

MEP March 2025 Report



In 2017, a young girl named Sheema was critically injured by a rogue elephant. Mara Elephant Project (MEP) community rangers responded immediately and using the helicopter. MEP was able to get her to the hospital where she received treatment and made a full recovery. MEP has stayed in touch and provided for her school fees yearly. Now, Sheema is 14 years old and attending Kishermoruak Primary School. She recently sent a photograph with her school supplies and uniform that MEP provided.

GENERAL



In March, Mara Elephant Project (MEP) celebrated International Day of Forests highlighting the ongoing efforts to protect the pristine Loita Forest. Due to the increased human activities, the forest faces significant threats stemming from the ongoing shift from communal to private title deed ownership, with 42% of the forest already subdivided. MEP through the LGT Venture Philanthropy Foundation (LGT-VP) support, is working with the community to conserve the subdivided sections of the forest. Despite having individual ownership of the land, the community is still seeing the need to conserve the forest, and the support of the LGT Venture Philanthropy Fund and other stakeholders will enhance the Loita Forest protection and conservation.



“We welcome this project brought to us by Mara Elephant Project to protect this forest and my community is happy about it, from this meeting, they have understood the benefits of conserving the forest.” Charles Kakulundu, Community Elder

SECURITY, ANTI-POACHING & CONFLICT



In March, the community alerted MEP rangers that they noticed two elephants with injuries. The MEP mobile ranger team was deployed to assist the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) Vet Dr. Bernard Rono with the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (SWT) Mobile Vet Unit on the ground while the helicopter was in the air. The two bulls, one with an arrow wound and one with a spear wound, were successfully treated and there are ongoing monitoring efforts to track their recovery.



In Mosiro, MEP rangers from the 'Lima' team are working alongside government partners, KWS, Kenya Forest Service (KFS), local officials and the community to deter habitat destruction activities. In March, this combined team seized 22 charcoal sacks and

destroyed four kilns in a targeted patrol effort. MEP rangers are at the forefront working hand-in-hand with partners to increase the protection of key elephant habitats.



In a successful joint operation between the KWS Intelligence Unit and MEP rangers in March, one suspect was arrested with elephant ivory. The suspect was intercepted while

in transit with the piece of ivory weighing 47 kg. In another operation, one suspect was arrested in possession of two pieces of ivory weighing 32 kg. MEP's intelligence coupled with our Government partners prevented ivory from leaving Kenyan borders.

Collaboration is a core value for MEP, and we can only be successful in our mission if we are aligned with our partners and all working towards the same goal. In March, MEP organized the Greater Mara Ecosystem warden's meeting, a pilot activity that brought together all key personnel from the local conservancies to foster seamless communication and cooperation across conservancy lines. MEP is uniquely positioned to facilitate a gathering like this, and the positive response means plans are in place to continue these conversations for the benefit of Mara's wildlife and wild spaces.

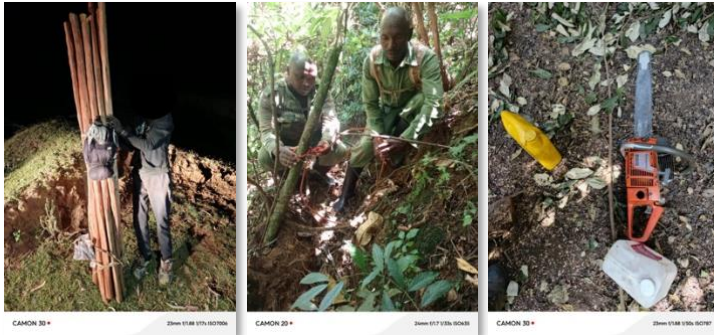


On March 28, a community member received quite the surprise first thing in the morning when he discovered a young elephant calf amongst his herd of livestock. Alarmed that the mother was nowhere in sight, he called MEP to respond. Even more distressing, after a joint search effort on the ground and in the air with the KWS the mother was discovered dead of natural causes. This operation now became a rescue mission to get the calf to the SWT elephant orphanage for immediate

care. Originally loaded into the MEP helicopter for transport, the 2-month-old, almost 200 lbs. baby, proved too unpredictable for an airlift. Luckily, the SWT professionals were on the scene with a vehicle to take him the rest of the way. He's now under expert care and there's hope for his future survival.



