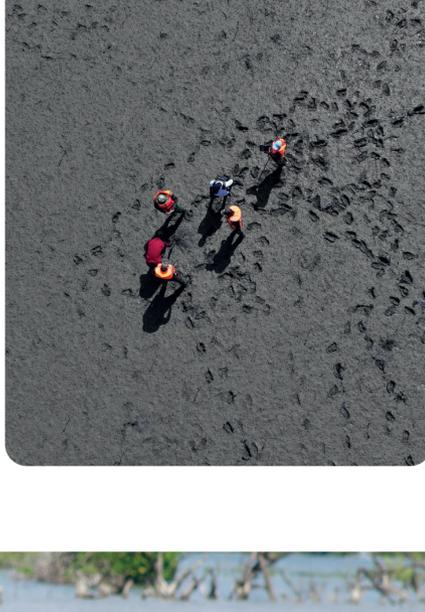


Introduction

From July to December 2025, Wetlands International Africa – West Coast and Gulf of Guinea implemented an intensive six-month program of actions, aligned with the seasons, tides, and the communities living at the heart of wetlands. This semester marks a pivotal milestone with the launch.

- Of the **CREAF** project, supported by the International Climate Initiative (IKI), along the East Atlantic Flyway, a major ecological corridor linking Africa, Europe, and the Arctic.
- Of a new educational initiative: **Wetlands Kids Day**.

While continuing our long-standing interventions in Africa, we strengthened our community-based, scientific, and operational positioning, embedding our local actions within a global response to the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, and community resilience.



Ecosystem Restoration

a. Mangrove Regeneration

During the peak restoration season, efforts focused on reclaiming mangroves natural barriers against coastal erosion and vital pillars of local livelihoods.

 **84.11 Hectares**

Saloum Delta

In the **Saloum Delta**, more specifically in the **Gandoule & Joal-Fadiouth Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)**, actions under **ARC and Only One** have enabled the reforestation of **84.11 hectares**, combining **Rhizophora and Avicennia** plantations, supported by the establishment of a nursery with **9,600 seedlings** to ensure the sustainability of these efforts.

 **102.3 Hectares**

Casamance

In **Casamance**, the **Rooted Resilience and Only One** initiatives have continued restoration over **102.3 hectares**, spread across six (6) protected areas, strengthening a vital ecological network for both communities and biodiversity.

 **149 Hectares**

Guinea-Bissau

Finally, in **Guinea-Bissau**, restoration relied on **Assisted Natural Regeneration**, with **149 hectares** restored in the **Cacheu and Cantanhez National Parks**, demonstrating the effectiveness of nature-based solutions.

b- Beyond the mangrove: critical habitats and mudflats

At the same time, other key ecosystems have benefited from targeted actions.

Djoudj National Bird Park

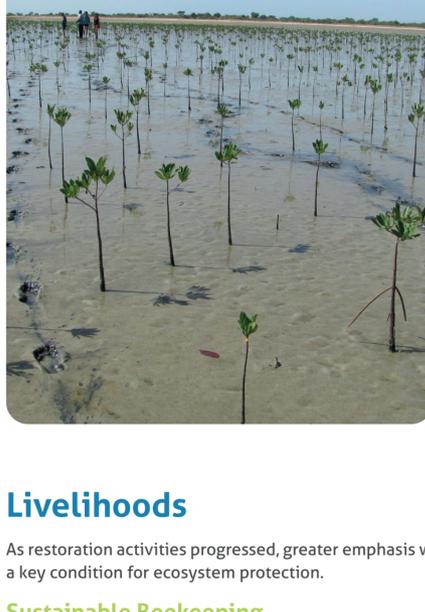
Life AWOM Project

- 720 hectares of wetlands restored, a crucial habitat for the **Aquatic Warbler**.
- Creation of a crucial refuge for this globally threatened species in the Park.



Saloum Delta

In the **Saloum Delta**, **overexploited mudflats** at **Mbassis Log and Joal-Fadiouth** have been rehabilitated through controlled restocking and community monitoring efforts.



Scientific approach: monitoring and preparation

From the earliest phases of restoration, scientific rigor has guided the interventions. **Monitoring plots** were established, **community technicians were trained and equipped**, and protocols were standardized to ensure reliable and comparable long-term monitoring.

Sierra Leone: preparing for future restorations

In **Sierra Leone**, the semester was dedicated to **preparing for future restorations**, with the identification and mapping of priority areas in **Yawri Bay**, complemented by **hydrodynamic studies** essential for understanding the functioning of channels and tides.

Livelihoods

As restoration activities progressed, greater emphasis was placed on strengthening sustainable livelihoods, a key condition for ecosystem protection.

