

AFRICAN Heartland News



New Easement Makes Room for Hope... and Wildlife

by Kathleen Fitzgerald *Director, land conservation*

Last December, while others were finishing up their gift shopping and planning their holiday travels, John Keen and his family gave their own extraordinary gift to the people of Kenya. They signed the country's first environmental easement, which will protect important natural habitat adjacent to Nairobi National Park. In doing so, they set an example for other landowners interested in conserving Kenya's natural heritage.

A native Kenyan, Keen owns a parcel of land adjacent to Nairobi National Park, one of the few national parks in the world that sits at the edge of a metropolis. Nairobi National Park offers visitors a respite from the city's 6 million inhabitants and world-renowned traffic jams. It also operates as Nairobi's green lung—an air filter to the city—and an educational resource for millions of Kenyans who come to experience nature.

Founded in 1946, the park spans 28,963 acres (11,721 hectares) and hosts a diversity of wildlife, including black rhinos, lions, leopards and plains zebras. More than 400 migratory and indigenous bird species are also found there. As in many protected

areas in Kenya, the wildlife of Nairobi National Park depends upon adjacent lands for survival—lands that are mainly privately owned.

Keeping land open

With the support of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) has been working to keep the land in this region open for wildlife and pastoralists, and to improve the livelihoods of the local Maasai. This has become progressively more challenging in recent years. The subdivision and conversion of land are rampant, and prices are high. Wildlife has been unable to continue its movement patterns, and human-wildlife conflict has escalated. The result has been a dramatic decline in the number of species in the region.

Keen and his family decided to do their part to counter these alarming developments, through the conveyance of an environmental easement to AWF and the Kenya Wildlife Service. By means of this voluntary agreement, certain uses of the Keens' land are restricted in order to keep it open for wildlife. ▶

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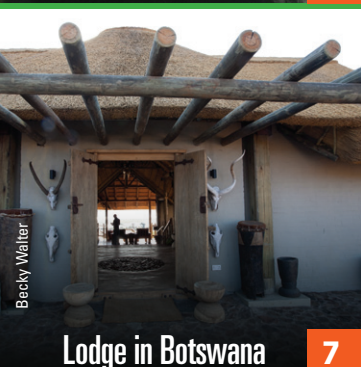
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Building Upon a Portfolio of Conservation Success

The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) was established as a modest organisation in 1961 by visionaries who recognised the unique value of Africa's wildlife and wanted to develop the capacity of Africans to conserve the continent's spectacular natural resources well into the future. More than 50 years later, our organisation continues this mission with the same passion, but with greater reach and a wealth of conservation experience under our belt. We now have programmes in 15 countries in East, Central, Southern and West Africa, spanning nine large conservation landscapes.

which we call "Heartlands." The array of projects range from groundbreaking bonobo habituation work in the Democratic Republic of Congo to the joint development of management plans for protected areas under their jurisdiction of local governments. We have gone on to pilot their implementation. We also have a number of success stories that demonstrate the effectiveness of AWF's approach in combining biodiversity conservation with livelihood development, such as with an integrated fish farm in Zambia and a microfinance organisation in Kenya.



We now have programmes in 15 countries in East, Central, Southern and West Africa, spanning 9 conservation landscapes

As AWF looks ahead, we see an African continent that is rapidly developing, as many governments seek to uplift their citizens' standards of living. In many parts of the world, economic modernisation has been synonymous with the destruction of wildlife and other natural biodiversity. Our belief is that with the benefit of experience, Africa can use its wildlife and biological resources as a comparative advantage, finding ways to both conserve its unique natural heritage while also building increasingly successful economies. We shall continue to scale up our programme, which integrates conservation and development.

The articles in this newsletter provide a small selection of the conservation actions that AWF is implementing in our landscapes,

Each of these conservation actions contributes to a portfolio of significant completed projects that together are progressively growing conservation results and livelihood improvements and ultimately delivering large landscape conservation in the African Heartlands.

On behalf of AWF, I want to thank all of our development and implementation partners. Your support and commitment will leave a lasting mark on conservation in Africa.

Helen Gichohi

*Helen Gichohi
President*

Lupani Primary School Serves as Incentive in Zambia

One of the biggest challenges in engaging African rural communities in effective biodiversity conservation is changing attitudes from seeing wildlife as a pest that destroys crops and livestock to an asset. AWF has succeeded in shifting attitudes about wildlife in the Sekute Chiefdom, Zambia, through a suite of incentives, including developing conservation enterprises under community-private partnerships and supporting basic primary school education. Such activities will help ensure that families have a stake in the success of programmes that conserve wildlife.

Lupani School is one such incentive. In collaboration with the Sekute Chiefdom, AWF rebuilt the area's only primary school. In the summer of 2010, AWF CEO Patrick Bergin and the deputy district commissioner for Kazungula District and the chairman of the Sekute Community Development Trust hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the school. Construction was completed and the school officially opened on Feb. 11, 2011. Once a dilapidated mud structure with thatched walls and a collapsing roof, the Lupani School has been transformed into a modern facility with six classrooms, several offices, and five houses for teachers. Immediately after the school's inauguration, 105 students enrolled—50 more than the school it replaced.

AWF and the Sekute Community Development Trust built the school and provided needed furniture and amenities. The Zambian government has generously agreed to pay the teachers' salaries and maintain the school's facilities.

Another incentive

Another initiative aimed at education is AWF's Easement for Education program, which launched in 2009. The first round of the program awarded 95 students scholarships for secondary and tertiary education and has been applauded by the Trust, traditional leadership, local politicians, local communities and the government as important human development milestones in a Chiefdom where 80 percent of the population is illiterate.

