Biennium Progress Report

RCMRD CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC)

18-July-2025 to 12-May-2026

Submitted to:

Convention on Biological Diversity

Submitted by:

REGIONAL CENTRE FOR RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT
Kasarani Road, Off Thika Road
P.O Box 632-00618
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel : +254 20 2614603 D/L
Tel: +254 20 2680722/2680748
Cell: +254 723 786161/735 981098
Fax: +254 20 2680747
Website: http://www.rcmrd.org

12th May 2026

Table of Contents

Part I. Background on the TSCC

1.1. Key Details

Name of the TSCC: Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD)
Reporting Period: July 2025 – 5 May 2026
Date of Submission: 12-May-2026

1.2. Introduction

The Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD) was officially designated as a Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) during the 20th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) held in July 2025. The designation was formalized through the signing of a Host Agreement between RCMRD and the CBD Secretariat on 18-July-2025, positioning RCMRD as a regional hub supporting implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) across Eastern and Southern Africa.

RCMRD joined the global network of 18 Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centres, including five in Africa. The TSCC supports the following 12 countries: Comoros, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

The TSCC objectives are:

- To enhance local, national, sub regional, regional and international capacities in relation to science, technology and innovation by means of human resource and institutional capacity building and development;
- To enable technology assessment and monitoring of appropriate technologies;
- To promote and facilitate the development, transfer and use of appropriate technologies, including indigenous and traditional technologies subject to free, prior and informed consent, according to national legislation;
- To promote and encourage joint research, cooperation and collaboration in the use of scientific advances and good practices in research;
- To promote the development, implementation and scaling-up of innovative solutions;
- To facilitate access to and exchange of relevant technical and scientific data, information and knowledge.

To ensure visibility to this important mandate, RCMRD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC) was officially launched on 27 January 2026 by the **Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry of the Republic of Kenya** during a high-level regional event held in Nairobi, Kenya. In her address, the Cabinet Secretary described the designation of RCMRD as both timely and strategic, directly responding to the growing technical, scientific, and institutional demands associated with implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) and preparations toward CBD COP17.

She emphasized the importance of regional coordination, institutional alignment, and strengthened technical cooperation among African countries, noting that fragmented approaches could limit Africa's influence, impact, and access to sustained technical and financial support within global biodiversity processes.

The launch brought together representatives from participating TSCC countries, government institutions, regional and international organizations, development partners, technical experts, and biodiversity stakeholders. As host of the Sub regional Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support, RCMRD will provide through biodiversity data management, scientific cooperation, Earth Observation applications, technology transfer, capacity strengthening, regional knowledge exchange, and resource mobilization.

1.3. Capacity Needs Assessment

RCMRD conducted a regional needs assessment under the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) initiative to identify country priorities and technical gaps related to implementation of the KMGBF. Below is a summary of the key findings of the needs assessment and the focus areas.

Key technical and spatial needs identified included:

- GIS tools and spatial datasets;
- interoperable biodiversity information systems;
- Earth Observation applications;
- biodiversity monitoring platforms;
- integrated geospatial decision-support systems;
- easy-to-use biodiversity reporting tools; and
- open-source GIS technologies.

Capacity-building priorities identified included:

- GIS and remote sensing training;
- biodiversity monitoring;
- spatial planning;
- data management and reporting;
- metadata development;
- AI and drone applications; and
- citizen science approaches.

Data management and interoperability needs included:

- centralized biodiversity databases;
- data-sharing policies;
- interoperability frameworks;
- mobile data collection systems; and
- biodiversity monitoring systems at local levels.

Institutional and governance needs identified included:

- stronger stakeholder coordination;
- inclusive planning approaches;
- integration of IPLCs and communities;
- sustainable financing mechanisms; and
- incentives for private-sector engagement.

