



WWF

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WWF-KENYA

WILDLIFE FOCUS

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WWF-KENYA

WWF is one of the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organization, with over 5 million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

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Together for People and Wildlife

It is our pleasure to bring you the second edition of WWF-Kenya's, Wildlife programme biannual newsletter, the Wildlife Focus. In this edition we highlight on the milestones, key learnings and challenges facing wildlife conservation in the country.

To manage Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC), WWF-Kenya is piloting the Safe System Rapid Assessment in Narok County. This is the first time the framework is being implemented in Africa. Our goal is to identify the gaps in the current HWC interventions and develop a strategy that will be used by stakeholders to make conflict hotspots safe for people, livestock and wildlife. This intervention will go a long way to reduce property loss and secure critical habitats.

Furthermore, through strategic partnerships we have managed to maintain zero poaching of elephants in the priority sites, completed writing the African Lion Strategy and we are in the final stages of reviewing Kenya's Lion Strategy.

We are also excited to report that through collaborating with the local communities in the Mara where over 5,000 acres of space for wildlife conservation bordering Siana Conservancy is secured. This is an initial build-up to the grand project of securing the Southern-Kenya and Northern-Tanzania landscape that WWF-Kenya and WWF-Tanzania is collectively developing with other network partners to expand wildlife dispersal and migratory corridors in East Africa. We have lined up this and more stories for you as we continue to sustain wildlife conservation work in Kenya for posterity.

Enjoy the reading

Yussuf Adan Wato Ph.D, Program Manager - Wildlife

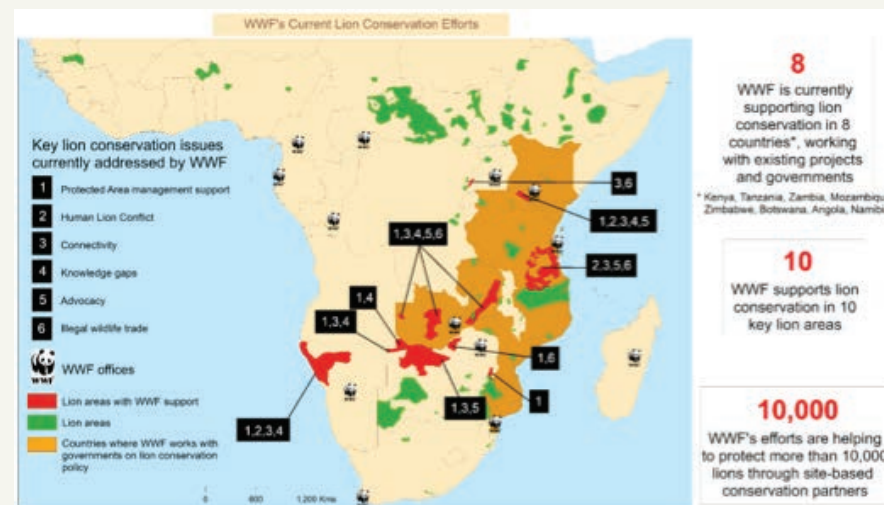
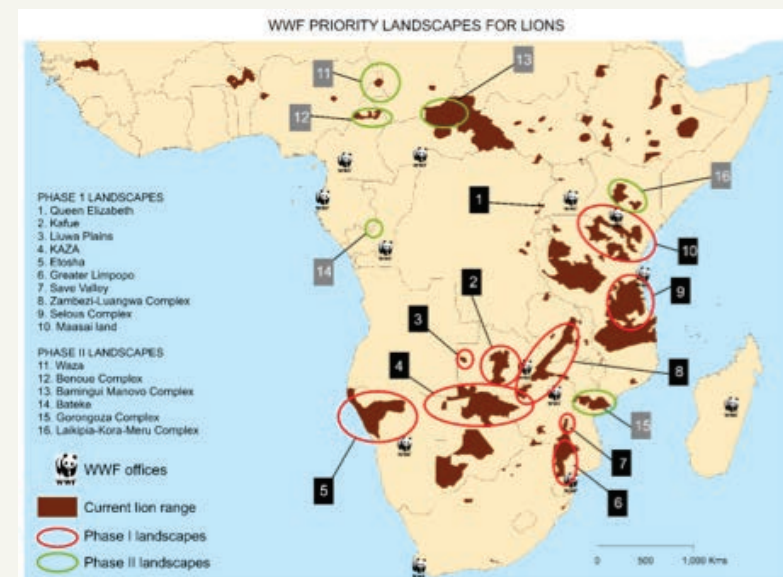


A Move to Save Lions

Lions are in trouble despite their ecological, economic and cultural value. Their space is constricting and the prey populations are declining with the growing human population further exacerbating the situation. Consequently, lions have lost 90% of their historic range, are extinct in 26 African countries, and only occur in 27 range states. This worrying trend explains the crash in population from an estimated 200,000 lions one hundred years ago to perhaps less than 20,000 lions today.

