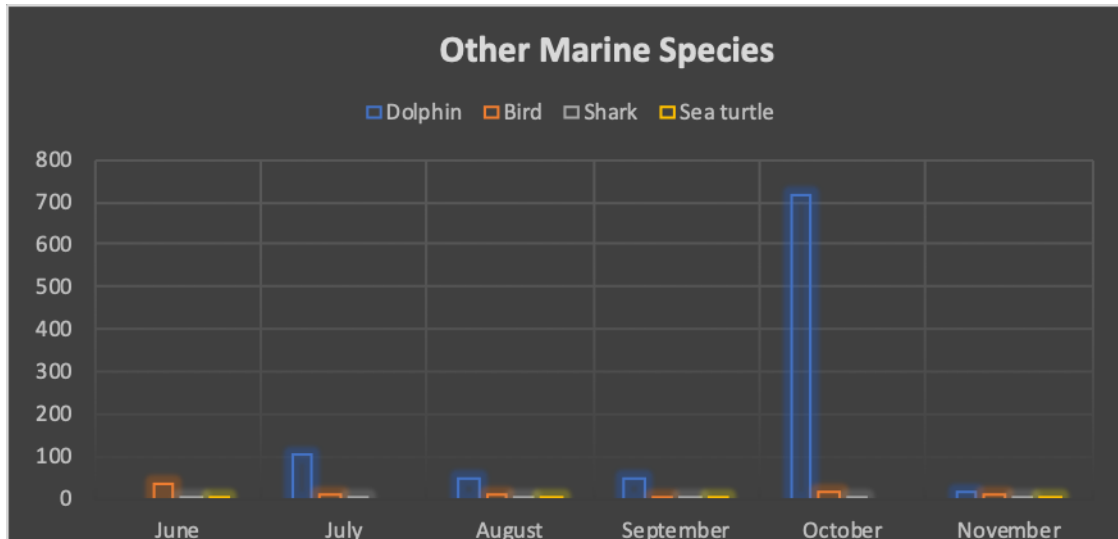


Figure 3: Recorded sights of Dolphin and other marine species at MBREMP by December 2025.

Sea Turtles

Across the full reporting period, in collaboration with Sea Sense, only green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) were recorded nesting within the monitored beaches of MIMP. This observation is consistent with long-term ecological trends indicating that Mafia Island remains a key reproductive habitat for green turtles, while other species such as hawksbill, olive ridley, loggerhead, and leatherback turtles occur less frequently or seasonally. A total of 68 green turtle nests were recorded, with a total of 969 eggs laid and 735 hatchlings successfully released across multiple nesting beaches, including Juani, Kungwi, and Kifinge. Juani Island remained the most active and primary nesting hotspot site within MIMP.

In collaboration with sea sense, sea turtle nesting sites are monitored and translocated in a conducive area. In the reporting period at Kigombe a total of 188 eggs were laid at Dahali beach and 183 translocated to Kigombe beach (TACMP office) waiting for hatchling.



Picture (Left): sea turtle walking to the ocean Picture (Right): sea turtle from hatched nest

2.1.3 CRRI and TASFAM projects - implementations

The Coral Reef Rescue (CRR) - GEF project contributes to the Global Coral Reef Rescue Initiative (CRRI) – a global multi-stakeholder partnership aimed at protecting the health of coral reef ecosystems in the face of climate threats. For the respective period the project has implemented the following:

- I. Execution of community Training program in Kilwa and Kibiti.
- II. The establishment of National Coral reef Data Base and capacity building for its operationalization.
- III. Capacity building events on MPRU conservation staffs on adaptive management and management of MPAs through networking.

- IV. Consolidation and operationalization of the NAPCRCR: 2026-2031 (The National Action Plan for the Conservation of coral Reefs) and establishment of the National Coral Reefs Hub (NCRH) and its website.
- V. The conduct of multi-stakeholders' meetings in various local hubs
- VI. The conduct of various important analyses like: The Cost - benefit analysis, threats and opportunity analysis, and the analysis of the level of awareness.
- VII. Consolidation and operationalization of the Business Engagement Strategy (BES) and National Communication and Engagement Strategy (NCES).