Part II. Report on Outcomes

2.1. TSCC Operationalization and Governance

Objective: To Operationalize the TSCC and establish governance, coordination, and regional implementation mechanisms.

a) Outcomes

Output	Status	Details
1.1.1 Appoint TSCC Coordinator	Completed	TSCC Coordinator appointed to support operationalization, coordination, stakeholder engagement, and implementation of TSCC activities under the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Mechanism.
1.1.2 Form TSCC Steering Committee	In Progress	Steering Committee nomination process initiated with nomination letters received from participating countries. All 12 participating countries accepted to join the Steering Committee except Ethiopia and Mauritius, whose responses remained pending as of May 2026. UNEP and AUDA-NEPAD were engaged as observer institutions.
1.1.3 Convene inclusive Steering Committee meetings	In Progress	Initial consultations and coordination engagements undertaken with participating countries and partner institutions in preparation for formal Steering Committee meetings.
1.1.4 Establish coordination unit	Completed	Internal coordination arrangements established within RCMRD to support TSCC implementation, coordination, reporting, communication, and partnership engagement.
1.1.5 Establish office with computer, desk, chairs etc.	Completed	TSCC operational office space established within RCMRD headquarters to support coordination, technical cooperation, meetings, and implementation activities.
1.3.1 Sign host agreement with SCBD	Completed	Host Agreement between RCMRD and the CBD Secretariat signed during AMCEN 2025, formally designating RCMRD as a CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre for Eastern and Southern Africa.
1.3.2 Develop biennial workplan with Results Based Indicators	Completed	TSCC Biennial Workplan developed and aligned to KMGBF priorities, regional biodiversity implementation needs, technical cooperation activities, and reporting requirements under the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Mechanism.

b) Progress, Challenges, and Proposed Solutions

The operationalization and governance of the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC) progressed well during the reporting period. Key achievements included the signing of the Host Agreement between RCMRD and the CBD Secretariat during AMCEN 2025, appointment of the TSCC Coordinator, establishment of internal coordination arrangements within RCMRD, and development of the TSCC Biennial Workplan aligned to KMGBF priorities.

The RCMRD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC) was officially launched on 27 January 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya by the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry of the Republic of Kenya during a high-level regional event attended by participating countries, development partners, regional institutions, and biodiversity stakeholders.

Additional progress was made through initiation of the Regional Steering Committee composed of representatives from participating countries and partner institutions. Official nomination letters were received from most participating countries, demonstrating strong regional commitment and ownership of the TSCC framework. UNEP and AUDA-NEPAD were also engaged as observer institutions to support broader regional coordination and collaboration. The Steering Committee framework is expected to strengthen strategic guidance, technical cooperation, regional coordination, knowledge exchange, institutional ownership, transparency, and long-term sustainability of the TSCC mechanism.

Further progress was achieved through presentation of the TSCC framework to the RCMRD Governing Council during its November 2025 session. The presentation strengthened political and institutional visibility of the TSCC, increased awareness and ownership among Member States, showcased biodiversity monitoring and reporting initiatives, and reinforced RCMRD's regional mandate in biodiversity monitoring, geospatial technologies, and implementation support for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

Despite this progress, several governance and operational challenges remain. Responses from countries regarding Steering Committee participation took quite a long time slowing full operationalization of the governance structure. Coordination across multiple countries and institutions also requires sustained administrative, technical, and financial support. In addition, convening regular regional coordination and Steering Committee meetings remains dependent on availability of operational resources.

To address these challenges, RCMRD will continue bilateral follow-up with the remaining countries to finalize Steering Committee participation and strengthen regional ownership of the TSCC framework. Additional efforts will focus on formalizing governance procedures, strengthening virtual coordination mechanisms, operationalizing regular Steering Committee meetings, and mobilizing additional technical and financial resources to support long-term coordination and implementation of the TSCC mandate.