Also, in March, there were two ivory recovery reports from the MEP "Lima" ranger team in the Mosiro area. All these pieces of ivory were handed over to KWS for further scrutiny and storage while MEP rangers continue combing the area to ensure the elephants that call Mosiro home are safe and secure.



Overall, in March, MEP rangers alongside government partners arrested two ivory suspects, and 23 habitat destruction suspects. They recovered 79 kg of ivory, two power saws, and removed 25 snares. They also confiscated 39 pieces of timber, 2,874 posts, destroyed 49 charcoal kilns, 122 charcoal sacks and mitigated 27

conflict incidents.

HELICOPTER



On March 14, MEP's "mobile" ranger team and KWS Vet Dr. Titus Kaitho with the SWT Mobile Vet Unit successfully treated a female elephant in Ol-Kinyei Conservancy after spotting her in distress. Thanks to aerial support from the MEP helicopter, the elephant received urgent treatment for a suspected gunshot wound and is now on the road to recovery. MEP rangers are keeping a close eye to ensure a full recovery.

DRONES FOR CONSERVATION Special Projects Manager's Update



Throughout the month, the MEP headquarters team conducted multiple aerial patrols over the Mara conservancies to address the escalating human-elephant conflict incidents. Drones were used to move elephants away from settlements and fences, reducing the risk of property damage and potential injuries. The team also located and monitored injured elephants, ensuring they received the care they needed.

The MEP "Lima" ranger team was active in the Mosiro area, where a mega herd of 100 elephants were monitored near the community. Tensions are on the rise in this area after recent human and elephant deaths as a result of conflict.

The team also stepped in to help children in Oldorko safely reach school amid increased elephant activity, offering drone escorts through conflict-prone zones.





The Mau “Alpha” and “Charlie” ranger teams patrolled the Marmanet area, where they monitored collared elephant, Maxine, and her herd. The teams also encountered poachers and pursued three men who unfortunately go away leaving behind ten poisoned arrows and three bows. In Doldol, the teams detected a forest fire via drone. A rapid response followed, with continued aerial monitoring over two days until the blaze was fully extinguished.

The “Golf” team conducted drone patrols over the Nyakweri Forest, moving elephants out of maize farms. In a joint operation with KWS and Oloisukut rangers, the team supported their surveillance efforts as they investigated lion deaths in Oloisukut Conservancy.



MEP rangers pushing Ol-Choda out of community settlements by use of a drone in March

COMMUNICATIONS & FUNDRAISING



In March, MEP celebrated World Wildlife Day, International Women’s Day and the International Day of Forests and highlighted MEP’s conservation technologies, amazing staff’s contribution to our mission and our efforts to increase the protection of Loita Forest.



In March, MEP had the pleasure of hosting donors from Global Wildlife Conservation (GWC) at our headquarters in Lemek

Conservancy. Their visit highlighted MEP’s innovative work on the cattle mapper project, an initiative supporting Mara conservancies in determining their ecological carrying capacity to better balance the needs of both wildlife and livestock. With the potential for new funding, MEP is poised to scale this vital tool, dramatically reducing the time needed to count livestock and enabling more effective, data-driven land management across the ecosystem.

In Kenya, the Mara Elephant Project Trust received \$69,471 in donations from Foreningen Forsvara Elefanterna and the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust continues their support to protect the Mau Forest. Mara Elephant Project USA raised \$449,618.20 in support of MEP's mission. MEP extends its sincere appreciation to the Estate of Arthur G. Rice Sr., Lori Price (for supporting the Loita ranger teams), Regina Lancaster, John Dillow who requested a gift from the J.E. Fehsenfeld Family Foundation, Marie Pendzich, Lois Feinberg, Margaretta Taylor, Gwein Weiner, The EOS Foundation Trust, Lisa Konieczka, Howards Earl Aldrich, Lynn Jacobson, Lee Alexander, Martin Schuler, Jerre Gresly, Nancy Roberts, Sarah Frech & Stan Erck, Michael Crawford, Sally Davidson, Sandra de Roulet, Susan Frank, Mary Nelson, Len Reinhart, and Robert Cheshire.