Sustainable Beekeeping

Close support for the apiaries of three GIEs in the **Saloum Delta** (from the villages of **Missirah, Mbisse, and Mbissane**, respectively) helped strengthen the capacities of the beekeeping supervisors. For these groups, support for beekeeping is already paying off, with a total of **38 active hives**. The 2025 campaign yielded **90 kg of honey**, generating estimated revenues of **769,500 FCFA** for the groups from **Missirah and Mbisse** villages.

Secure Agriculture

Agricultural infrastructures have been secured :

- Installation of fences for **7.5 hectares** of market garden plots in **Ndour-Ndour, Mbélane (Saloum)**, and in **Ouonck and Oukout (Casamance)**.

Capacity building

In the **Saloum Delta**, a comprehensive capacity-building program reached several stakeholders, members of different GIEs (the majority of whom are women) across various sectors:

- Aquaculture, aquaponics, and processing of fishery products, cereals, and woody and non-woody products: **18 people trained**.
- Market gardening and poultry farming: **16 people trained**.
- Beekeeping: **15 people trained**, with the provision of hives and complete beekeeping kits.
- Improved stove production: **20 people trained**, resulting in the manufacture and distribution of **150 stoves** to benefit **13 GIEs**.

In **Casamance**, **alternative energy solutions have been deployed**.

- Training local artisans in the production of improved stoves thus reduces pressure on mangrove wood.

In **Guinea-Bissau**, the rehabilitation of a plot in **Apilho** benefited **70 farmers**, strengthening local food security.



Savings and loans : the GECCOM model

The semester also saw major progress in community financial structuring.

Casamance

- Strengthening the **Board of Directors** of the cooperative society.
- Training on **organizational dynamics, leadership, and simplified accounting**.
- Provision of **1,500 membership booklets** to formalise enrollments.

Saloum Delta

- Launch of the cooperative creation process with: **Training of 36 village agents and 6 community liaisons**.
- **Workshop on establishing governance bodies**.
- **Constitutive general assembly organised**.



Community awareness and mobilisation

The end of the semester was marked by strong awareness-raising actions. Social mobilisation campaigns enabled the cleaning of wetlands of birds (Bird Island and islets around Bétenty), while a new educational initiative, **Wetlands Kids Day**, was launched, enhancing environmental education for young children through fun and educational activities.



Launch of a new educational initiative: Wetlands Kids Day

Wetlands Kids Day is a fun and engaging event designed to raise students' awareness of environmental protection and wetlands through games, reading sessions, challenges, and interactive activities. This initiative also builds on the momentum of our **Mangrove Environmental Clubs**, established in 2020, with nearly **150 clubs** currently active across our intervention areas.

This concept was tested on the islands as part of the environmental education activities of the **CREAF** project, which notably included interactive readings of the comic book **Youssooupha and the Mangrove**.

The comic book **Youssooupha and the Mangrove**, developed as part of the **MCA** program, has been finalised and distributed. It serves as a valuable educational tool to raise awareness among young children about the importance of this ecosystem.

Ecosystem Governance

The sustainable protection of wetlands relies on participatory governance and strong local institutions.

Revitalisation of regional platforms

- The **Casamance Mangrove Platform** was revitalised during a dedicated forum, strengthening coordination among stakeholders, as well as administrative and traditional authorities in the region, around conservation issues.
- The **Saloum Delta Platform** held a workshop to prepare the local contribution to the **World Congress of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World**.

Capacity building for managers

In **Saloum**, an advanced training program was implemented for the benefit of park staff, eco-guides, and eco-guardians of **Palmarin and Bétenty**:

- Two sessions strengthened the skills of **66 participants** in ornithology and scientific monitoring protocols for bird populations.
- A specialised training on **bird capture, banding, and the use of tracking devices** was provided for **12 participants**.

In **Casamance**, a sharing workshop brought together **18 Marine Protected Area officers** to exchange on tools and best practices for mangrove conservation and restoration.

Provision of strategic monitoring equipment

Significant material support was provided to the managers of the protected areas in the **Saloum Delta** to enhance their field presence and visibility:

- **Enhanced mobility:** Provision of a **10-meter pirogue**, **3 outboard motors**, **3 motorcycles**, and a **motorised tricycle**.
- **Signage and safety equipment:** Provision of **awareness/regulation signs**, **fuel**, and **life jackets** for patrols, distributed across the seven protected areas.

Mangrove monitoring and mapping: real-time detection and verification of alerts

In **Casamance**, using the **Global Mangrove Watch (GMW)** tool for mangrove monitoring, degradation alerts detected by satellite were systematically monitored, and field verification and remote sensing were conducted to enable rapid and targeted interventions.

Behind every hectare restored, every person trained, and every initiative supported, there is time, expertise, mobilisation, and a shared commitment to preserving wetlands and strengthening the resilience of territories in the face of climate change.

„Inspire and mobilise society to protect and restore wetlands for people and nature.“

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