In a bid to urgently reverse this downward trend, WWF-Kenya actively participated in the development of an African Lion Strategy to chart the road-map for lion conservation across Africa. This Strategy aims at increasing the lion numbers, maintaining the ecological integrity of their habitats and securing functional corridors that connects the habitats. The strategy will focus on a number of priority areas that range from building the will to rally the public, politicians, philanthropists and nations to support lion conservation, promote evidence-based decision making through science and support Wildlife Area Management. In addition, the strategy will seek to reduce human-lion conflict, enhance and maintain connectivity and ultimately reduce illegal wildlife trade.

Priority landscapes and 6 Countries that host at least over 500 lions in Africa have signed up to rally this strategy with the desired goal being doubling lion numbers in Africa. WWF-Kenya is at the same time supporting the review of Kenya's lion strategy which has not been revised since 2014. This review is coming at the right time when a lion survey protocol has recently been developed for Kenya and a nation-wide lion survey is planned for August –October 2018 to determine a reliable population estimate of lions across Kenya – an initiative driven by WWF-K, Kenya Wildlife Service and other conservation partners. It will also anchor on the finalized African lion strategy.



Maps by Nic Elliot (2018)



Achieving Conservation Goals Through Land-leases and Livelihood Improvement in the Mara Landscape

Reduced range across the Mara landscape is a major challenge affecting the conservation of the African elephant (*Loxodonta africana africana*). This challenge has been occasioned in part by an upsurge in human population and an unprecedented land fragmentation within the ecosystem resulting in increased cases of human wildlife conflict. To help secure existing rangelands while at the same time improve livelihoods; WWF through the African Elephant Project (AEP) is supporting communities better realize the benefits of integrating nature and development, and help deliver on both livelihood and conservation goals.

In June 2018, WWF in partnership with the management company of Mara Siana Conservancy (ManCo) facilitated a one-year lease agreement on land titles within critical but unsecured areas of the conservancy. During the lease period, a feasibility study is to be conducted examining income-generating options for this newly secured section within the corridor area between Mara Siana and Olaro conservancies including whether or not other alternate livelihood options can be established. Additionally, a conservancy business plan will also be completed with significant partner and community input during this period. The land will be incorporated into the existing Mara Siana Conservancy and therefore under the overall management of ManCo. The total secured area under ManCo increases to 15,000 acres. Lease of land will position ManCo and WWF to have greater say and leverage in the overall direction that conservancy takes.

Livelihood improvement

In Oloisukut Conservancy, the AEP is pioneering a livelihood improvement programme for its members through a grant scheme to the conservancy to purchase better breeds (Boran and Sahiwal) to replace the low yield Zebu and eventually destock the conservancy and reduce grazing pressure from domestic low yield livestock. The revolving scheme first identified during a planning process in 2015 will ensure every member has an improved breed stock from the initial seed cattle of Boran and Sahiwal. The Boran was selected ostensibly for its high beef yield while the Sahiwal was chosen due to its dual purpose as a dairy and beef cattle. The two cattle breeds are known to perform very well in the high production zone of Trans Mara within the landscape. In late 2017 and early 2018, WWF also sought to actualize conservation success using Oloisukut as a case example of a progressive and robust community conservancy within the Mara landscape. Based on a management and business planning process for landowners facilitated by WWF in 2016 and which culminated in the identification and prioritization of key specific activities to sustain the conservancy post WWF support, WWF provided support to the upgrade and renovation of a 14km access road to the core area of the conservancy identified by tourism investors and conservancy management as critical for engagement and revenue generation through eco-tourism. The road, which is now complete, has had an immediate impact on visitation and access by domestic and foreign tourists alike.



Mara Siana Conservancy
Scouts Offices and Outposts

Constructed with the support of WWF

Celebrating Women in Conservation

Local communities play a critical role in protecting the environment. In the Maasai Mara ecosystem WWF is supporting the formation and management of community conservancies to tackle shrinking wildlife migratory corridors and dispersal areas. Community led initiatives that have resulted in reduced poaching, human wildlife conflict incidents, increased wildlife density and benefits to communities.