2.2. Visibility and Responsiveness

Objective: Strengthen visibility, outreach, stakeholder engagement, and responsiveness of the TSCC.

a) Outcome

Output	Status	Details
2.1.1 Conduct GeoHex Challenges	In Progress	Initial concept development and planning for the GeoHex innovation challenge initiated under the TSCC framework to promote biodiversity innovation, youth engagement, geospatial technologies, and collaborative problem-solving related to implementation of the KMGBF. Through the strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between RCMRD and Esri Global, ArcGIS licenses and geospatial technologies were secured as important technical resources supporting implementation of the GeoHex initiative and broader biodiversity innovation activities. Regional engagement and innovation activities were further strengthened through stakeholder consultations, technical cooperation activities, and regional biodiversity innovation planning initiatives.
2.2.1 Official TSCC Launch	Completed	The CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC) was officially launched on 27 January 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya by the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry of the Republic of

Output	Status	Details
		Kenya. The launch generated strong online media coverage, institutional visibility, stakeholder engagement, and regional awareness of the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Mechanism through workshops, regional meetings, presentations, digital communication products, media outreach, biodiversity dashboards, Story Maps, and institutional engagement activities.
2.2.2 Create a Help Desk	In Progress	Initial resources were mobilized through collaboration with FAO to support establishment of a biodiversity monitoring and reporting help desk focusing on KMGBF Target 2 implementation. In addition, RCMRD established a technical support team under the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) to support participating countries on KMGBF Targets 1 and 3 through GIS applications, biodiversity monitoring, Earth Observation technologies, spatial planning, protected area monitoring, and geospatial reporting support.
2.2.3 Attend COP17	Upcoming	Preparatory planning initiated to support participation in CBD COP17 and showcase TSCC activities, regional biodiversity monitoring initiatives, technical cooperation achievements, geospatial innovation, and regional collaboration efforts under the KMGBF framework.

b) Progress, Challenges, and Proposed Solutions

The TSCC visibility, awareness, and regional engagement activities progressed well during the reporting period. Key achievements included the successful official launch of the TSCC on 27 January 2026, which significantly strengthened regional visibility, stakeholder engagement, and awareness of the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Mechanism across Eastern and Southern Africa.

Additional progress was made through stakeholder consultations, regional technical cooperation activities, and planning of innovation initiatives such as the GeoHex Challenge aimed at promoting biodiversity innovation, youth engagement, and application of geospatial technologies in implementation of the KMGBF. Through the strategic Memorandum of Understanding between RCMRD and Esri Global, ArcGIS licenses and geospatial technologies were secured as important technical resources supporting biodiversity innovation and regional technical cooperation activities.

Further progress was made through mobilization of initial resources from FAO to support establishment of a biodiversity monitoring and reporting help desk focusing on KMGBF Target 2 implementation. In addition, RCMRD established a technical support team under the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) to support participating countries on KMGBF Targets 1 and 3 through GIS applications, biodiversity monitoring, Earth Observation technologies, spatial planning, protected area monitoring, and geospatial reporting support.

Despite this progress, several challenges remain, including limited operational resources for establishing a fully operational regional help desk, sustaining innovation initiatives, and supporting continuous regional engagement, communication, and visibility activities. Additional technical, financial, and institutional support will be required to scale regional support services and maintain long-term operational sustainability.

To address these challenges, RCMRD plans to strengthen resource mobilization efforts, expand strategic partnerships, operationalize virtual technical support mechanisms, and further strengthen biodiversity innovation and geospatial support initiatives through regional collaboration and technology partnerships.

2.3. Partnership development and resource mobilization

Objective: Strategic partnerships and resource mobilization systems are established to ensure long-term sustainability

