**Region: East Africa Drylands**

Countries Include: Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda

**Biodiversity and Global Environmental Benefits Regional Highlights:**

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| Country | Country-level biodiversity significance |
| Burundi | * Burundi’s population is highly dependent on the country’s natural environment, with 90 percent engaged in agriculture. Cultivated plants and managed forests; however, have been largely introduced, or a result of afforestation processes. For this reason, Burundi’s ecosystems can be separated into natural (forests, savannas, steppes, and wetlands), afforesteed, and agricultural lands.[[1]](#footnote-0) Western Burundi encompasses a portion Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot, which is spread over a million square kilometers, and provides vast ecosystem services and a habitat to over 100 endemic mammal species, among others. Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot documentation from CEPF is found [here](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/eastern_afromontane_ecosystem_profile_final.pdf). * Species biodiversity is relatively high. The geographic scope of species range-size rarity is centered in the Northwest region enclosed by the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate above the global average, 51.19 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of Protected Areas (PAs) include: [Mukungu - Rukamabasi](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/28700), and [Nyamugari](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/28604). Areas only partially within protected areas include: [Ruvubu National Park](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6035) and [Kibira National Park](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6034). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 43.24 percent. * Based on relative biological importance the following two KBAs were highlighted as top priority in Burundi: [Kibira National Park](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6034) and Lake Tanganyika. Prioritization mapping efforts of the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot in Burundi, have identified 1 terrestrial and 1 freshwater KBAs which are Priority 1, comprising 2.5 and 5 percent (1/39 and 1/18) respectively of the hotspot total. * There are few prioritization mapping efforts, primarily led by academic or development institutions: [IWGIA’s Country Technical Notes on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues](https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40224460/burundi.pdf/969773f0-9429-49d3-bccf-d02d4cbcdac4), which includes relevant statistics as of 2014; and a study on [peripheral socio-economic interactions and participatory management](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Vieux_Traore/publication/314865805_Influence_of_Peripheral_Socio-economic_Interactions_and_Participatory_Management_on_the_Exploitation_and_Evolution_of_the_Rusizi_National_Park_Burundi_from_1984_to_2015/links/5960ba8a0f7e9b8194226c17/Influence-of-Peripheral-Socio-economic-Interactions-and-Participatory-Management-on-the-Exploitation-and-Evolution-of-the-Rusizi-National-Park-Burundi-from-1984-to-2015.pdf) in the [Rusizi National Park](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6036). * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are low throughout the country, with only one concentration in [Kibira National Park](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6034). * The primary land cover types are Agriculture - 1.55Mha; Shrubland - 430kha; Grassland - 342kha; Water - 204kha; Forest - 150kha. * Burundi has 4 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Burundi.pdf?1589487716). * Burundi is landlocked and thus has no marine data. |
| Djibouti | * Djibouti is a coastal country in the Horn of Africa, with 90 percent of land classified as desert. Country reports to CBD have found that the general state of biodiversity of Djibouti continues to decline, although only a small portion of the country’s population’s livelihoods are reliant on ecosystem services. Djibouti’s Goda Mountains contain a microclimate and the largest forest in the country, which has a high level of endemism. Forests overall comprise a very small portion of the country’s land areas at just 27 Ha. Overgrazing, firewood collection, and rainfall deficits; however, have severely degraded the remaining forest landscapes.[[2]](#footnote-1) * Species biodiversity is modest. The geographic scope of species range-size rarity is centered in the Arta and Tadjourah Region. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate near the bottom of the global distribution, 0.81 to 44 percent, respectively. Most KBAs are outside of Protected Areas (PAs) and include: [Lac Abhé](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6153), [Forêt de Day](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6149), [Dôda](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6155), and [Kadda Guéïni - Doumêra](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6151). PA protection of KBAs were only documented from 2013 when the country also only protected 0.81 percent of KBAs. * There are few prioritization mapping efforts, primarily led by academic or development institutions: highlighting the overall lack of effort to active management of protected areas and [important bird areas](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/IBAs/AfricaCntryPDFs/Djibouti.pdf), and a potential transboundary seascape management plan for the Gulf of Tadjourah and Ghoubet-el-Kharab which includes [conservation prioritization maps](http://msp.cousteau.org/djibouti/downloads/Djibouti-Seascape-Combined-19sept16.pdf). * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are low throughout the country, due to the primarily barren or desert landscape. * The primary land cover types are Bare - 1.97Mha; Wetland - 97.4kha; Grassland - 63.7kha; Sparse vegetation - 49.2kha; Water - 31.5kha; Shrubland - 30.9kha; Agriculture - 4.93kha; Settlement - 1.93kha; Forest - 27ha. * Djibouti has 1 ramsar site with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Djibouti.pdf?). * Djibouti performs just below the global average of ocean health, performing poorly in sustainable food provision, artisanal fishing opportunities and clean waters. While the marine ecosystem is of relatively high conservation importance, including the coral reefs highlighted in these [conservation prioritization maps](http://msp.cousteau.org/djibouti/downloads/Djibouti-Seascape-Combined-19sept16.pdf), Djibouti does not have established protected areas. |