In all these the role of indigenous people in conservation of natural resources cannot be ignored, especially the role of women and youth. Whereas women play a critical role in conservation, their contributions are often unrecognized. Gender inclusion is part of projects excursion at WWF. One of the women champions in wildlife conservation is Mrs. Kingasunye Reyia a committee member at Siana Conservancy.

Mrs. Reyia a mother of six argues that, “Women are in direct contact with nature and it is impossible to conserve without engaging us. And for this reason, it is important to empower and educate women on the management and sustainability of natural resources.”

Mrs. Reyia reiterate that women are greatly exposed to negative impact associated with environmental degeneration, as women are accountable for the food and nutritional needs of their families.

Whereas the Constitution stipulates for women’s equitable access to land, security of land rights and elimination of gender discrimination in land governance and land based resources, security of legitimate land rights and protection of such rights are still elusive in most part of the country.

As a committee member Mrs. Reyia represents the women voices. “Siana conservancy has provided employment to many of our youth. Women involved in beading enterprise now have available market at the conservancy.”

“I did not go to school but through my beading enterprise and land leases we receive from the conservancy we have been able to support my children’s’ education needs,” said Mrs. Reyia.

Jacob Mpoe, Sekenani Committee representative at the conservancy says that engaging women in Siana conservancy has brought diversity in ideas and helped encourage more women to take up leadership position his community.

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through my beading enterprise
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Mrs. Reyia.**



WWF Supports the First ever Comprehensive Survey of Elephants in the Loita Forest

WWF facilitated the first ever comprehensive census and survey of African Elephants (*Loxodonta africana africana*) in the Loita Forest from mid through to late January 2018. The survey was coordinated by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) elephant programme with technical input from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and in-kind support from other partners. WWF's facilitation entailed provision of resources leading to the set-up of the KWS forest elephant survey team, equipping of the team, training and support to costs relating to the actual census and survey, and facilitation of community meetings leading up to the census. Having accurate and reliable data on forest elephant population dynamics and distribution is necessary to inform long-term conservation interventions by WWF and partners within the landscape and to attain conservation impacts at scale for the African elephant as a national and global priority species. This approach also redresses key gaps in the implementation of the Conservation and Management Strategy for the Elephants in Kenya (2012-2021) with regard to elephants in forested ecosystems.

The census was designed to provide an accurate and up-to-date dataset on the number and distribution of the species in the key community forest and conservation area of Loita using standardized dung decay rate assessment and dung density assessment methodologies. Dung decay rate. WWF's support to the training component was particularly important as elephant estimates derived from line-transect surveys are prone to bias both during data collection and analysis. These biases can be mitigated through training and adoption of dung decay rates specific to the surveyed site. A total of thirty (30) participants were trained on line transect dung decay rate assessments during a two-day training workshop held in Narroosura Loita. Eight teams, comprising of four members each were formed and deployed in various sections of the MFC.

Results of the elephant survey and assessment in Loita indicates the presence of 432 elephants within the 450Km² community forest of Loita. These results inform WWF and partners' future interventions within the landscape including planned assessments of elephants in other forest patches, as well as modalities of crafting habitat linkages within the landscape for elephants and other range specific and migratory wildlife species. These surveys are to be undertaken periodically to reflect changing scenarios on the ground and as the need arises. In addition, the surveys will go a long way in addressing gaps identified by KWS and other elephant stakeholders at a national workshop to review the Strategy for the conservation of elephants in Kenya.