a) Outcome

Output	Status	Details
3.1.1 Establish linkage with and support in updating protected and conserved areas	In Progress	Through the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) for Biodiversity, Forests and Seascape Ecosystem Management initiative and collaboration with UNEP-WCMC, RCMRD supported participating countries in strengthening protected and conserved area datasets, spatial data validation, biodiversity monitoring systems, and reporting to the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and Protected Planet platform. The support contributes directly to implementation and monitoring of KMGBF Target 3 and strengthens regional biodiversity reporting, geospatial analysis, and conservation planning capacities.
3.2.1 Develop resource mobilization strategy with partner and Party input	In Progress	RCMRD initiated resource mobilization efforts through engagement with development partners, participating countries, regional institutions, and biodiversity initiatives to support long-term implementation of the TSCC framework. Resource mobilization discussions were aligned to biodiversity monitoring, GIS and Earth Observation applications, technology transfer, regional capacity-building, and implementation of the KMGBF.
3.2.2 Develop and submit funding proposals	In Progress	Several successful resource mobilization initiatives were undertaken during the reporting period. Resources were mobilized through FAO to support the Sub regional Workshop on Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting for KMGBF Target 2 and establishment of biodiversity monitoring support activities. Additional support was mobilized from UNEP to support Kenya's National Inception and Technical Consolidation Workshop for preparation of the Seventh National Report (NR7) to the CBD. RCMRD also continued implementation of biodiversity-related activities under the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) initiative and the Kunming Biodiversity Fund (KBF) project supporting regional capacity-building, biodiversity monitoring, geospatial applications, and implementation of KMGBF Targets 1, 2, 3, and 6. Additional concept notes, partnership engagements, and funding discussions were initiated under regional biodiversity monitoring, geospatial innovation, NaturAfrica-related opportunities, and technical cooperation initiatives.

b) Progress, Challenges, and Proposed Solutions

The TSCC made good progress in strengthening partnerships and resource mobilization during the reporting period. Successful collaboration with partners including FAO, UNEP, UNEP-WCMC, AUDA-NEPAD, Esri Global, CIFOR-ICRAF, and regional institutions supported implementation of biodiversity

monitoring, geospatial applications, protected area reporting, and technical cooperation activities across participating countries.

Resources mobilized through FAO supported the Sub regional Workshop on Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting for KMGBF Target 2 and initial biodiversity monitoring support activities, while additional support from UNEP strengthened Kenya's Seventh National Report (NR7) process. Continued implementation of activities under the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) initiative and the Kunming Biodiversity Fund (KBF) project further strengthened regional technical cooperation, GIS applications, biodiversity monitoring, and implementation support for KMGBF Targets 1, 2, 3, and 6.

Despite this progress, challenges remain in securing long-term and sustainable operational financing to scale implementation across all participating countries. Coordination of multiple partnerships and donor requirements also requires sustained technical and administrative capacity. In addition, some resource mobilization opportunities remain highly competitive, while varying institutional capacities among countries can affect implementation readiness and absorption of technical support.

To address these challenges, RCMRD plans to strengthen development of a structured resource mobilization strategy, expand strategic partnerships, increase joint proposal development with regional and international partners, and align future funding opportunities with KMGBF priorities and regional biodiversity needs. Additional emphasis will be placed on strengthening institutional coordination, enhancing regional visibility of TSCC achievements, and positioning the TSCC under emerging biodiversity financing opportunities including NaturAfrica, climate-biodiversity initiatives, and geospatial innovation programmes.

2.4. Technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer

Objective: Parties receive effective technical, scientific cooperation, capacity building, technology transfer and NBSAP support.

a) Outcome

Output	Status	Details
4.2.1 GBF Capacity Needs Assessment (FAO/Kunming Fund)	In Progress	RCMRD initiated a regional capacity needs assessment under the Kunming Biodiversity Fund (KBF) project to identify technical, institutional, and geospatial capacity gaps related to implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). Preliminary findings identified priority needs in GIS tools, biodiversity monitoring systems, Earth Observation applications, interoperability frameworks, biodiversity reporting tools, spatial planning, and capacity development across participating countries. The findings are informing TSCC work planning, regional technical support, biodiversity monitoring interventions, and future capacity-building initiatives. This activity is being in Kenya, Ethiopia and Madagascar. So far, we have undertaken activities in Kenya and Madagascar. Additional technical support activities included participation in a GIS, Remote Sensing and Invasive Species Monitoring Workshop in Madagascar focused on capacity assessment, invasive species monitoring, spatial planning, and development of a national capacity-building roadmap aligned to KMGBF Targets 1 and 6.

