
Conservation Lodges of Africa



COVER: AWF helped the Maasai community in southern Kenya to establish the high-end Satao Elerai Lodge, in exchange for the community setting aside some of its lands for conservation.

BELOW: Done right, the development of conservation tourism enterprises provides an incentive to local communities in Africa to protect wildlife, like elephants, and wild lands.



For Your Next Holiday, Consider a Conservation Lodge

The African continent is home to some of the world's most amazing wildlife and natural wonders. Yet rural communities see little value in their wildlife neighbors, as growth in human population and changing climatic conditions place increasing strain on the continent's natural resources.

Conservation of wildlife and wild lands can offer economic benefits for Africa's people, however. One way is through the development of conservation tourism. The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) has worked with communities throughout the continent to establish a number of such tourism enterprises, from mid-market camps to exclusive luxury getaways.

Before developing a conservation tourism facility, AWF first examines the business case and conservation objective. We then work with a local community to mitigate the conservation threats, whether it is protecting key wildlife corridors or eliminating encroachment on forests, for example. In return for the conservation agreement, AWF helps the community identify a private sector partner.

JOINT EFFORT

The key is to create successful business ventures that provide communities the economic incentives to conserve wildlife and their natural surroundings. While the community agrees to set aside and protect land for conservation, the private sector partners bring the needed experience and expertise in developing and managing high-quality tourist facilities. The actual development of the facility is a joint effort, with the community providing the land, AWF typically providing financial support for lodge construction, and the private partners providing additional capital for the furniture and fittings.

The end results are the stunning lodges profiled in this book: beautiful facilities set in picturesque, wildlife-rich landscapes, in many cases owned by local communities and managed by hospitality and safari experts. These lodges employ local individuals, pay rent to the communities and share the business revenues with those same communities. Most importantly, they provide the economic incentive for local communities to conserve and protect the wildlife and wild lands around them, ensuring that Africa's wildlife remains for Africans, and citizens the world over, to enjoy for generations to come.

The next time you're planning a safari holiday, we encourage you to consider some of the destinations highlighted in this book. Not only will you view spectacular wildlife in gorgeous landscapes, but your stay will help conserve these magnificent lands and all that rely on them.