TASFAM Project: TASFAM: Tanzania Scaling-up Sustainable Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Project (TASFAM) is a five-year project funded by the World Bank Group to support the fisheries sector development along coastal districts in Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.

MPRU is implementing TASFAM project objectives defined under component one, particular the subcomponent 1.2 on targeted investments in marine conservation and eco-tourism.

For the period of up to March 2026: MPRU implemented the following activities:

- i) Review of MPRU Act and Development of MPRU Regulations to strengthen the Resource Management in MPAs
- ii) To perform a status verification of the designated critical habitats
- iii) Developing an effective Area-Based Management and Monitoring Plan for critical habitats based on the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries
- iv) Development of the manual for the restoration and rehabilitation of critical habitats such as corals, mangroves and seagrass
- v) Review of existing marine reserves boundaries
- vi) Promotion of sustainable tourism activities in MPAs through private investments

2.2 Community awareness and stakeholder involvement

To ensure communities and other stakeholders are well-informed and supportive of the conservation and management initiatives of MPAs, a range of outreach, education, and awareness programs were conducted during the respective period reaching a wide variety of audiences. A total of around **3,286** stakeholders were engaged in environmental education and awareness activities. These included:

- (i) 1171 primary and secondary school students (362 in DMRs, 200 in MBREMP, 30 in TACMP, and 579 in MIMP).
- (ii) 849 higher learning institution students from Dar es Salaam, visited by DMRS.
- (iii) 24 Staff from Primary and Secondary schools, Universities and Municipal (15 in DMRs, 7 in MIMP, 2 TACMP)

- (iv) 157 community-based coastal zone managers (including 49 Honorary Rangers and 108 fishers from DMRS neighbouring communities).
- (v) 50 MBREMP VLCs Members and fishermen participated in a workshop on grievances with the main purpose to overview the challenges and solution on regulating human activities at the park.
- (vi) 561 MIMP community members received co-management training.
- (vii) 276 VLC members and local leaders received co-management training, supported by the Mwambao Coastal Community Network in TACMP.
- (viii) 56 Village Liaison Committees (VLCs) and local leaders participated meetings focused on strengthening collaboration to combat illegal fishing and addressing challenges related to fishers not using the designated market at Mchukuuni, which affects government revenue collection and fisheries data.
- (ix) 70 TACMP community members, participated in the development of community management plans for marine areas in partnership with WCS
- (x) 72 TACMP community members participated in discussion on the rehabilitation of fisheries infrastructure in Kigombe. WCS committed to support the rehabilitation of the identified facilities.
- (xi) In MIMP, a total of seven (7) committees provided with capacity building on roles and responsibilities. During the capacity-building sessions, the committees highlighted several challenges that hinder them from effectively performing their duties. These include a lack of working tools and equipment, such as boots and torches, the absence of official identification cards, a lack of Pangas for clearing forest paths, and the discontinuation of allowances that they previously received. In addition, the committees emphasized the lack of regular refresher training, which further limits their effectiveness in carrying out their responsibilities.

For the purposes of ensuring ownership of MPAs resources by the community surrounding the resource, compliance with regulations and control of access to resources, in each MPA, Local Residents' User Certificates (LRUC), Resident Permits and Non-Resident Fishing Permits are normally issued by the responsible local administration (i.e. VLC) of each MPA, accordingly. During the reporting period, a total of 49 LRUC, 193 resident permits and 160 non-resident fishing permits were issued and TZS 9,440,000/= was collected as shown in Table 6.