COMMUNITY & OUTREACH



In March, MEP had the pleasure of hosting Tusk Ambassador Gbenga Akinnagbe, a renowned actor, at MEP headquarters in Lemek Conservancy. Gbenga was introduced to MEP's researchers, senior staff, and shown

MEP's efforts in protecting elephants and their habitats across the Greater Mara Ecosystem. Also, joined in this visit, MEP advisory council member, Teddy Kinyanjui was present and he donated 250 Kgs of seedballs to go towards MEP's reforestation program across the Mara landscape.

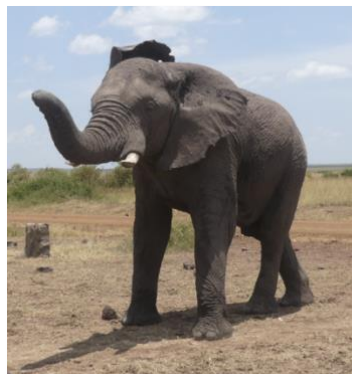


MEP also hosted two groups of travel agents from Kicheche, one of our camp partners at our headquarters in March. The travel agents were taken through our operations in the Greater Mara Ecosystem, and MEP's visitor opportunities so that they can effectively brief their guests during the booking process. MEP is proud to partner with stakeholders to raise awareness and funds to promote and support conservation and sustainable tourism initiatives.

RESEARCH & CONSERVATION

Long-Term Monitoring (LTM) Team

In March, the LTM team conducted 10 elephant sightings, documenting 63 elephants, including 19 bulls, 16 cows, 19 sub-adults, and 9 calves. A key highlight was monitoring David, a collared transboundary bull, in the Osero Sopia area of the Maasai Mara Game Reserve. David was observed within a herd of four bulls and exhibited notably shy behavior, providing valuable insights into his movement patterns and social interactions.

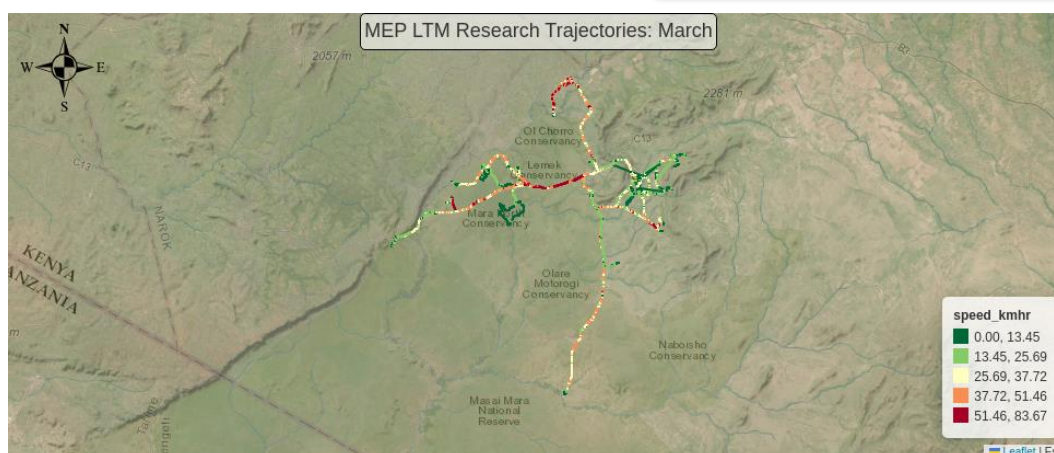


The LTM team monitored Individual 646 in Mara North Conservancy.