AWF is providing these incentives to the Sekute community in recognition of its effort to set aside the 40,000-hectare Sekute Conservation Area. This land comprises two important wildlife movement corridors, Mambova and Situwa, that pass from protected and community areas in Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe, into community lands on the Zambian side of the Zambezi River corridors. This will work to resolve the problem of habitat fragmentation, contribute to ecological functions at a transboundary landscape scale and provide habitat for plants and animals in a human-dominated environment. Furthermore, the Sekute Conservation Area, if properly managed, has potential to sustainably contribute to sequestration of carbon dioxide emission, and hence, contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change. ■

“This conservation area will contribute to ecological functions at a transboundary landscape scale



Above: Students in the newly opened school; an elephant crosses the Zambezi river.



Craig R. Sholley

Berman Rimer

Craig R. Sholley

Participatory Micro-zoning Reduces Threats to Forest

by Congo Heartland staff

The close of AWF's FY 2011 also brought to a close AWF's effective Sustainable Opportunities for Improving Livelihoods (SOIL) program, which has been embedded as a part of CARPE programming in the Maringa Lopori Wamba (MLW) landscape of the Democratic Republic of Congo for the past two years.

Based on 24 months of implementation, AWF believes that SOIL's efforts to organise farmers, technical support and market opportunities in order to reactivate agriculture is improving the lives of local farmers and farm families.

AWF designed SOIL to conserve forest resources, including carbon. Armed with several years of data and analysis—which plotted out resources, settlement and farm land, and which delineated conceptual zones—AWF was able to hone in on specific macro-zones to address, hectare by hectare, how land is regarded, used and stewarded in targeted macro-zones. Congo Heartland team members pursued participative land-use zoning at the micro, or community, level, to determine with the local population which areas should be deemed as permanent forests, meant to ensure biodiversity connectivity between protected forest blocks, and which would be demarcated as non-permanent forest where agriculture and livelihoods actions should take place.

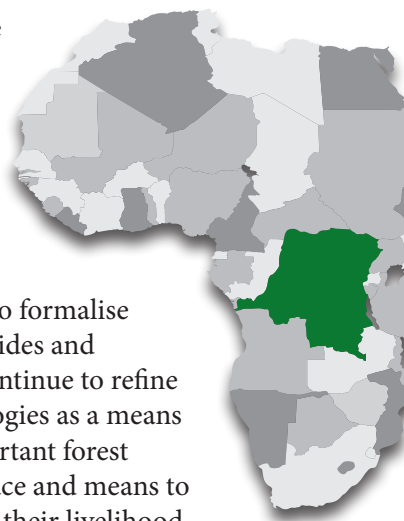
Next steps: Refine and promote

In two years under SOIL, AWF introduced and formalised voluntary quid pro quo agreements with

local communities that created explicit linkages between voluntarily foregoing uses of certain areas of forest designated for conservation in return for support for agricultural investment in other areas. AWF also led participatory micro-zoning and delivered livelihood programs for more than 25,000 people residing in 27 villages in the groupements of Yolota, Nkole, Bowankoy, Likunduamba and Lingomo.

With AWF's facilitation, these community members have joined with local authorities to execute fine-scale participatory mapping and data collection to understand, discuss and ultimately designate 55,010 hectares as permanent forest and 18,319 hectares as non-permanent forests.

The agreements that outline the zones have been validated by local government authorities in an effort to institutionalise the agreements and plans on a short- to medium-term horizon. AWF is now working with government authorities and other partners to formalise and disseminate operational guides and communication strategies to continue to refine and promote zoning methodologies as a means to prioritise and conserve important forest areas while still creating the space and means to help rural poor people increase their livelihood options. ■





Bonobo monitoring relies on direct observation.

AWF Finds Ongoing Success in Bonobo Conservation

by Congo Heartland staff

In the Maringa Lopori Wamba (MLW) landscape of the Democratic Republic of Congo, AWF and its partners have made substantial progress in the past year in building capacity and habituation at two key bonobo conservation sites. These are the 3,625-sq.-km Lomako–Yokokala Faunal Reserve and the emerging 1,100-sq.-km Iyondji Community Bonobo Reserve. At both sites, teams of trained assistants have identified and are gradually habituating specific bonobo communities for continued study and eventual tourism development and perform daily meticulous monitoring of the study populations, their habitats, and threats that affect them.

Bonobo tracking and monitoring relies on direct observation in the form of visual sightings and auditory calls, and indirect observation in the form of nests and droppings. In both Lomako and Iyondji, cumulative sightings have been on the rise as progress has been made toward habituation. In Lomako, habituation is centred on the Iyema group, made up of 24 independent individuals plus numerous infants. In Iyondji, the team has focused on two communities, Bembongo and Ite, each of which consists of approximately 30 individuals.

In the past five months in Lomako, the team registered a total of 43 direct observations; in Iyondji, the team recorded 141 direct observations in the last 11 months. In both sites, study teams are carefully monitoring availability of food and habitat condition as a means to deduce trends in bonobo movement in order to tailor park management and monitoring strategies. For example, in Lomako, observations peaked in August and September, which coincided with the seasonal availability of ripe, fleshy fruit.

Perhaps most striking has been the progressive shrinking of distance between observer and bonobo. Until recently, scouts and researchers could not come to within 100 m of bonobo before they fled; now at both sites, teams can come to within 6 m to observe.