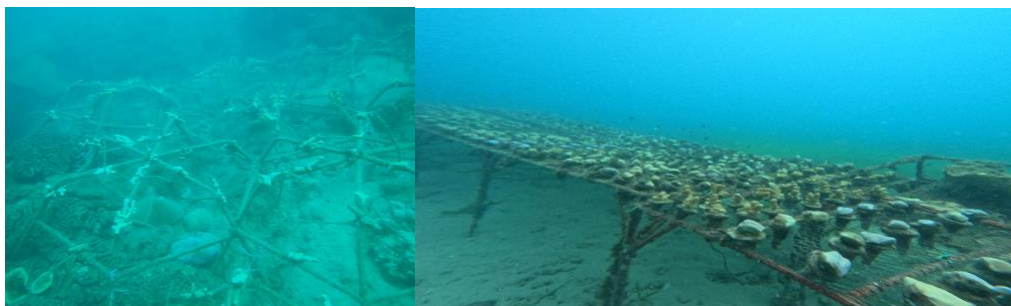
Table 6. The issued non-residents fishing permits, resident permits and local resident's user certificates by the respective MPA during July - March 2025/2026.

MPA	LRUC	Residents permit	Non-residents fishing permit
-----	------	------------------	------------------------------

MIMP	49	1	160
TACMP	-	-	-
MBREMP	-	192	-
DMRS	0	0	0

Different groups of community including women and youths are involved in all level of management from the planning process and sharing of functions, rights and responsibilities. During the reporting period communities in different MPA were involved in various conservation activities like planting of mangroves, coral restoration activities, beach clean-up, etc.

- (a) During the respective period, a total of 8950 mangrove seedlings were planted in the MPAs of which, 5,950 mangroves were planted at TACMP in collaboration with VLCs of Sahare (250) and Mtambwe (5700) while 3000 mangrove seedlings were planted at MBREMP in collaboration with Action For Action (AFO) and with some community groups of Ruvula and Mtandi villages.
- (b) The coral restoration activity at TACMP is funded by the BAF project and implemented by WCS in collaboration with the Mariculture Organization. The activity of coral restoration is undertaken by five participants of which three divers are from community, one diver from TACMP and a boatman. The activity started on October 2024 by establishing a coral nursery at Mwamba Taa. Currently, the coral nursery has 43 coral tables with a total of 7,224 coral fragments planted since the beginning of the project.
- (c) WCS in collaboration with TACMP under the support of EACOP is conducting a coral reef restoration at TMRS of which, a total of 12,500 coral fragments has been planted since September 2025.



Pictures: Progress of coral fragment planted on reef star and coral table

- (d) MPAs staffs, local communities and other stakeholders (i.e. hotels, resorts, dive centres) at various periods participated in the organized beach clean-up activities by collecting solid waste, particularly plastic waste. A total of 1,787.6 Kg beach trash mainly dominated by plastic bottles was collected at DMRS (1,242 Kg) and MIMP (545.6 Kg).



Pictures of plastic bags during beach cleaning events

2.3 Promotion of alternative income generating activities

Among the strategies for the promotion of alternative income generating activities included capacity building to community on financial matters and provision of knowledge on the identification of alternative livelihoods options. Beekeeping, seaweed farming, and horticulture production were among the proposed alternative livelihood strategies aside fishing. During the reporting period the following activities were carried out: -

- (a) 13 groups (each with average of 30 members) of the 67 groups and 7 VLCs in MIMP received training on conservation of MPAs, financial matters and on alternative livelihoods amongst others.
- (b) MBREMP in collaboration with Action For Ocean (AFO) has joined effort in formulating the Village Community Banks (VICOBA) aiming at building the capacity of community on monetary education in savings and strengthen their capital to run alternative activities such as poultry and animal husbandry. A new VICOBA in Mnuyo village with eleven members was formed.



Picture during community engagement meeting

- (c) MIMP has conducted assessment of 16 groups (of 30 members each) who engage in sea weed farming. The assessment focused on the progress of their seaweed farming activities.
- (d) In TACMP, communities in Kigombe and Mwarongo were facilitated to implement temporary closures of selected coral reef areas for octopus fishing from June to 8th October 2025 followed by a learning visit during the reopening event organized in collaboration with MWAMBAO which include a total of 55 participants including VLCs, Village Executive Officers, and street leaders from Machui, Mchukuuni, Mwambani, Kivumbi Tifu, and Makoko Ndumi to train on the implementation of temporary octopus' closures to support scaling up in other areas. The initiative demonstrated improved outcomes, particularly in Mwarongo, highlighting its effectiveness as a sustainable fisheries management approach.