Output	Status	Details
4.2.2 GBF Target 2 Roadmap Capacity Building (FAO HQ)	In Progress	RCMRD, in collaboration with FAO and the CBD Secretariat, organized the Sub regional Workshop on Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting for KMGBF Target 2 from 27–30 January 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya. The workshop strengthened regional capacities on ecosystem restoration monitoring, restoration indicators, GIS and Earth Observation applications, biodiversity reporting methodologies, and implementation approaches related to KMGBF Target 2. All TSCC participating countries were represented during the workshop except Mauritius, which had not yet formally joined the TSCC framework at the time of the meeting. Additional regional technical cooperation and roadmap discussions were initiated to strengthen implementation support across participating countries.
4.2.3 Support countries to update and report NBSAPs	In Progress	Technical support was provided to participating countries to strengthen biodiversity monitoring, geospatial analysis, protected area reporting, and evidence-based reporting aligned to the KMGBF. Support activities included engagement on national reporting processes, biodiversity data management, GIS applications, and support to Seventh National Report (NR7) processes, including technical support to Kenya, Uganda and regional collaboration activities with participating countries.
4.3.1 Deploy ArcGIS software to countries and provide technical support	In Progress	Through the strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between RCMRD and Esri Global, ArcGIS Professional Plus for ArcGIS Online User Type licenses were secured for participating countries to strengthen biodiversity planning, geospatial analysis, ecosystem monitoring, protected area management, and biodiversity reporting under the KMGBF framework. The initiative strengthened technology transfer, GIS capacity development, digital biodiversity infrastructure, and regional technical cooperation under the TSCC framework.

b) Progress, Challenges, and Proposed Solutions

Technical and scientific cooperation activities under the TSCC progressed well during the reporting period. Significant achievements included implementation of regional capacity-building activities, strengthening of biodiversity monitoring and reporting systems, and increased application of GIS and Earth Observation technologies in support of the KMGBF.

The Sub regional Workshop on Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting for KMGBF Target 2, organized in collaboration with FAO and the CBD Secretariat, strengthened regional technical cooperation and capacity development, with participation from nearly all TSCC countries. Additional progress was made through the regional GBF capacity needs assessment under the Kunming Biodiversity Fund (KBF), which helped identify priority technical, institutional, and geospatial needs across participating countries.

Further progress was achieved through strengthening technology transfer and geospatial support under the strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between RCMRD and Esri Global. ArcGIS licenses and technical support arrangements were secured to support biodiversity planning, ecosystem monitoring, protected area management, geospatial analysis, and biodiversity reporting under the KMGBF framework. Technical support to countries on NBSAP updating, biodiversity reporting, GIS applications, and Seventh National Report (NR7) processes also strengthened regional collaboration and implementation support.

Despite this progress, challenges remain including uneven technical capacities among participating countries, limited access to geospatial infrastructure and biodiversity data systems, operational resource constraints, and varying levels of national readiness for biodiversity monitoring and reporting. Coordination of technical support across multiple countries and sustaining long-term capacity-building efforts also requires additional technical and financial resources.

To address these challenges, RCMRD plans to strengthen regional technical cooperation mechanisms, expand GIS and ArcGIS deployment support, enhance virtual training and technical support platforms, strengthen biodiversity data interoperability systems, and mobilize additional resources and partnerships to scale implementation support across participating countries. Additional emphasis will be placed on strengthening national capacities for NBSAP implementation, biodiversity monitoring, Earth Observation applications, and evidence-based reporting aligned to the KMGBF.

2.5. Additional Information

a) Strengthening Regional Biodiversity Cooperation and Technical Support

The operationalization of the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC) has strengthened regional collaboration, South-South cooperation, and application of geospatial technologies in biodiversity monitoring, reporting, and decision-making across Eastern and Southern Africa. Through implementation of the TSCC framework, participating countries have increased engagement on implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), particularly on biodiversity monitoring, GIS applications, Earth Observation technologies, protected area reporting, and regional knowledge exchange.