Progress on Iyondji

AWF was previously instrumental in supporting *l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature* (ICCN) in gazetting Lomako as a reserve, which recognises the rights and roles of local people in its management. AWF has been working to adapt a comparable process in Iyondji, this time as a community-managed rather than a faunal reserve. Progress in Iyondji includes:

- Facilitating the development of a Protected Area Management Plan and a process for forest classification;
- Organising and training a team of 10 trackers in bonobo habituation and a team of 12 *eco-gardes* in monitoring and surveillance;
- Launching the habituation programme; and
- Establishing a local advisory group to create a formal vehicle for community participation.

AWF and its main partners—including the local Forêt des Bonobos and the University of Kyoto's Wamba Committee on Bonobo Research—have prepared a dossier for the ministry seeking formal gazettelement of Iyondji. AWF believes strongly that this conservation model, which emphasises the engagement of local communities in bonobo conservation alongside on-the-ground research, will be key to the bonobos' long-term survival. ■

WMA Moves Forward with Tourism Facility Plans

By Fiesta Warinwa *Director, Kilimanjaro Heartland*

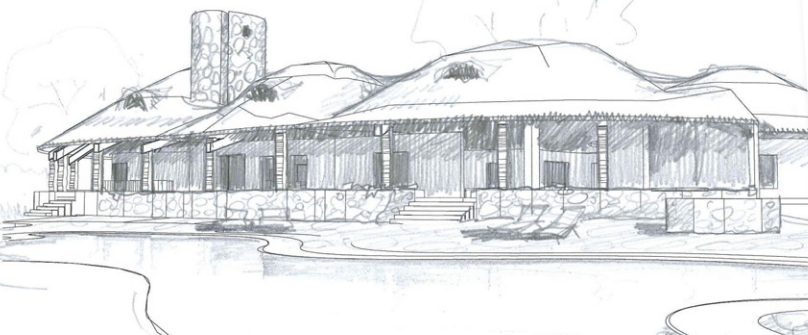
Since the establishment of the Enduimet wildlife management area (WMA) in 2005, a strong working relationship between Enduimet and AWF leadership has enabled steady progress in the development of the WMA. Located between three key protected areas—Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Amboseli National Park on the Kenyan side—Enduimet WMA forms one of the key dispersal areas for significant numbers of elephant, giraffe, zebra and other wildlife species.

To help the local community benefit from the area’s wildlife resources, AWF’s Kilimanjaro Heartland team assisted members of the WMA in negotiating a contract with Monarch Group Ltd. to construct, lease and operate a luxury lodge. (This was done after following all the required government procedures, which included developing the agreement in accordance with the WMA regulations and Revised Non Consumptive Rates for Wildlife.) The 25-year lease agreement was formally signed by the Board of

Trustees of the Enduimet WMA, AWF and the Monarch Group on 5 December 2011.

Per the agreement, AWF is providing US\$500,000 as community equity to construct the tourism facility—the immovable assets—while the Monarch Group provides for all the movable assets, operations and working capital. The contract was approved by Tanzania’s director of wildlife in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, as well as by the area’s Longido District Advisory Board. The parties have the opportunity to renew the agreement upon the expiration of the 25 years.

Construction of the lodge began in March, with a ground-breaking ceremony on 2 March 2012. ■



TRIAD Architects

AWF Continues Mozambique Engagement

By Inacio Timane *Community development officer, Limpopo Heartland*

AWF has continued implementing its community development strategy around Mozambique’s Banhine National Park in the Limpopo Heartland. After establishing two new community associations in the region, AWF has progressed with various community engagement and education initiatives. For example, AWF worked with about 275 families from Tchai-Tchai and Tchove on conservation agriculture, distributing drought-resistant seeds of millet, sorghum, bean and cassava, and training the farms on conservation agriculture techniques. The first season’s harvest yield was approximately 56 kg per hectare, compared to 36 kg per hectare previously. AWF firmly believes that if agriculture is practiced in appropriate areas, it can provide more space for wildlife, generate needed crops and reduce human-wildlife conflict.

AWF additionally consulted local villages about Banhine’s proposed new boundaries and led conservation and sensitization meetings regarding park management. Approximate 732 people have participated in these meetings. To help communities gain benefit from conservation initiatives, AWF also selected a private investor, Barra Resorts, to refurbish and operate the Banhine Bush Camp (formerly the Fish Eagle Camp, which was originally constructed by AWF to serve as a research camp). ■



AWF

New Lodge Officially Launches in Botswana

by Nasson Tembo *Director, Kazungula Heartland*

The long-awaited Ngoma Lodge in Botswana is now open for business. The lodge, which offers five-star facilities and boasts eight luxury chalets overlooking the Chobe River, was constructed in a record eight months and opened its doors to guests in late spring 2011. At an official launch ceremony on 27 July 2011, the President of Botswana, Lieutenant General Seretse Khama Ian Khama, expressed joy for this landmark achievement by Chobe Enclave Community Trust. The ceremony also featured songs composed by five different dancing groups to celebrate the giant step taken by the Trust and the general community in owning such an investment.

A partnership between the Trust and Muchenje Safaris (trading as Ngoma Management), Ngoma Lodge is seen as a big step for the community in advancing conservation and development in the area: It will contribute to local employment and generate revenues for community development and conservation of wildlife resources. Already it is employing 17 staff from the Enclave villages in tour guiding, lodge administrative activities and housekeeping. Many locals also benefited during the period of construction, as the construction company hired between 35 to 45 people from the community as casual workers.

“**Ngoma lodge has already remitted US\$16,000 to the community for the last two quarters of 2011**

The project was funded by Muchenje Safaris (Ngoma Management), the U.S. African Development Foundation and the Trust. AWF facilitated the process of soliciting and securing a private sector partner for the development and management of the lodge as well as the deal with the private sector partner. Construction and archeological monitoring were also undertaken by AWF. At the launch ceremony, both the Trust and the partner thanked USADF and AWF for making this project come to fruition.