Brian McBrearity
Director, Conservation Enterprise
African Wildlife Foundation

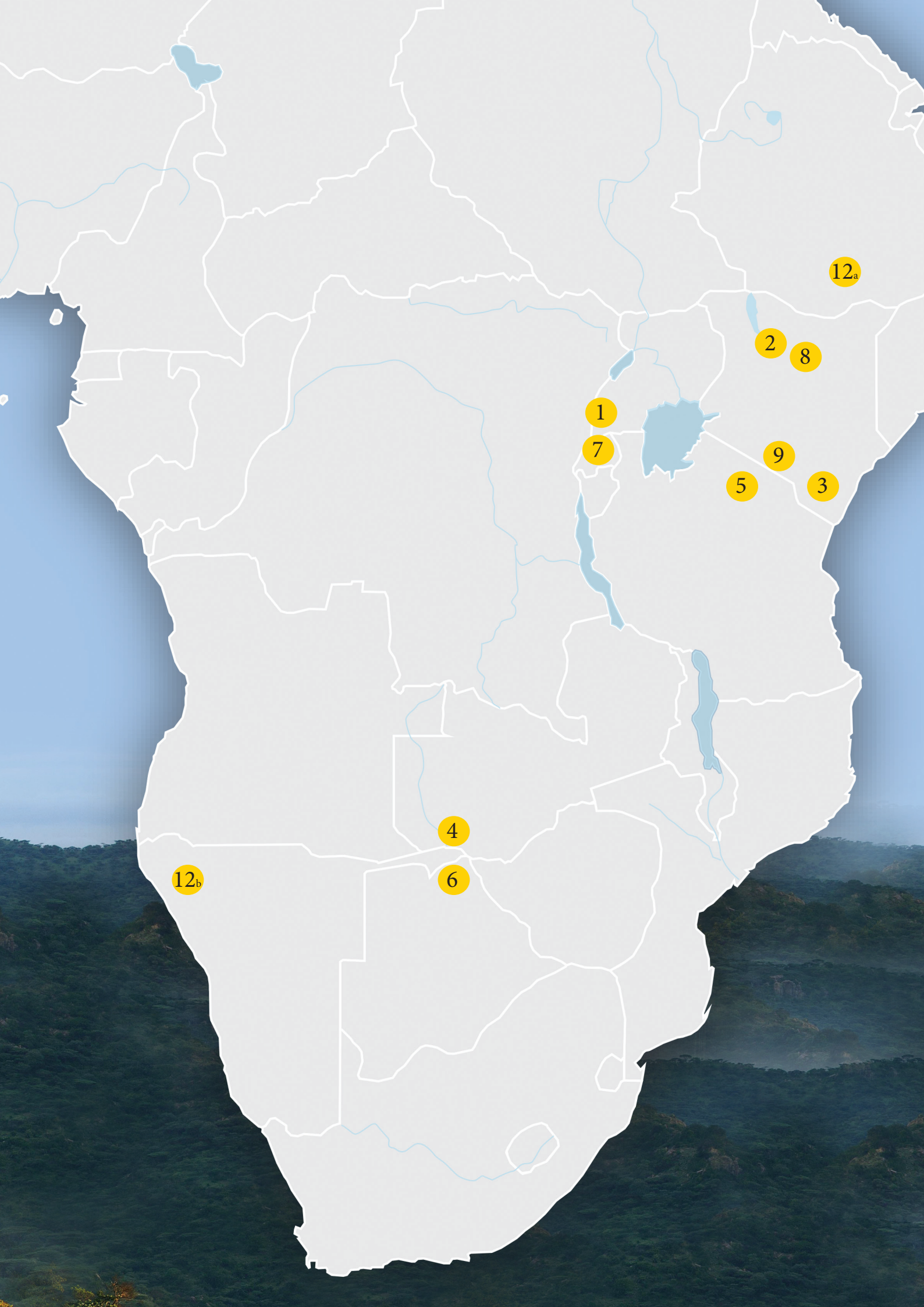


Index

Clouds Mountain Gorilla Lodge UGANDA	1
Koiya Star Beds (Loisaba) KENYA	2
Lions Bluff Lodge KENYA	3
Machenje Fishing Lodge ZAMBIA	4
Manyara Ranch Tented Camp TANZANIA	5
Ngoma Safari Lodge BOTSWANA	6
Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge RWANDA	7
The Sanctuary at Ol Lentille KENYA	8
Satao Elerai Camp KENYA	9
A Look Back: Lessons Learned	10
A Look Ahead: Leveraging Capitalism for Conservation	11
Bale Mountain Lodge ETHIOPIA	12 _a
Grootberg Lodge NAMIBIA	12 _b
About AWF	13



The Sanctuary at Ol Lentille is one of the many lodges that AWF has helped establish to incentivize conservation and produce benefits for local communities.



12_a

2

8

1

7

9

5

3

4

6

12_b



Clouds

mountain gorilla lodge

LOCATION: Bwindi Impenetrable National
Park, Uganda

NO. BEDS: 10

YEAR OPENED: 2008

Clouds Mountain Gorilla Lodge is nestled atop the Nteko Ridge, above the lush rainforests of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. The lodge offers cozy, award-winning accommodations in the midst of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with dramatic views of the Virunga mountain range and the Great Rift Valley. Clouds is situated steps away from the trailhead for the Nkuringo family of mountain gorillas.



CONSERVATION LOGIC: Unplanned human settlements were increasingly encroaching upon mountain gorilla habitat by Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, leading to human-gorilla conflict, such as when mountain gorillas raided the crops of homesteads adjacent to their habitat. To promote conservation efforts by the local Nkuringo community and ensure that community members end up valuing mountain gorillas, rather than viewing them as a nuisance, AWF helped establish this high-end tourism enterprise to bring in income from gorilla tourism.

WHO IS BENEFITING: The Nkuringo community owns the lodge while a private sector partner manages daily operations. Per an arrangement brokered by AWF, the community earns a share of the revenue—significant in a region where household incomes are extremely low. In the few years that Clouds has been in operation, it has already accrued more than US\$150,000 for the Nkuringo community. This income is managed by a community trust that has implemented a number of local development projects.

Clouds has proven to be a significant conservation incentive for the community: The most recent census of the Bwindi mountain gorilla population found that it had increased, from 302 in 2006 to 400 individuals in 2011.

INFORMATION: wildplacesafrica.com





Koiya Star Beds is one of the most unusual lodging experiences in Africa, providing the truly unique experience for guests to sleep in comfort under the stars of the immense southern sky. It is attached to the luxurious Loisaba Lodge, which offers extraordinary pampering, including massage and spa treatments, along with a romantic open-air bubble bath overlooking the surrounding hills.