The TSCC has also strengthened institutional partnerships and regional coordination with FAO, UNEP, UNEP-WCMC, African Union Development Agency-NEPAD, Esri, CIFOR-ICRAF, and other regional institutions, while increasing visibility of biodiversity innovation, technical cooperation, and interoperability of biodiversity information systems across the region.

The TSCC is also contributing to development of regional biodiversity public goods including geospatial platforms, biodiversity dashboards, interoperable spatial datasets, technical workflows, Story Maps, and knowledge products supporting implementation of the KMGBF across participating countries. Through the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) initiative, RCMRD continues to strengthen digital biodiversity knowledge platforms and geospatial decision-support systems that support biodiversity monitoring, spatial planning, protected area reporting, regional knowledge exchange, and evidence-based implementation of KMGBF Targets 1, 2, 3, 6, and 21 across Eastern and Southern Africa.

b) Upcoming Regional Geospatial Forum for Inclusive Biodiversity Action

As part of sustaining regional momentum under the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Mechanism, RCMRD is organizing the Upcoming Regional Geospatial Forum for Inclusive Biodiversity Action scheduled for 9–12 June 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya under the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) initiative. The Forum is expected to strengthen regional technical cooperation, biodiversity innovation, knowledge exchange, and application of geospatial technologies in implementation of the KMGBF, particularly supporting Targets 1, 2, 3, 6, and 21 related to spatial planning, ecosystem restoration, protected and conserved areas, invasive alien species management, and biodiversity knowledge sharing. Special emphasis will be placed on participation of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), government institutions, technical experts, and development partners.

The Forum is also expected to benefit implementation of the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC) by creating an inclusive regional platform that brings together both technical

and non-technical stakeholders involved in biodiversity action and decision-making. Through dedicated engagement of special interest groups including women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), community organizations, policymakers, and development partners, the Forum will help strengthen awareness and accessibility of geospatial technologies and biodiversity information beyond traditional technical communities. This approach is expected to strengthen inclusive participation, regional collaboration, knowledge sharing, and broader ownership of KMGBF implementation processes across Eastern and Southern Africa.

c) Regional Public Goods and Digital Biodiversity Platforms

The TSCC is contributing to development of regional biodiversity public goods including geospatial platforms, biodiversity dashboards, interoperable spatial datasets, technical workflows, Story Maps, and knowledge products supporting implementation of the KMGBF across participating countries. Through the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) initiative, RCMRD continues to strengthen digital biodiversity knowledge platforms that support regional technical cooperation, biodiversity monitoring, spatial planning, and evidence-based decision-making.

An important regional public good under this framework is the RCoE Mapbook platform, which supports visualization and sharing of biodiversity and protected area information across participating countries. The platform strengthens regional biodiversity reporting, geospatial analysis, Earth Observation applications, protected area mapping, and contribution of validated datasets to the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and Protected Planet platform in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC. The RCoE Mapbook further supports implementation of KMGBF Targets 1, 2, 3, and 21 through enhanced biodiversity communication, regional knowledge exchange, and accessibility of geospatial biodiversity information for planning and reporting purposes.

d) International Recognition Through the Esri SAG Award

RCMRD's growing role as a regional hub for biodiversity-related geospatial support, innovation, and technical cooperation was further reinforced through receipt of the Esri Special Achievement in GIS (SAG) Award. The recognition highlighted the Centre's application of GIS, Earth Observation technologies, biodiversity monitoring systems, spatial data infrastructure, and digital innovation in supporting sustainable development and implementation of the KMGBF. The award further strengthened institutional visibility and demonstrated international recognition of RCMRD's technical leadership in geospatial technologies and regional biodiversity cooperation.

The recognition is also expected to benefit implementation of the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC) by increasing institutional visibility, strengthening confidence among partners and participating countries, supporting resource mobilization efforts, and enhancing opportunities for strategic collaboration and technology transfer. The award further positions the TSCC as a credible regional platform for application of geospatial technologies, biodiversity innovation, regional knowledge exchange, and evidence-based implementation of the KMGBF across Eastern and Southern Africa.