The Trust is now gearing up for the most difficult phase of the project: making this a commercially sustainable enterprise. The first six months of operations have seen a high rate of tourist arrivals,

a good indication that Ngoma Lodge will establish itself as one of southern Africa’s successful market-based conservation initiatives. Average occupancy rate has been 40 percent, and the lodge has remitted US\$16,000 (100,000 pula) to the community for the last two quarters of 2011. Business is expected to grow in 2012, as are the benefits to the community. According to locals, the lodge is definitely a dream come true for the community! ■



Ngoma is a big step in advancing area conservation and development.



During the restocking ceremony dignitaries helped release fingerlings into the Zambezi River.

Integrated Fish Farm in Zambia Marks Milestone with Zambezi Restocking

By Jones Msonde *Ecologist, Kazungula Heartland* and Donald Namushi *Project manager, Livelihood Improvement through Fish Enterprise (LIFE)*

For a short time in late February, the quiet village of Mwandi in Zambia became a hive of activity when more than 30 visitors descended on its sandy beaches to attend a small ceremony hosted by His Royal Highness (HRH) Senior Chief Inyambo Yeta III and his Kuta, (traditional council of elders.)

The ceremony—during which 8,000 fingerlings of three-spotted bream (*Oreochromis andersonii*) were released into the mighty Zambezi River—marked the start of a fish

restocking programme. It was also a significant milestone for Mwandi Integrated Fish Farm, a conservation enterprise established by AWF, the Zambia Department of Fisheries and Inyambo Trust.

Promoting fish conservation

Mwandi Royal Village in southern Zambia’s Sesheke District is situated 1 km away from the Zambezi. Africa’s fourth largest river, the Zambezi is a major source of livelihood for more than 100,000 people living in the

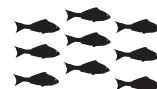
Teach a Man to Fish AWF helps a community protect the Zambezi River,



Restored fish populations in the Zambezi River will strengthen local livelihoods, while the aquaculture enterprise will yield employment and economic benefits.



Overfishing along the Zambezi River threatens livelihoods of local fishermen. AWF, together with the Inyambo community and other partners, is implementing a fisheries management plan and establishing a sustainable aquaculture enterprise.



Nine fish ponds have been constructed thus far. Fish fingerlings native to the Zambezi River are being bred in the ponds. In addition, water pumps have been installed and villagers are now accessing water from taps instead of the river.



district. Due to overfishing and unsustainable fishing methods, such as the use of mosquito nets, however, the river’s fish stocks have been declining at a faster rate over the last few years. Mwandu Fish Farm was established by AWF to promote fish conservation and to reverse this trend. When completed, the fish farm is expected to produce 24 tonnes of fish and 600,000 fingerlings, which will be sold to markets plus commercial farms.

Mwandu comprises:

- Nine fish ponds stocked with three-spotted bream, an indigenous fish species originally collected from the Zambezi River;
- A poultry house with a holding capacity of 1,000 chickens;
- A duckery;
- A fish hatchery; and
- An incubator for birds, with a holding capacity of 500 eggs.

Waste from chickens—of which 1,200 broilers have been raised and sold so far from the fish farm—is used as part of the fish feed, while 59 Peking ducks are being used to fertilise the plankton in the fish farm. The fish, which originally weighed an average of 80g each, now average 200g each.

1st harvest for the ceremony

The fingerlings for the Zambezi restocking ceremony were collected from these ponds—the fish farm’s first harvest, true to the African tradition of offering the first harvest to God to secure more fruitful harvests in the future.

Given the significance of this milestone, the ceremony was attended by several dignitaries, including the



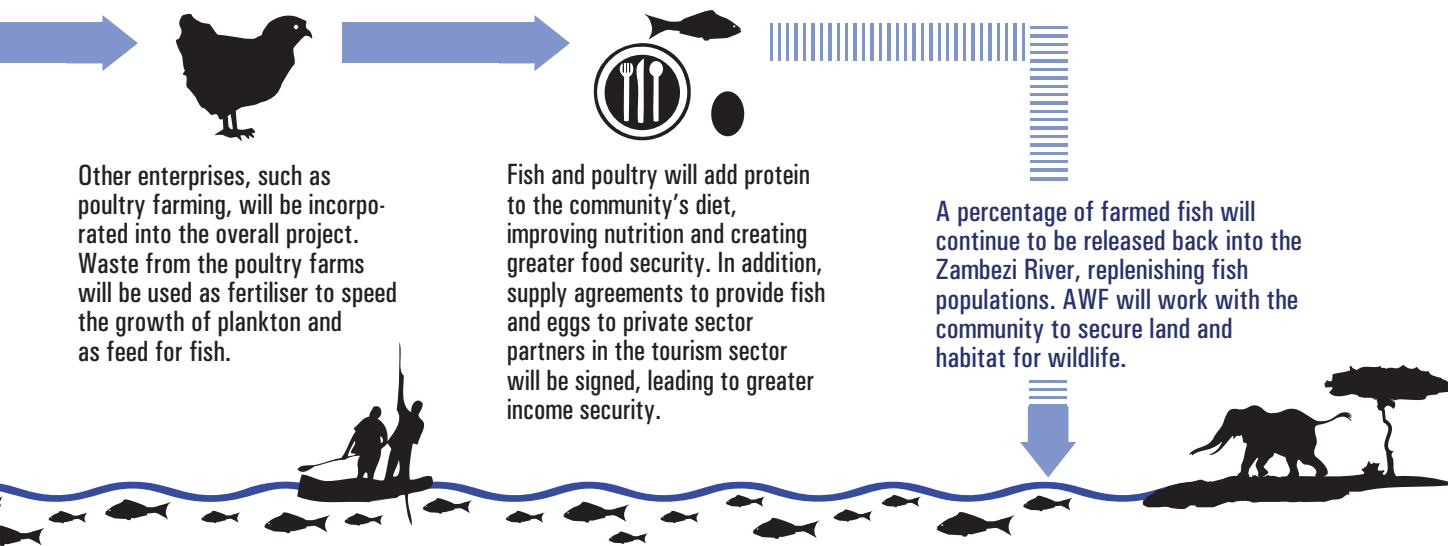
Community members collect fingerlings from the fish farm.