2.4 Promotion of Eco-Tourism

During the reporting period, MPRU attended national and international events and festivals including Saba Saba, Nane Nane and Swahili International Tourism Expo (SITE). These events also aimed to raise public awareness about the importance of sustainable coastal ecotourism and the various conservation management activities within the MPAs. Additionally, the public was informed about the socio-economic and ecological roles of marine protected areas.

- (a) MIMP collaborated with the Tanzania Tourism Board (TTB) to conduct two stakeholder meeting for the familiarization of old centuries Rhapta City as a new product of Tourism industry in Mafia Island and Tanzania at Large and the mission included the footages for the preparation of documentary for the promotion of the underwater heritage city. Also, MIMP in collaboration with TAWA conducted a stakeholder meeting with the mission of connecting upcoming Cruise Ship Tourism between Kilwa, Mafia and Zanzibar.
- (b) At TACMP, a total of 526 promotional materials were produced during the reporting period. Of these, 246 brochures were prepared specifically for exhibition purposes, while 280 were produced to support ongoing education and stakeholder awareness initiatives
- (c) At DMRs, two (2) photo booths were installed in Sinda and Bongoyo Islands. These marketing tools are playing a vital role since they introduce the islands to the world. DMRS also produced special stand-alone banner, table talkers and fliers to market glass bottomed boat (MV DODOJI II) which is a new tourism product. This new product is in operational and is attracting more visitors.
- (d) A meeting focused on sustainable ecotourism awareness was held for tourism boat operators, who are key stakeholders in the DMRS. The agenda emphasized the importance of adhering to visitor management codes of conduct and safety protocols, highlighting the need to respect carrying capacity and

implement effective time management practices to enhance customer care and satisfaction. In total, 18 boat operators participated in the training sessions.

2.4.1 Tourist Visitation

During the review period, a total of 35,851 tourists visited the MPAs. Most MPAs experienced a bit decline in visitation numbers compared to the previous fiscal year 2024/2025 (see Table 7 for details).

Table 7. Number of visitors among MPAs between July- March 2024/2025 and July-March 2025/2026.

MPA Name	July - March 2024/2025	July- March 2025/2026
	# Visitors	# Visitors
MIMP & MIMR	6,507	7,308
TACMP, TMRS & MAZIWE	950	986
DMRS	34,011	26,300
MBREMP	0	1,257
TOTAL	41,468	35,851

3.0 MPRU – HQ (conservation section) collaboration with its stakeholders

In view of other stakeholders other than the local coastal communities and VLCs, MPRU insisted in having collaborative management with various stakeholders with the common interests, mainly for sharing of experience and knowledge, expertise, responsibilities and resources. Among the stakeholders that MPRU cooperated the most included; Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) like World Wildlife Fund for Nature -WWF, Wildlife Conservation Society-WCS, Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association-WIOMSA, Nature Conservancy Tanzania – NCT, and Mwambao. Among the Government Institutions that MPRU collaborated the most included National Environmental Management Council - NEMC, Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute - TAFIRI, University of Dar – Es- Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture – SUA. Furthermore, MPRU extended its collaboration with international organizations like GEF- WWF- through its Coral Reef Rescue Initiatives (CRRRI-Project 2023-2027), World Bank – Through its TASFAM (Tanzania Scaling-up Sustainable Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture Management) project.