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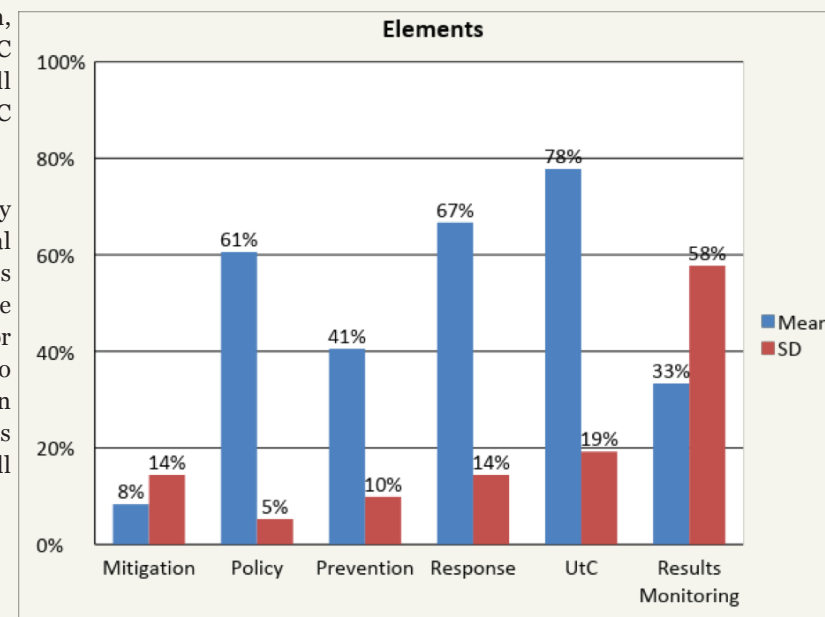


Kenya Leads the Way in Adopting Safe System Approach to Address HWC

The solution to HWC may appear simple: keep wildlife and people apart, local tolerance can then be maintained, and co-existence achieved. However, with the ever growing human population and the need for more space to sustain people and wildlife, the prospect to resolve HWC is increasingly challenging. Human and wildlife share the same space, thus coming in contact with each other is inevitable and the interactions, in some cases are not without conflict. It is difficult to accurately quantify the full extent of human and economic loss of HWC but it is estimated that the compensation claims as a result of crop loss, livestock depredation and human injury and death as a result of HWC now stands at US\$170 million in Kenya. This clearly demonstrates that HWC is a major challenge in wildlife conservation and compensation is not a sustainable solution to address it.

WWF and other conservation partners have over the years employed initiatives such as setting up local community-based insurance schemes, fencing, trenches, deterrents (e.g. noise, lighting), and legal protocols for dealing with straying wildlife, active management of wildlife, community education, hotspot mapping, the use of rapid Response Teams following conflict events and monitoring of results. Although a lot of effort and resources go into resolving HWC, the challenge remains and keeps intensifying. It is on this basis and on appreciating the complexity of HWC, that the Wildlife Program of WWF-Kenya pursued the adoption of a Safe System Approach to address HWC in the Mara landscape. This approach attempts to construct criteria that if correctly identified and implemented, would lead to a landscape where the people, their assets, the habitat and wildlife will all be safe and thrive together in harmony. Safe System Approach is hinged on six elements: policy, prevention, mitigation, understanding the conflict, response, and monitoring. Any initiative to address HWC is housed in one of these elements and the effectiveness of addressing HWC is contingent on all elements being implemented concurrently and in an integrated approach. For instance, a good HWC response team will be ineffective if their patrol is not informed by a sound wildlife monitoring.

We chose one of the HWC hotspot – Narok as a pilot site for Safe System launch. In a three day workshop attended by 45 participants representing the Kenya Wildlife Service and Mara National Reserve, Kenya Police Service, Livestock Department, Narok County Government officials, Various NGOs working in the Mara and communities, a HWC Rapid Assessment was carried out to determine the baseline for HWC in Narok. The results reveal that Narok is far from being a Safe System for people, wildlife, assets and habitats and there are various gaps that will need to be addressed to resolve HWC as shown in the rapid assessment results generated. Together with other partners in the landscape, the findings of this rapid assessment will inform the development of HWC strategies and initiatives that WWF will support to make Narok County a place where wildlife and people will thrive in harmony.





United we Stand with the Rangers

Kenya's invaluable wildlife resources are under threat due to wildlife crime, a major challenge impeding conservation efforts. To ensure that world's most iconic wildlife, including black rhinos and African elephants are secured and recovering in the wild, WWF-Kenya has been working alongside Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) to tackle the menace through policy implementations and adoption of latest technology.

In the Mara Ecosystem, WWF-Kenya recently supported a refresher-training program for 40 Narok County rangers. The training aimed at sharpening the ranger's knowledge and skills in different aspects pertaining to discipline, wildlife conservation and management. WWF-Kenya's, Peter Lokitela SS, HSC was one of the lead trainers.

Notably, wildlife rangers play a critical role in the protection of wildlife, withstanding the poor and risky working conditions. According to Ranger Perceptions: Africa 2016, African rangers lack not only sufficient weapons and vehicles, but also more basic necessities like boots, shelter and clean water supplies.