Part III. Summary of key achievements and challenges

3.1. Key achievements during the 2025-2026 biennium

Achievement 1: Operationalization and Regional Launch of the CBD TSCC
Official operationalization and launch of the CBD Technical and Scientific Cooperation Support Centre (TSCC) on 27 January 2026, strengthening regional biodiversity cooperation, governance, and implementation support for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) across Eastern and Southern Africa. The event was organized by RCMRD, CBD, FAO, CIFOR-ICRAF and all the countries covered by in our TSCC were represented. The Chief Guest was Dr. Deborah Barasa, the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry of the Republic of Kenya. A tree was planted to mark this important occasion.

Achievement 2: Strengthening Regional Technical Cooperation and Capacity Development
Strengthened regional technical cooperation and capacity-building through implementation of biodiversity monitoring, GIS, Earth Observation, protected area reporting, and KMGBF-related workshops and technical support activities across participating countries including Kenya, Uganda, and Madagascar. Conducting a major workshop focusing on Target 2 on Ecosystem Restoration was a huge undertaking that brought more awareness to what the TSCC should be undertaking.

Achievement 3: Strategic Partnerships, Resource Mobilization, and Technology Transfer
Strengthened strategic partnerships, resource mobilization, and technology transfer through collaboration with FAO, UNEP, UNEP-WCMC, Esri Global, and other regional partners. Resources were mobilized to support biodiversity monitoring workshops, Seventh National Report (NR7) process, regional capacity-building initiatives, and implementation of the Kunming Biodiversity Fund (KBF) project. In addition, ArcGIS licenses and geospatial technologies were secured through the RCMRD & Esri Memorandum of Understanding.

The modalities for sharing the licenses currently being finalized, where each country will get at least 3 licenses to use for their spatial related work. Deployment will be accompanied by regional capacity-building and sensitization activities to strengthen understanding of how participating countries can apply the software for biodiversity monitoring, spatial planning, protected area management, Earth Observation applications, and KMGBF reporting. The issue of lack of software had been mentioned as strong need by the countries during the capacity needs assessment exercise.

3.2. Main Challenges during the 2025-2026 biennium and way forward

Challenge 1: Limited Operational and Financial Resources
The TSCC continued to face limitations in operational funding required to scale regional implementation activities, technical support services, coordination meetings, and long-term biodiversity monitoring initiatives across participating countries.

> ***Way Forward:*** *RCMRD will strengthen resource mobilization efforts through development of strategic partnerships, joint funding proposals, and engagement with regional and international biodiversity financing initiatives including NaturAfrica, KMGBF-related opportunities, and geospatial innovation programmes.*

Challenge 2: Uneven Technical Capacities and Biodiversity Data Interoperability Challenges
Participating countries demonstrated varying levels of technical capacity, digital infrastructure, and access to interoperable biodiversity information systems, affecting implementation of biodiversity monitoring, GIS applications, and reporting processes.

> ***Way Forward:*** *RCMRD will expand regional capacity-building programmes, strengthen technical support and virtual learning platforms, promote interoperable biodiversity information systems, and support deployment of Geospatial technologies and biodiversity monitoring tools across participating countries.*

Challenge 3: Coordination and Governance Challenges Across Multiple Countries and Institutions
Operationalizing regional coordination mechanisms, including Steering Committee participation and multi-country technical cooperation activities, required sustained administrative engagement and timely responses from participating institutions.

> ***Way Forward:*** *RCMRD will strengthen bilateral engagement with participating countries, formalize governance and coordination procedures, operationalize regular Steering Committee meetings, and strengthen regional communication and collaboration mechanisms to support long-term implementation of the TSCC mandate.*

3.3. Lessons Learned

- Regional technical cooperation mechanisms require sustained coordination and country ownership.
- Geospatial technologies are increasingly recognized as essential tools for biodiversity implementation and reporting.
- Demand for technical support on KMGBF implementation is significantly higher than available operational resources.
- Partnerships are essential for scaling regional implementation support.

rcmrd.org