Jones Masonde

Governor of the Caprivi Strip from neighbouring Namibia, His Excellency Morgan Mpofu, and the District Commissioner of Seskeke District, Sachibuye Mwanangombe, who represented the Minister of Zambia’s Western Province. Over the course of the week, a total of just over 50,000 fingerlings were released into the Silombe channel of the Zambezi River. HRH Senior Chief Inyambo later declared a two-year moratorium on fishing in this channel.

Mwandu Royal Village and the integrated fish farm is only place in Zambia, aside from Lake Mweru, where restocking of fish has been done. It is most likely the first one in the country where a restocking programme was done by the community, yet another remarkable milestone. ■

their lifeblood, and delivers economic benefits to an impoverished area



continued from page 1

► “I want this land to remain pristine today and in the future for wildlife and the generations to come,” said Keen. “We have destroyed so much of our land and wildlife; it is time to save this country of ours!”

Keen had long known that he wanted to protect his property but had been uncertain about what mechanism would best serve his family and the land. For more than a year, he and his relatives met with AWF’s land conservation staff to explore various legal mechanisms that would enable them to retain the land while conserving it. Many members of the sizeable clan—from the youngest, 15-year-old Silole, to Keen himself—were involved in the talks.

“It was important to Mr. Keen as well as to AWF to have all the generations engaged in this discussion,” noted AWF’s Ezekiel Kingola, an administrative manager for AWF who has long known Keen and his family. The Keens agreed that an easement would be the best conservation tool for their situation. The family operates a lodge, Masai Lodge (masailodge.com), on their property and the easement permits them to continue operations and associated activities. Through the easement agreement, the lodge is now considered to be located inside the park, helping to boost visitation.

Conservation leadership

The easement was signed in December 2011 at a ceremony at Masai Lodge. In addition to the Keen family, those attending the ceremony included AWF President Helen Gichohi; Director of Kenya Wildlife



John Keen (center) and his family, shown here with Kenya Wildlife Service’s Kipng’etich and AWF’s Gichohi.

Commented Kerst, “We are delighted to be part of this historic event. It is a hopeful and extremely exciting day for the Keens, our partners, and all Kenyans.”

Kipng’etich added, “The Kenya Wildlife Service would like to thank the Keens for their leadership in executing Kenya’s first environmental easement. Nairobi National Park was one of Kenya’s first established parks, so it is appropriate that this easement, being the first in Kenya, is adjacent to it.”

Creative solutions needed

Environmental easements have proven highly effective in other parts of the world, and AWF has been exploring how they could be used in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa.

To AWF, they offer the ideal win-win situation, where private landowners retain ownership and a park is expanded.



Kathleen Fitzgerald

“I want this land to remain pristine today and in the future for wildlife and generations to come
—John Keen

Service Julius Kipng’etich; USAID Director Erna Kerst; and staff of AWF, Kenya Wildlife Service, and USAID.

“We applaud the Keen family for their decision to place their land under an environmental easement and hope that their conservation leadership will inspire other landowners to do the same,” said Gichohi.

“Kenya’s national parks, sanctuaries and reserves safeguard roughly 8 percent of the country’s land for wildlife habitat, but these protected areas are unconnected and remain too small to support viable populations of wildlife,” observed Gichohi. “To secure Kenya’s remaining wild places, we need creative solutions like easements.” ■

AWF Improves Infrastructure at Buffalo Springs

by Ben Wandago *Director, Samburu Heartland*

AWF recently undertook an infrastructure improvement effort in the Samburu–Isiolo Conservation Area (SICA), renovating ranger houses at Buffalo Springs National Reserve. SICA consists of three reserves—Samburu, Buffalo and Shaba—and are inseparable in terms of ecology, security and tourism management. The functional ecosystem covers an area of 535 sq. km, with the neighbouring community lands and ranches acting as wildlife dispersal areas. Buffalo and Shaba, located in Isiolo County, are managed by the County Council of Isiolo, while Samburu National Reserve is in Samburu County under the management of County Council of Samburu.

Buffalo Springs and Shaba National Reserves have a shortage of decent houses, with some of the rangers being accommodated in uniports. Additionally, for SICA to be properly managed and protected, improved infrastructure was necessary. Thus AWF renovated 12 ranger houses—six at Chokaa gate and six at Ngare-Mara gate—and the senior warden's house at the Kenya Wildlife Service complex. The houses were run down and needed complete renovation that included the removal of asbestos roofing and replacement with galvanised iron sheets that are more environmentally friendly in terms of roof catchments.

The work was completed in December 2011 at a cost of US\$110,000, and houses handed over to the County



The Isiolo ranger houses, before (left) and after.