| Ethiopia | * Located in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia's landscapes cover a range of climates and ecosystem types. The population is highly dependent on agriculture, comprising 83 percent of the workforce; and forests, which provide sustainable livelihoods for millions of households throughout the country. There are a number of endemic species to Ethiopia’s ecosystems, most of which are located in the Eastern Afromontane Hotspot—documentation from CEPF is found [here](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/eastern_afromontane_ecosystem_profile_final.pdf). * Species biodiversity is modest. The geographic scope of species range-size rarity is found in the center of the country in Oromia region, and lake Abaya. * Key Biodiversity Areas within the country are protected at a rate well below the global average, 19.77 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) are found throughout the country and include: [Lower Wabi Shebelle river and Warder](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6294), [Bahir Dar - Lake Tana](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6241), [Mid-Abbay (Blue Nile) river basin](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6250), [Bogol Manyo - Dolo](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6302), and [Anferara forests](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6292). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 18.59 percent. * Prioritization mapping efforts of the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot, have identified 2 terrestrial and 4 freshwater KBAs in Ethiopia which are Priority 1, comprising 23 and 11 percent (9/39 and 2/18) respectively of the hotspot total. Based on relative biological importance the following KBAs were highlighted as top priority in Ethiopia: Bale Mountains National Park; Gughe Mountains; Harena-Kokosa; Koka Dam and Lake Gelila; Lake Ashenge Catchment; Lake Tana; Liben Plains and Negele Woodlands; Little Abbai River; Metu-Gore-Tepi Forests ; Nechisar National Park; and Simien Mountains National Park. * With coordination from WRI and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MEFCC), Ethiopia also released a [national prioritization mapping effort for tree-based landscape restoration](https://assets.forest-atlas.org/eth/documentation/MEFCC-Ethiopia-National-Landscape-Restoration_high-res.pdf), which includes efforts to map benefits to local communities. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are moderate throughout Southern Ethiopia. * The primary land cover types are Shrubland - 50.3Mha; Agriculture - 28.0Mha; Forest - 21.0Mha; Bare - 7.38Mha; Grassland - 7.07Mha; and Water - 776kha. * Ethiopia has no Ramsar sites. * Ethiopia is landlocked and thus has no marine data. |
| Kenya | * Located below the Horn of Africa, Kenya has a large diversity of ecosystem zones, including: lowland and mountain forests, grasslands, semi-arid scrublands, dry woodlands, and inland aquatic, coastal and marine systems. Forests in Kenya critically provide ecosystem services of livelihood provision (food, medecine, fuel and water), as well as habitats for a range of species.[[3]](#footnote-2) The government of Kenya utilizes an ecosystem approach to protect the country’s landscapes and species, but does not have conservation priorities mainstreamed in national legislation.[[4]](#footnote-3) There are a number of endemic species to Kenya’s ecosystems, most of which are located along the Southern coast and in the Eastern Afromontane Hotspot—documentation from CEPF is found [here](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/eastern_afromontane_ecosystem_profile_final.pdf). This distribution is matched in the geographic scope of species range-size rarity. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate below the global average, 37.91 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) are found throughout the country and include: [Dida Galgalu desert](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6417), [South Nguruman](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6446), [Tana River Delta](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6412), [Mukurweini valleys](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6396), and [Mumoni Hill Forest Reserve](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/45610). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 35.17 percent. * Prioritization mapping efforts of the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot, have identified 3 terrestrial and 1 freshwater KBAs in Kenya which are Priority 1, comprising 7.7 and 5.5 percent (3/39 and 1/18) respectively of the hotspot total. Based on relative biological importance the following KBAs were highlighted as top priority in Kenya: Lake Chala and Lake Jipe Catchment; Mount Elgon; Mount Kenya; and Taita Hills Forests Kenya. * ICCAs provide a vital role in Kenya linking conservation with realization of Indigenous and Local Community rights, specific details from ICCA Registry are found: [Il Ngwesi](http://www.iccaregistry.org/en/explore/Kenya/il-ngwesi); [Kaya Kinondo](http://www.iccaregistry.org/en/explore/Kenya/kaya-kinondo); [Muliru Farmers Conservation Group](http://www.iccaregistry.org/fr/explore/Kenya/muliru-farmers-conservation-group). [IWGIA’s Country Technical Notes on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues](https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/40224744) provides recent context on the Indigenous Peoples of Kenya. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are moderate throughout the country but concentrations are found in the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot. * The primary land cover types are Shrubland - 28.0Mha; Agriculture - 14.5Mha; Grassland - 8.63Mha; Forest - 3.05Mha; Bare - 1.88Mha; Water - 1.23Mha; and Wetland - 1.02Mha. * Kenya has 6 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Kenya.pdf?). * Kenya is below the global average in ocean health, with gaps in sustainable food provision and clean waters. The freshwater and saline lakes/associated wetlands are crucially important for migratory birds; and the mangrove forests and coral reefs along the southern coast of Kenya have exceptional biodiversity, though increasingly degrading due to anthropogenic pressures. |
| Rwanda | * Rwanda’s landscape is heterogeneous in nature, comprising wetlands, mountain forests, savannah woodland and aquatic forests. The country’s Protected Areas (PAs), particularly those bordering DR Congo are of high biological and economic importance, generating high-end ecotourism revenues to the state government and local communities. Areas outside of PAs, however, have experienced considerable degradation due to mining and timber production. * There are a number of endemic species to Rwanda’s ecosystems, most of which are located in the Eastern Afromontane Hotspot—documentation from CEPF is found [here](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/eastern_afromontane_ecosystem_profile_final.pdf). This distribution is matched in the geographic scope of species range-size rarity. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate just above the global average, 45.67 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) are found throughout the country and include: [Lake Kivu catchment (Rwanda)](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/29659), [Nyabarongo River](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/46984), [Mukungwa River Catchment](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/46982), and [Akanyaru wetlands](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6777). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 41.04 percent. * Prioritization mapping efforts of the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot, have identified 1 terrestrial and 2 freshwater KBAs in Rwanda which are Priority 1, comprising 7.7 and 5.5 percent (1/39 and 2/18) respectively of the hotspot total. Based on relative biological importance the following KBAs were highlighted as top priority in Rwanda: Lake Bulera and Luhundo; Lake Kivu; Nyungwe National Park. * This dated [IWGIA report](https://www.iwgia.org/images/publications/0474_randa_2-engelsk.pdf) highlights the lasting tension between Indigenous Peoples and conservation efforts in Rwanda, showing that the Twa and Batwa were made largely landless due to economic and conservation pressures by 2008. Rwanda’s 2017 [National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (v.2)](https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/rw/rw-nbsap-v2-en.pdf) highlights several key ecological corridors and proposed expansions of national protected areas throughout the country. * Recent prioritization mapping efforts from the conservation and academic community include: [the application of Systematic Conservation Planning](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1617138119302110) to identify suitable sites for additional conservation reserves. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are moderate throughout the country but concentrations are found in the West of the country along the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot and the Eastern border with Kenya. * The primary land cover types are Agriculture - 1.76Mha; Shrubland - 296kha; Forest - 233kha; Water - 155kha; and Wetland - 83.5kha. * Rwanda has 1 ramsar site with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Rwanda.pdf?). * Rwanda is landlocked and thus has no marine data. |
| Tanzania | * Tanzania is a country of high biodiversity and conservation importance, containing six biodiversity hotspots: Eastern Arc old Block-Mountain Forests; the coastal forests; the Great Lakes for Cichlid fishes; the marine coral reef ecosystems; the ecosystems of the alkaline Rift-Valley Lakes; and the grassland savannas for large mammals (Serengeti National Park).[[5]](#footnote-4) The Eastern Arc Mountains and Coastal Forests hotspot is profiled in detail [here](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/final.easternarc.ep_.pdf). * There are a number of endemic species to Tanzania’s ecosystems, most of which are located in the Eastern Afromontane Hotspot—documentation from CEPF is found [here](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/eastern_afromontane_ecosystem_profile_final.pdf). This distribution is matched in the geographic scope of species range-size rarity, and follows the KBA landscape of Tanzania through the center of the country, North along the border with Kenya and West bordering Lake Tanganyika. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate just above the global average, 57.03 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) are found throughout the country, with a concentration around Lake Victoria and include: [Wembere steppe](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/7006), [Kagera swamps](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6987), [Lake Victoria: Bumbire Islands](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/7002), and [Mori Bay](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/46996). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 50.09 percent. * Prioritization mapping efforts of the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot, have identified 8 terrestrial and 3 freshwater KBAs in Tanzania which are Priority 1, comprising 20.5 and 16.6 percent (8/39 and 3/18) respectively of the hotspot total. Based on relative biological importance the following KBAs were highlighted as top priority in Tanzania: East Usambara Mountains; Lake Chala and Lake Jipe Catchment; Lake Tanganyika; Malagarasi River System; Mount Rungwe; Nguru Mountains; Rubeho Mountains; Udzungwa Mountains; Ukaguru Mountains; Uluguru Mountains; and West Usambara Mountains. * CEPF prioritization mapping is less detailed for the Eastern Arc Mountains and Coastal Forests, but in the Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable species compendium they highlight that Tanzania holds more species than Kenya (148 to 79 respectively). A financial flows analysis found that the Udzungwa Mountains have received the most conservation attention, followed by the East and West Usambaras and the Ulugurus; while in the coastal forests the IBAs of Kilwa and Rufiji Districts have received the most attention.[[6]](#footnote-5) * [IWGIA’s Country Technical Notes on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues](https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40224460/tanzania.pdf/59a6ddbc-fb50-4ae0-a4df-9277a89152d7) provides recent context on the Indigenous Peoples of Tanzania. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are moderate throughout the country but concentrations are found in the West of the country along the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot and the Southern Coast. * The primary land cover types are Forest - 35.2Mha; Agriculture - 26.9Mha; Shrubland - 18.7Mha; Water - 6.07Mha; Wetland - 5.28Mha; Grassland - 2.74Mha; Bare - 258kha. * Tanzania has 4 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-United-Republic-of-Tanzania.pdf?). * Tanzania is just below the global average in ocean health, with gaps in sustainable food provision and clean waters. |
| Uganda | * Uganda is a high biodiversity country, due to the convergence of seven of Africa’s biogeographic regions. This diversity is shared in both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, thanks to the range of mountains (Rwenzori Mountains, the Virunga Volcanoes, and Mount Elgon), high altitude montane forests, and open water ecosystems of Lake Victoria and the country’s watersheds. Uganda is ranked among the ten most biodiverse countries globally, and is host to more than half of the world’s remaining mountain gorilla population, among other species. Uganda’s ecosystem service annual contributions have declined from 2005 to 2010 due to deforestation and conversion pressures. * There are a number of endemic species to Uganda’s ecosystems, most of which are located in the Eastern Afromontane Hotspot—documentation from CEPF is found [here](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/eastern_afromontane_ecosystem_profile_final.pdf). This distribution is matched in the geographic scope of species range-size rarity, with concentrations in the North, West and Eastern borders of the country. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate well above the global average, 72.05 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) are found scattered throughout the country and include: [Lake Kachila](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/46978), [Lake Kijanabalola](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/46979), and [Lutembe Bay](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/7058). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 59.36 percent. * Prioritization mapping efforts of the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot, have identified 2 terrestrial and 4 freshwater KBAs in Tanzania which are Priority 1, comprising 5 and 22 percent (2/39 and 4/18) respectively of the hotspot total. Based on relative biological importance the following KBAs were highlighted as top priority in Uganda: Bwindi Impenetrable National Park; Lake Albert; Mount Elgon National Park; Murchison Falls National Park; Rwenzori Mountains National Park; and Virunga National Park and Rutshuru Uganda. * A recent [WCS and USAID study](https://uganda.wcs.org/Portals/141/Summary%20report%20of%20Uganda's%20Biodiversity_final.pdf) with coordination by the government of Uganda, has identified further sites that are critical for the long term conservation of their respective species. A more recent [academic study](https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/csp2.7) aimed to further build on conservation prioritization and provide reference to community wildlife areas. * This [ICCA Consortium note](https://www.iccaconsortium.org/index.php/2018/12/17/supporting-iccas-in-uganda-beyond-revenue-sharing-icdps-and-community-conservation/) provides additional context to the tension between community management and more militarized forms of conservation in Uganda, and illustrates the potential of ICCAs going forwards. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are low throughout the country but concentrations are found in the West of the country along the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot and the coast of Lake Victoria. * The primary land cover types are Agriculture - 11.4Mha; Forest - 4.87Mha; Water - 3.72Mha; Shrubland - 2.42Mha; Grassland - 747kha; and Wetland - 383kha. * Uganda has 12 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Uganda.pdf?). * Uganda is landlocked and thus has no marine data. |

1. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=bi> [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=dj> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=ke> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ke/ke-nr-05-en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=tz> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. <https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/final.easternarc.ep_.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)