A 6-day field operation was conducted to monitor collared elephant Audrey in March, involving collaboration with the MEP mobile ranger team, local communities, and the Loita Hills Conservancy rangers. Although Audrey wasn't monitored, future efforts to monitor her and two other elephants, Polaris and Kiambi.



The MEP LTM team hosted several visitor groups in March, including MEP USA Director Lisa Konieczka and MEP donor, Margaret McCormick.

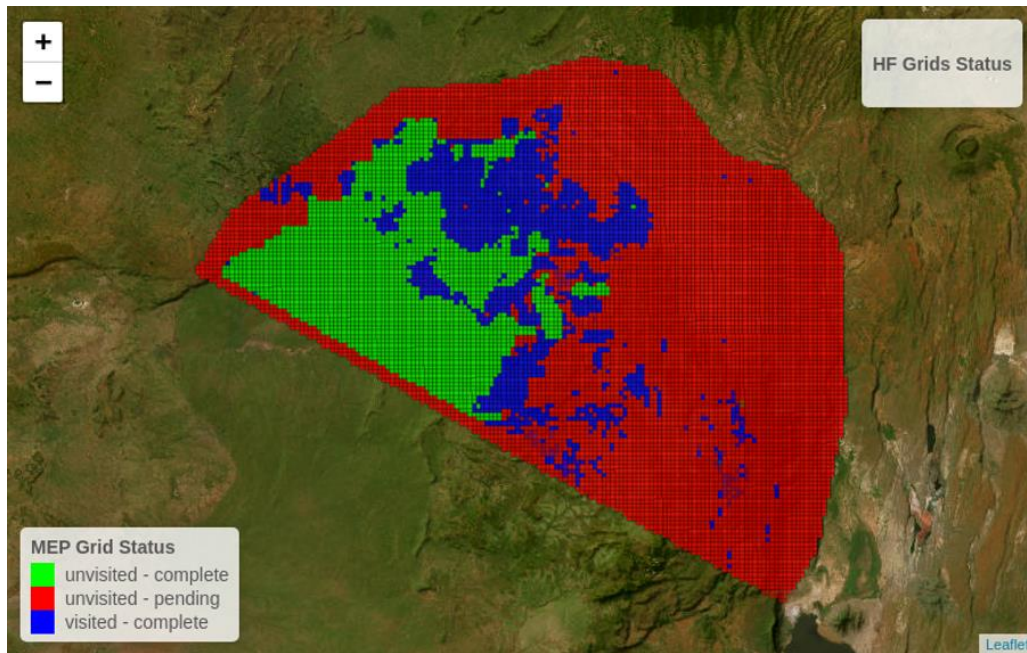


All of our LTM team are collecting data on Distance count, Elephant Sightings, School Programme and Community Engagement using motorbikes and EarthRanger.