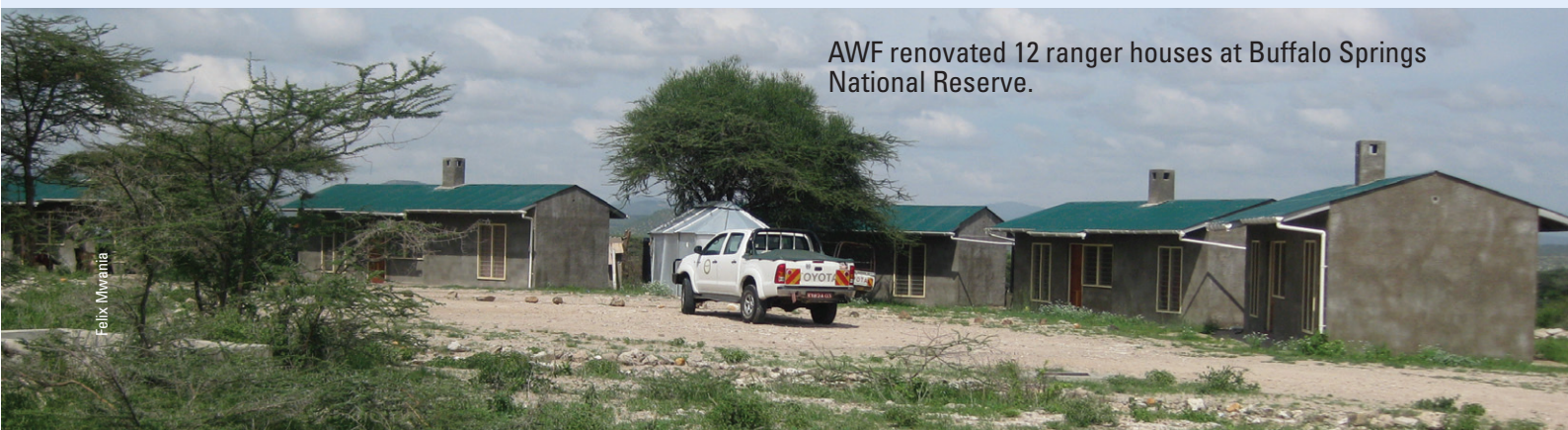
“With the completion of the renovations, it is hoped that the rangers will be more effective

Council of Isiolo for use by the rangers. Water supply is yet to be rehabilitated—the County Council of Isiolo is to undertake this task. The official handover of the project has been slated for Spring 2012.

All of these efforts are a part of the 2010–2020 management plan for SICA, which AWF helped to develop after three previous failed attempts by others. The plan has five main programmes that outline the future desired conditions at SICA and the management actions to be implemented. The ranger house renovations were in support of the Protected Area Operations plan, whose purpose is to support the achievement of the other four programmes.

With the completion and occupation of the renovated houses, it is hoped that Buffalo Springs National Reserve rangers will be more effective in their work and that other programmes in the SICA plan will also benefit from this support. ■

AWF renovated 12 ranger houses at Buffalo Springs National Reserve.



Fighting Rural Poverty While Supporting Conservation: A WMA Case Study

By Sula Kibira *Monitoring & evaluation project officer, Maasai Steppe Heartland*

Wildlife management areas (WMAs) offer communities living in important wildlife habitat outside protected areas a way to benefit from the presence of wildlife on their land. In the Maasai Steppe Heartland in Tanzania, the Burunge WMA offers a case study of success.

Through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Integrity Pact Project, the Burunge community followed a specific process to establish its WMA—including the development of a business plan and the use of a competitive bidding process for the investors. The well-planned enterprise makes it attractive for wildlife enterprise, which will support community conservation and livelihoods

High income

Income generation was intended as a key benefit of WMAs. One of the tourism investments in Burunge has increased community revenues tenfold, the highest amount of income ever obtained by the 10 villages within the WMA. The communities have decided to use the resources to support social infrastructure, including schools, clinics, village offices and water supply. The revenue has also been used to cover taxes, and during a drought in 2010–2011, some of the revenues were used to purchase maize for famine relief. Meanwhile, a total of 20 village game scouts have been employed—two from each village—through the

WMA and more than 40 people are employed in the area lodges.

Burunge WMA is able to raise additional revenues through grant financing. The Cash for Work project, funded by USAID via World Wildlife Fund, is aimed at infrastructure development within target WMAs in the Tarangire–Manyara–Kilimanjaro ecosystem. Burunge is thus engaged in projects such as a visitor centre, outposts for the village game scouts, and roads. The Cash for Work programme also builds skills required to manage the WMA as well as general life skills through a component spearheaded by the U.S. Department of Interior.

“There is evidence that the presence of wildlife is increasing and habitat conditions are improving

Wildlife treasured

Whereas wildlife was previously seen a source of conflict, it is now regarded as a treasured resource to be protected. Relations between the communities and the National Parks have improved since the establishment of the WMA to the point where Tanzania National Parks has agreed to open a gate at Sangaiwe for tourists to travel directly between the WMA and park.

There is evidence that the presence of wildlife is increasing and habitat conditions are improving. The WMA villages have improved land and natural resources management through detailed land use plans that outline steps for rangeland management and protection of hydrological systems such as water points, swamps, rivers and lakes; reducing conflicts among pastoralists and cultivators; and reducing the rate of agriculture expansion, tree cutting and overgrazing in wildlife areas. One can easily distinguish the WMA area, with its full-grown grass and tree shrubs, from other areas that have a scarcity of trees and little grass cover.