3.1 Activities participated/or coordinated

MPRU- HQ conservation section for the respected period participated in the following activities:

- (a) Participation on the workshop meeting for National Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) as conducted by The Nature Conservancy Tanzania in cooperation with the Vice Presidency Office (VPO)
- (b) Participation on the “on-line session on data management and on how MPAs can support the MSP process and available spatial data on ecological connectivity in Tanzania
- (c) Participation in the Systematic Conservation Planning training
- (d) Participation in the Inception Meeting on Large Scale Seagrass Mapping and Management Initiative (LASMMI) Project
- (e) Participation in the World Mangrove Day 2025 and launching of National Mangrove Management and Development Strategy 2025-2035
- (f) Participation in the WIOMSA Symposium 2025
- (g) Participation on the Preparation of the Gender Engagement Plan for Marine Spatial Planning Development
- (h) Participation on the Workshop on Coral Reef Restoration and Rehabilitation in Tanzania
- (i) Participation in the “field activity for mapping of ecosystem, type and locations of resource activities within TACMP”
- (j) Participation in the Performance review of MPRU Strategic Plan on the meeting held at TFS offices, Morogoro
- (k) Participation in the Stakeholders workshop meetings for DMRS – GMP review, held at Makumbusho House, Dar Es Salaam
- (l) Participation in the workshop on marine and coastal biodiversity conservation for Kenya and Tanzania by Nairobi Convention in partnership with the UNEP Umbrella Programme”
- (m) Participation in the preparation of MPRU Budget and Plan of activities for 2026/2027
- (n) Participation in the workshop meetings for consolidation of the MPRU Strategic Plan held Morogoro and Kibaha - Pwani

3.2 Activities conducted /or coordinated

MPRU- HQ conservation section for the respected period conducted the following activities:

- (a) Coordination of the Workshop Meeting for the Validation of the Level of Awareness Report and Consolidation of the Communication Strategy from National Coral Reef Hub Stakeholders
- (b) Preparation and participation in the World Ocean Day

- (c) Involvement in capacity building workshops related to SwAM Ocean in Tanzania, Zanzibar
- (d) Conduct of the stakeholder's workshop meeting at Tanga Region for the operationalizations of the *National Action Plan for Coral Reefs conservation* (NAPCR-2026-2031) and a follow up of the implementation of the *National Action Plan for Conservation of Marine Turtles: 2024 – 2029*
- (e) MPRU in cooperation with the Mwambao Coastal Communities Network, we coordinated the development of the Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) for VLCs in MPAs
- (f) MPRU in cooperation with Swedish Agency for Marine conservation and Management (SwAM) held a training on "Conservation standards" for some MPRU conservation staffs at Zanzibar on 23rd - 26th February 2026
- (g) Continued development of the National Coral Reef Hub (NCRH) website and continued capacity building on the use of National Coral Reefs Data Base
- (h) Continued consolidation of biophysical Reports as we received them
- (i) Finalization of Kilwa Marine Reserves for submission to MLF
- (j) Preparation of the Concept Note (CN) for conservation of some critical habitats in Fresh waters. The Concept Note was submitted to MLF for further processes
- (k) Conduct of initial processes for the gazettelement of Kilwa MPAs

4.0 KEY CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Key Challenges

The following are the observed key challenges for the improved health of MPAs.

- I. Financial constraints limiting full implementation of planned activities as a result MPRU faces shortage of tools such as patrol vessels, diving gears, monitoring equipment, outdated General Management Plans (GMPs) and transformation to digital conservation
- II. Existence of conservation and community conflicts example at Nyororo Island and Namponda Island
- III. Encroachment and illegal activities such as fishing, mangrove cutting, and sand mining
- IV. Limited technical skills including ecosystem restoration and demarcation of MPAs
- V. Inadequate infrastructures for eco-tourism activities especially in the Marine Reserves

4.2 Strategic Recommendations

The following are the proposed strategic recommendations for the improved health of MPAs.

- I. Diversification of revenue sources including carbon credit, pollution charges, enhance ecotourism and proposal writing.
- II. Promote community awareness and participation in conservation strategies including provision of alternative livelihoods.
- III. Strengthen enforcement using community-based approaches and modern surveillance technologies.
- IV. Strengthen MPRU staff and community capacity on relevant technical skills on conservation.
- V. Collaborate with private sector in investing in ecotourism infrastructure.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

For sound conservation of MPAs in the country, strengthening investment in skills, technology and stakeholder collaboration particularly with coastal communities and private sector is crucial. Despite financial and operational challenges, MPRU has demonstrated progress in conservation through enforcement of laws and regulations and community engagement.