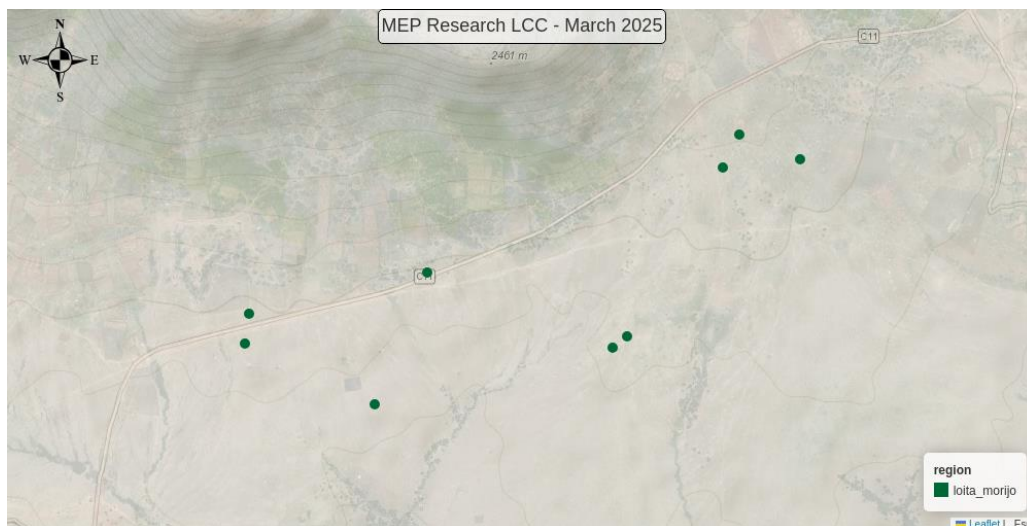
Data and Reporting Team

Geospatial Mapping

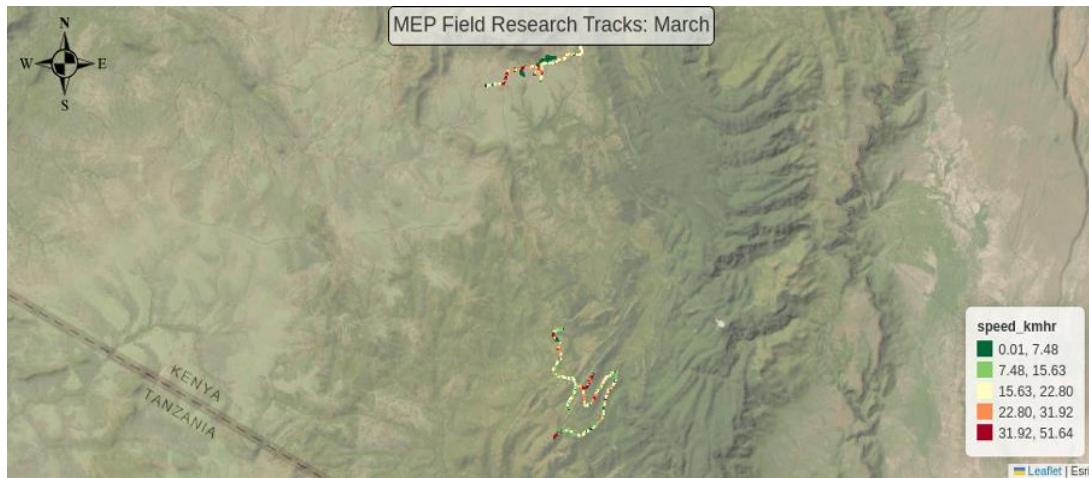
This month, seven grids were visited and completed, and Field Assistant Milton Kiok marked a significant number of roads and physical features. He was also able to map 4.06 km of fences and 9 LCC points. The head of LandDX Data Eugene Kuloba, summarised this month's data as depicted in the image below



Seven grids were visited and completed in the month of March.



Nine LCC points were collected in the month of March



Movements of MEP's one field assistant in March. MEP field assistant is working on mapping fences, roads, and landcover ground-truthing points using motorbikes and our TerraChart app. He covered a total of 167.92 Km and recorded 4.06 km of fences and 9 LCC points in March.

MEP Co-Existence Farm General Update



In March, there was average rainfall providing favorable conditions for agricultural activities. We had a successful harvest of 1.8 tons of *Eucalyptus citriodora*. This harvest was taken to Kutoka Ardhini. A total of 69 kg of red chili was also harvested and is being dried at the farm.

Advisory council member Teddy Kinyanjui visited the coexistence farm and generously donated 4 bags of seedballs from Seedballs Kenya which will be distributed to community members and schools. The team has been actively involved in the continuous collection of seeds from Kileleoni Hills. This effort is crucial for enhancing the tree seedling nursery at the experimental farm, ensuring a consistent supply of quality seedlings for reforestation and community planting initiative. 2000 indigenous seedlings were planted on the tree seedling nursery.

In March, the team celebrated International Women's Day at the Mara Training Center with partners from the Women in the Wild and Fairmont where they learned activities that women in the wild carry out to improve their livelihoods.



World Recycling Day at Oloonkolin Primary School with 50 students, engaging them in practical environmental education. Some of the activities included planting seeds in recycled glass and plastic bottles plus tetra pack conducting a comprehensive recycling awareness session. This

The team also celebrated

instilled a sense of environmental responsibility and promoted sustainable practices among the young learners.