The WMA process and implementation is not straightforward, and some challenges remain in Burunge. Nevertheless, WMAs are proving that they are a viable way for communities to benefit meaningfully from conserving and managing wildlife resources on community land. AWF has even received requests from several other communities in Tanzania to facilitate the process of establishing WMAs on their lands. ■



Local communities, such as these women in Tanzania's Kolo Hills, benefit from WMAs.

Use of Predator-Proof Bomas Mitigate Conflict in Tanzania

By Bernard Kissui *Senior ecologist, Maasai Steppe Heartland*

Maasai steppe of northern Tanzania is one of the four major ecosystems harbouring viable lion populations in Tanzania, making it a priority area for conservation of the African lion. Because migratory wildlife spends up to six months outside protected areas, such as Tarangire National Park, and in communal village land instead, incidents of livestock predation and retaliatory killing of lions and other carnivores are particularly high in the region. Indeed, conflict with humans is likely the leading cause of lion mortality. Since 2004 at least 226 lions have died due to retaliation for livestock predation, an average of 28 lions killed every year.

AWF has engaged in activities to mitigate human–lion conflict mitigation in communities surrounding Tarangire National Park. Among the strategies employed has been the reinforcement of traditional “bomas,” enclosures for livestock protection, with chain-link fences. This tactic appears to improve livestock security significantly over the traditional bomas, which are constructed with thorn bush walls.

In 2011, 35 predator-proof bomas were built, with an additional 15 being constructed more recently, benefiting 50 families. The cumulative total of predator-proof bomas already constructed is now 117 (excluding the 15 under construction).



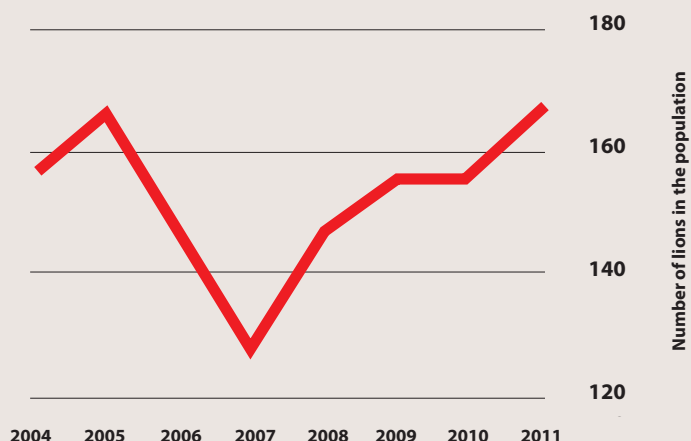
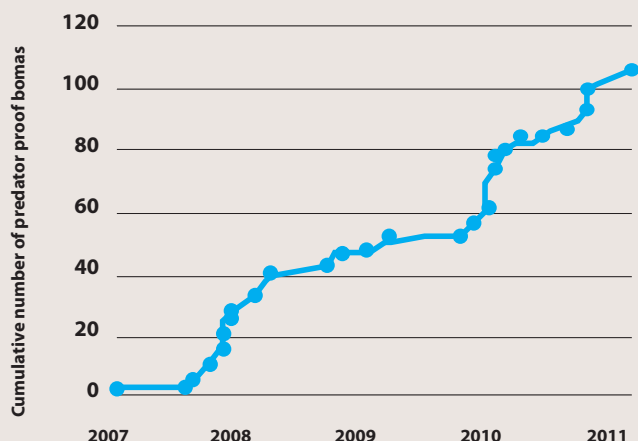
A predator-proof boma.

AWF

AWF continues to gather data, comparing each predator-proof boma with the nearest traditional boma, to determine the level of livestock predation under each condition, but preliminary results appear promising.

Meanwhile, AWF continues to monitor lion movement. The use of radio telemetry especially has allowed the collection of detailed information of how lions in Tarangire use their home ranges seasonally. In the wet season, some prides move outside the park boundaries and spend a significant amount of time in areas largely dominated by human activities (such as agriculture, livestock grazing and human settlements). During this time, Tarangire lions are subject to retaliatory killing due to livestock predation and trophy hunting. In the dry season, most prides do not move outside the park boundaries. ■

Human–lion conflict led the lion population in the Maasai Steppe Heartland to plummet but the use of predator-proof bomas (left) has contributed to an increase in the lion population (right).



Empowering Local Women Through Microfinancing

by Ben Wandago *Director, Samburu Heartland*

In 2002, AWF assisted the community of Kijabe Group Ranch in creating and managing a conservation area, the Ol Lentile Conservancy. Since then AWF has continued to partner with Kijabe and Nkiloriti communities to support their conservation efforts.

Among these communities and other rangelands of East Africa, the absence of access to financial credit is widely cited as an obstacle to poverty reduction. Pastoralists rely heavily on livestock to accumulate and safeguard their wealth, exposing them to a great deal of risk from diseases and droughts to raids and wildlife attacks. Microfinance savings offers them an opportunity to diversify risks and enhance investments. AWF has therefore initiated and supported the establishment of Nasaroni Village Bank.

The Nasaroni Village Bank was established in 2008 as a women’s group project for Kijabe and Nkiloriti group ranches in Laikipia County. The original model, however, was unsuccessful. In mid-2011, AWF stepped in and, through K-Rep Bank, assisted in developing a business

plan, establishing lending groups within the financial services organisation and providing training for members. The financial services organisation has also expanded its area of operation from the initial two group ranches to other neighbouring areas, such as Tiamamut, Koija, Musul and the greater Oldonyiro.

More recently, AWF procured a desktop computer and printer, and restored solar power supply in the office by procuring an inverter and solar battery, all with the aim of helping the operation digitise its manual filing system. AWF additionally provided a brand new motorbike to allow the manager to reach as many members as possible.

