

Issue 02 · 2nd October 2026. Legal and policy developments shaping Kwale County, and what they mean for the sectors that drive it. This newsletter tracks new, upcoming and ongoing legal and policy decisions affecting Kwale County, and what they mean economically across key sectors.

1. Land Titling Milestone

A major land titling milestone executed in the County, over the past week, where title deeds were officially issued to local residents, including historic squatter communities.

On 28th September, the State Department for Lands and Physical Planning reported the issuance of 26,000 land titles to the residents of Lunga Lunga constituency. The wider Kwale titling program will cover the issuance of titles to 94,175 beneficiaries across Msambweni, Matuga and Kinango constituencies.

This process is further consistent with the statutory framework governing settlement schemes. Under the Land Title Act 2012, settlement scheme land will be planned and surveyed before allocation to beneficiaries. The current survey, verification and registration process forms part of the transition from existing occupation and settlement interests to formally recognized property ownership.

Why it matters:

A resident who becomes a land owner can now formally engage in property transactions such as transfers, sales and leases. This further significantly reduces uncertainty and disputes over boundaries and occupation of titled parcels of land.

Commercial investment Formal land ownership encourages wider interest in commercial investment in the County.

Property-based financing unlocks commercial credit increasing cash-flow within the community furthering trading activities.

Small-holder farmers in Matuga, Kinango, Msambweni, and Lunga Lunga with secure land tenure, can engage in long-term investments in high-value cash crops and farm infrastructure.

2. Beach Management Units' (BMU) push to stem overfishing

The Fisheries Management and Development Bill is currently under review in the Senate, with a missing clause that is at the heart of a push by the Beach Management Units (BMUs). Somo Mohamed Somo, chairman of the Indian Ocean BMU Network (which includes Kwale BMUs) and Omar Mtengo, chair of the Kwale BMU, have urged the senate to restore the '*closure provision*' clause before the Bill is finalized.

The clause under contention, omitted by the National Assembly, recommended the closure of certain fishing areas to allow for fish stocks to recover and curb depletion.

Kwale county has three Joint Co-Management Areas (JCMAs): **Shimoni-Vanga** (7), **Chale-Gazi** (2) and **Mwandamu-Funzi** (6) which constitute 15 (BMUs). The Shimoni-Vanga area alone covers 781 square kilometres.

Why it matters:

The Shimoni-Vanga area sits beside Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park, where fishermen have been trained in reef and seagrass monitoring which makes a strong case for the ecological preservation.

The recent public investment in landing sites with cold storage in Shimoni, Vanga, Gasi, Chale and Tsunza and the Sh2.6 billion Shimoni Fish Port will be crucial in enabling the growth of the fishing economy.

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