Also, in March, MEP provided vegetable seedlings to improve the already existing kitchen gardens at Emarti and Enkipai primary schools in our efforts to increase food security and nutrition in the schools. School assessments were also conducted in five schools across the Mau, Loita, and Mosiro regions. These assessments will inform our educational interventions and ensure they are tailored to the specific needs of each school community. A total of 411 students were educated and undertook the assessment.



Fig 1,2&3: Chili & Citriodora harvest and Experimental Farm tree nursery

Climate Report

MEP's Co-Existence Farm Rainfall Recording March 2025

Date	Rain gauge [200m2]
10/03/2025	19
11/03/2025	2.6
12/03/2025	13
17/03/2025	03
18/03/2025	01
21/03/2025	4.7
27/03/2025	15
28/03/2025	7.3
29/03/2025	5.1
30/03/2025	19
31/03/2025	25

Tracking Manager Report

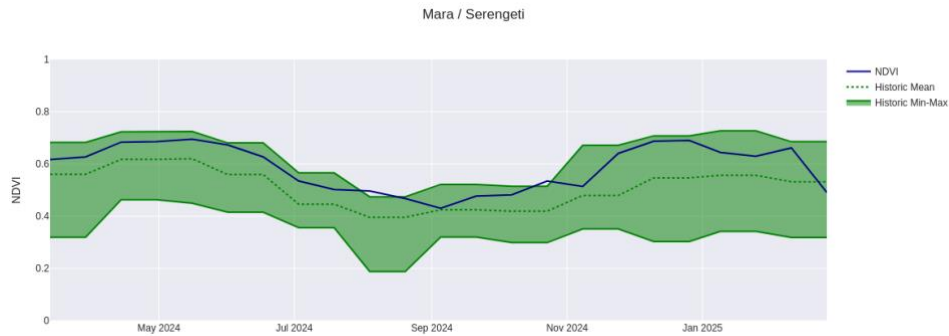


Collared elephants David and Matali monitored by MEP researchers and rangers in the month of March.

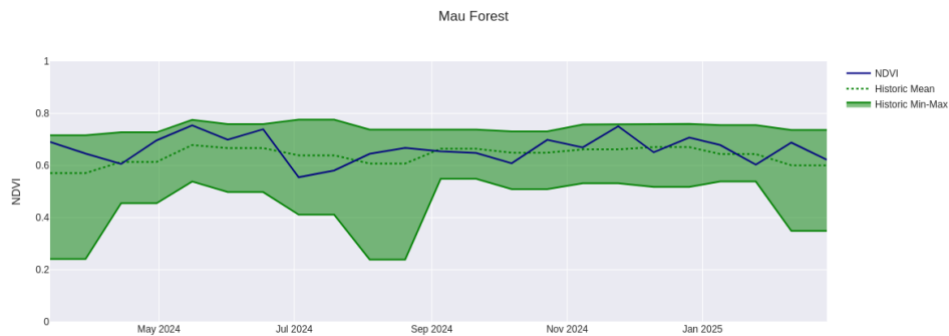
ENVIRONMENT: NDVI

The Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) is a measure of plant photosynthetic activity. Higher NDVI indicates the plant is greener. The blue trend line shows the current value, while the green shaded area shows the min-max range of values centered around the green trend line from values measured back to February 2000.

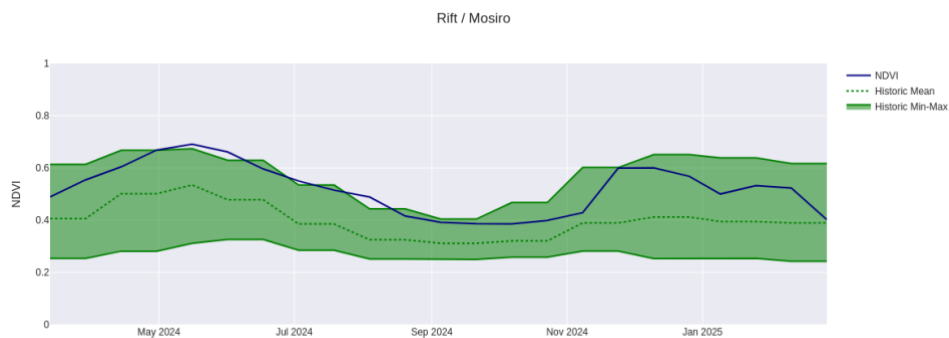
Greater Mara Ecosystem (GME)