To create a conducive working environment for the rangers WWF-Kenya has donated vehicles, uniforms, built better structures modern technologies including drones, long range cameras, thermal imagery cameras to KWS and the community rangers with GPSs, binoculars, smart phone for SMART App for data collection in in Siana, Oloisukut and Mara Conservancy, Pardamat and Loita Conservation area.

The use SMART technology by rangers has intensified patrols within the landscape with a total of 1177 patrols (during the past 11 months) conducted in three conservancies (Siana, Mara Conservancy and Oloisukut) with 36,151 km covered in more than 20,000hrs with more than 12,000 wildlife sightings. The application of the Zero poaching strategy has seen tremendous reduction in WWF flagship and priority species mortality in the Mara Landscape.





Rekindled Efforts to Connect Eight Protected Areas in Kenya and Tanzania

WWF Kenya and Tanzania Country Office have embarked on an ambitious transboundary conservation programme along the Southern Kenya-Northern Tanzania (SOKNOT) landscape aimed at contributing to restore the wildlife migratory corridors and dispersal areas in the two countries. The programme which will be undertaken in an integrated landscape approach seeks to contribute to the two Government's effort to implement their respective wildlife corridors reports.

The SOKNOT transboundary conservation area is of major regional and global significance, including the UNESCO world heritage sites of Serengeti and Mount Kilimanjaro, and the world famous wildebeest migration. The transboundary area is also regarded as a key range site for elephants, rhino and lion populations.

Despite regional and global significance, SOKNOT landscapes face major threats including shrinking wildlife migratory corridors and dispersal areas, declining wildlife populations, poaching, unsustainable infrastructure development and unplanned settlement as well as increasing human wildlife conflict and inadequate community benefit sharing in natural resource management.

The programme aims to connect eight protected areas and 32 community conservation areas – forming wildlife corridors and dispersal areas, while supporting the livelihood needs of local communities and contributing significantly to sustainable regional economic growth.





Man's Best Friend; Poachers' Worst Enemy

Did you know that dogs possess up to 300 million olfactory receptors in their noses compared to about six million in human beings? It is for this critical scientific marvel that the dog, man's best friend is officially a poacher's worst enemy.

The use of wildlife detector dogs is a relatively recent but very successful technique for combatting wildlife crime and strengthening anti-poaching efforts in protected areas. Sniffer dogs have been one of the biggest successes in stopping wildlife crime. Sniffer dogs can be trained to find weapons, track poachers and identify their routes.

Mombasa port in Kenya has been identified by wildlife authorities and partners as one of the largest transport hub for illegal wildlife parts, alongside other illicit activities including drugs and weapons smuggling in Africa. With the ever increasing sophistication and complex methods to hide and transport goods by organized criminal syndicates.

WWF in partnership with KWS and TRAFFIC and others are upping their game using a new technology through enforcement officers who have been trained to sample air from separate shipping containers without the need to open them. The air sample is then transferred onto sniffing pads that allow specially trained dogs and handlers to identify whether the container may hold illicit goods, including illegal wildlife parts. The actual sniffing process for dogs can be done in climate controlled rooms to allow the dogs to work for longer. One controlled room can hold samples of many containers. This allows better working conditions for the dog and greater efficiency.

Previously, logistical challenges meant their usage is not as efficient and successful as it could be since identified containers can only be open in the presence of their owner. This could take weeks to happen. In addition, given the fact that Mombasa port handles over 2000 containers a day, the challenge from a purely logistical view is huge.

Through WWF funding and on the ground help, KWS are raising their game in the fight against the illegal wildlife trade, especially at identified hot spots such as Mombasa Port. Through the use of new technology in tandem with sniffer dogs and handlers, enforcement officers will be better equipped and trained to identify trafficked illegal wildlife goods and ensure the successful prosecution of traffickers.



OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

RESPOND

WWF Kenya ensures that large scale infrastructure development has minimum adverse environmental and social impacts

ENGAGE

WWF Kenya engages in and influences global, regional, national and county policies and laws while leveraging strategic partnerships



SECURE

WWF Kenya ensures that key freshwater, marine and forest ecosystems are secured and populations of flagship species in target places are stable or increasing.

ADDRESS

WWF Kenya is keen to see that agricultural and fisheries production systems are based on environmentally and socially sustainable practices.



Why we are here.

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

www.wwfkenya.org

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