With these interventions, the microfinance organisation has shown positive progress—the membership has grown from just a few hundred members before AWF’s involvement to more than 800 by December 2011. Seventy-five percent are women. The organisation has disbursed 373 loans, equivalent to US\$53,245 (KSh 4,398,000). The lending groups meanwhile, have increased their loan repayments. ■



AWF provided training in record-keeping.

Nailepeau Conservancy Created in Kilimanjaro Heartland

AWF welcomed 65 additional landowners to its community lease program to create the Nailepeau Community Conservancy, approximately 1,619 hectares. The conservation lease program is part of AWF’s work to connect Amboseli, Chyulu and Tsavo National Parks in Kilimanjaro Heartland. A legal agreement between AWF and the landowners, the conservation lease stipulates that in exchange for conservation management and compliance with specific conservation restrictions, AWF will pay the landowners \$7 per acre conserved, with an annual increase.

“These lease signings are a significant success for the Amboseli ecosystem, as it links two community conservancies to create a 12,500-acre conservation unit in a critical area for wildlife,” says Kathleen Fitzgerald, AWF’s director of land conservation. ■



John Gisa (right), AWF community coordinator, assists a landowner.

AWC will help make a conservation impact in places like Tanzania's Kitulo National Park.

New 'Impact Investing' to Boost Conservation Efforts



Erin Mucud & Mreah Allen

With AWF's initial round of investments in conservation enterprises—mostly tourism lodges—complete, a new mission-related investment company, African Wildlife Capital (AWC), has been launched. AWC is owned and operated under AWF.

AWC makes investments in the form of structured loans into selected small to medium-sized conservation enterprises in the agricultural and tourism sectors, based on three main criteria:

1. Positive conservation impact;
2. Positive impact on poverty alleviation and local livelihoods; and
3. Commercial and financial viability.

AWC is part of the "impact investing" or "alternative development finance" movement that includes microfinance, green technology funds and other financing mechanisms that promote social benefit while preserving and providing a return on capital.

"After more than a decade of successful engagement in conservation enterprise work, AWF has recognised the need for a new type of conservation finance," said AWF CEO Patrick Bergin. "This new capital will promote and expand emerging enterprises that have promising business models and that can help protect habitat in large conservation landscapes—while also benefiting local economies and the livelihoods of people who live with wildlife."

The initial round of investments was made in the first half of 2011, with investment funding provided by members of AWF's Board of Trustees. The target range of investment per transaction is between \$250,000 and \$1.5 million. After this initial round, AWF expects to invite investment through AWC by other impact investors, foundations and development agencies.

1st Investment

AWC has already made its first investment, in Rungwe Avocado Co. in the southern highlands of Tanzania, a region that receives some of the highest rainfall in the country. The \$950,000 loan will support this early-stage, environmental sustainable avocado-growing and export project that currently engages 2,000 community members (and that may expand to 5,000). Rungwe intends to use this investment to intensify avocado production in a smaller area and increase income to local communities, encouraging communities to be less reliant on sustainable natural resource extraction.

AWC uses conservation covenants in exchange for investment. AWC is part of AWF's larger vision to work with the people of Africa to ensure that the wildlife and wild lands of Africa will endure forever. ■



Carolyn Schmidt

AWC's first investment is a sustainable avocado-growing project.

Activities featured in this newsletter were supported by:



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AWF's African Heartlands Programme

AWF's approach to achieving conservation impact in Africa is to encourage our partners to join us in focusing on a limited number of high-priority, large conservation landscapes that have the potential to conserve viable populations of African wildlife as well as key habitats and ecological systems well into the future. We use a planning process based on applied science to determine conservation objectives and to make these areas both ecologically and economically successful. Recognising Africa's wildlife cannot be conserved everywhere, the great majority of AWF's resources and efforts are invested in these Heartlands.

What is a Heartland?

Heartlands are composed of land units under different management and ownership regimes—national parks, private land and community land—in a single ecosystem ranging in size from 7,000 km² to 95,000 km². Some Heartlands fall within a single country; many extend across international borders of two or more countries. AWF's initial planning horizon and commitment for work in a Heartland is 15 years.

Heartland programme interventions include:

- Providing support for improved protected area management;
- Resource monitoring;
- Participatory land-use planning;
- Developing wildlife-based tourism enterprises;
- Securing local livelihoods and community-owned businesses;
- Capacity building with local institutions; and
- Enabling local leadership of wildlife and natural resource management.

Selecting and establishing Heartlands

When selecting Heartlands, AWF works carefully to identify landscapes that have the most potential for effective and sustainable long-term conservation. Initially, AWF considers both regional and global biodiversity conservation priorities. Then, once a potential landscape is identified, AWF

conducts a detailed analysis that looks at the biological, ecological, social and economic opportunities within the region.

Once an area has been identified as a Heartland, we develop a detailed profile that includes the area's biological, socioeconomic and institutional attributes, as well as identify key threats to conservation targets and potential conservation strategies that could be implemented. An area is considered a Heartland when the resources needed to implement an effective programme are secured.

Working in AWF's Heartlands

In each Heartland, AWF works closely with a wide range of partners and stakeholders—including national and local governments, communities, research organisations, other non-governmental organisations and the private sector—to develop priority interventions specific to the area. While each Heartland's strategy is unique, each Heartland focuses its work in the following strategic areas:

- Land & habitat conservation;
- Species conservation & applied research;
- Conservation enterprise;
- Capacity building & leadership development; and
- Policy.