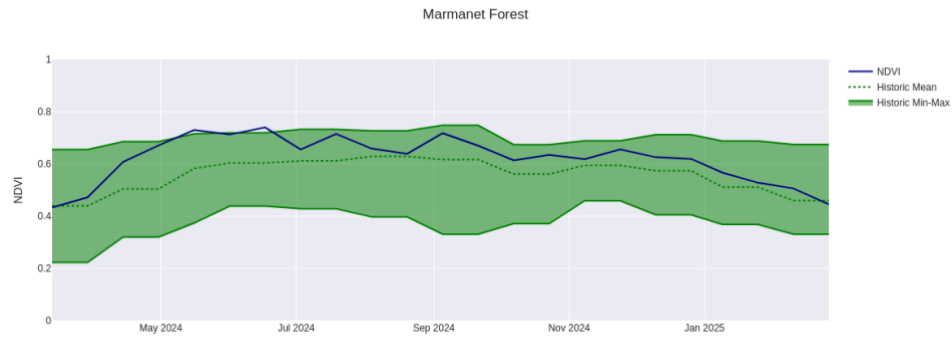
Mau Forest



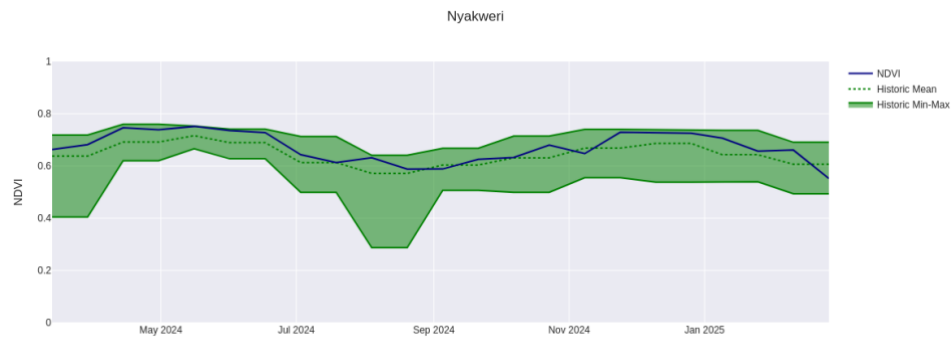
Rift Valley / Mosiro



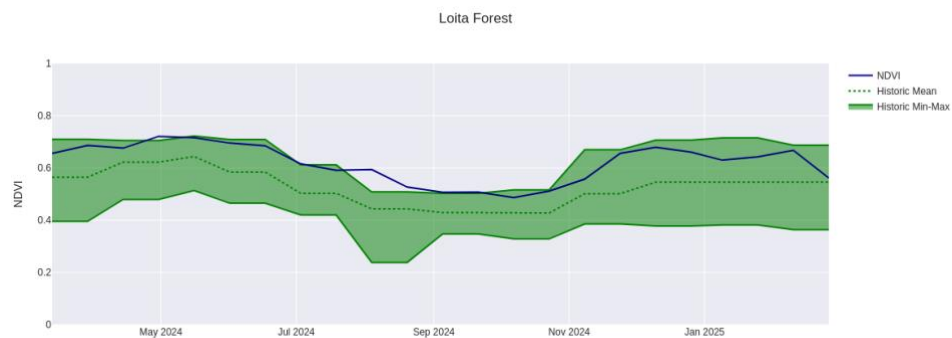
Marmamet Forest



Nyakweri Forest



Loita Forest



Elgon