LOCATION: Laikipia, Kenya

NO. BEDS: 8

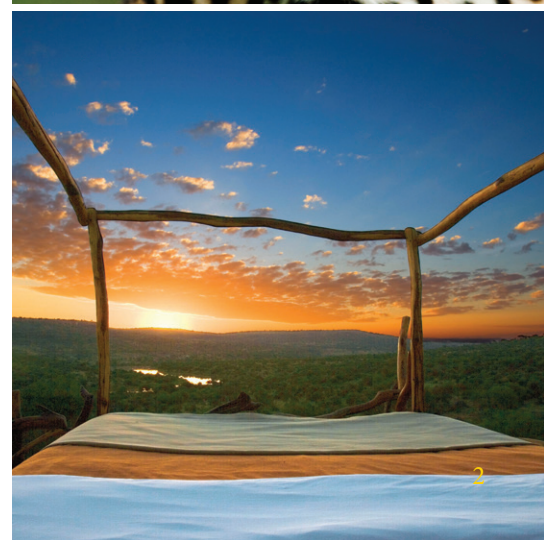
YEAR OPENED: 2001

CONSERVATION LOGIC: Northern Kenya's Laikipia region has no formal protected areas, so community-based conservation is key to the survival of wildlife here. The region is home to elephant, the endangered Grevy's zebra, unique northern specialist species like the gerenuk and Somali ostrich, plus the largest number of black rhino in the country. AWF worked with the 1,500-member Koiya community and a private sector operator to establish the lodge; in return, the community provided the land for the camp and set aside a 500-acre community conservation area.

WHO IS BENEFITING: Koiya Starbeds has produced solid benefits for wildlife and the community alike. The land within Koiya's conservation area has recovered remarkably well from previous overgrazing. It supports noticeably higher numbers of wildlife.

The Koiya community earns more than US\$20,000 in income each year from its ownership of the lodge. These revenues have enabled the community to fund critical healthcare, education and water projects. For the first time in the Koiya community, a student was able to attend university from funds generated by Star Beds. Community members are also employed at the camp, providing a strong incentive to conserve the land and its wildlife. Ultimately, Star Beds allows the Laikipia Maasai to continue their ranching traditions in a sustainable manner.

INFORMATION: loisaba.com





LOCATION: Near Tsavo West National Park,
Kenya

NO. BEDS: 24

YEAR OPENED: 2001

Lions Bluff Lodge offers visitors superb views of the Taita Hills, Usambara Mountains and Mt. Kilimanjaro. Viewing opportunities abound to spot much of the wildlife that frequents the area in the shadow of Kilimanjaro. The lodge itself offers visitors an exclusive experience in its private conservancy where game walks, night drives and bush breakfasts can be arranged on excursions from the rustic lodge.



CONSERVATION LOGIC: The lands around Tsavo West National Park comprise a biologically rich area, but were under severe pressure from pastoralist activity that had degraded the land from overgrazing. The landscape was also under threat of being divided and developed, which would have blocked migration routes, threatening the survival of many species that require wide habitat ranges. AWF therefore worked with local communities to establish the LUMO Community Wildlife Sanctuary, which comprises 125,000 acres of land bordering Tsavo West National Park, the Taita Hills Sanctuary and the Mwakitau.

WHO IS BENEFITING: Three communities benefit from Lions Bluff: Lualenyi, Mramba and Oza Group Ranches. Members of these communities have received training as game scouts and work as employees of the tented camp. New offices, staff quarters and a sanctuary gate were built, and a vehicle was purchased for wildlife monitoring, providing income and enhanced security for the sanctuary.

Working cooperatively, the communities and AWF have increased income and employment and trained locals in more sustainable agricultural practices that continue to supplement their income.



INFORMATION: lionsblufflodge.com



Machenje Fishing Lodge sits on the banks of the mighty Zambezi River, a stone's throw from world-class fishing in southern Zambia. The lodge is located in close proximity to world-famous Victoria Falls, Zambia's Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, Botswana's Chobe National Park, as well as the Zambezi National Park and the Matesi forest reserve in Zimbabwe, making it an ideal base for exploring some of southern Africa's most iconic sites. Accommodations are in thatch cottages that blend harmoniously with their natural surroundings.

CONSERVATION LOGIC: This region of the continent is rich in natural resources and boasts Africa's largest elephant population, which regularly roams between Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and Namibia. Increased human development, however, has led to more incidences of human-wildlife conflict and has increased pressure on the ecosystem. Recognizing the area's potential and the critical need to conserve this key elephant corridor, the Sekute Chiefdom set aside 20,000 hectares of land in exchange for AWF providing a host of economic and social benefits—including the establishment of Machenje.

WHO IS BENEFITING: Though the lodge has only recently opened, the people of the Sekute Chiefdom have already benefited from employment during construction. A number of full-time staff positions will also be reserved solely for members of the local community.

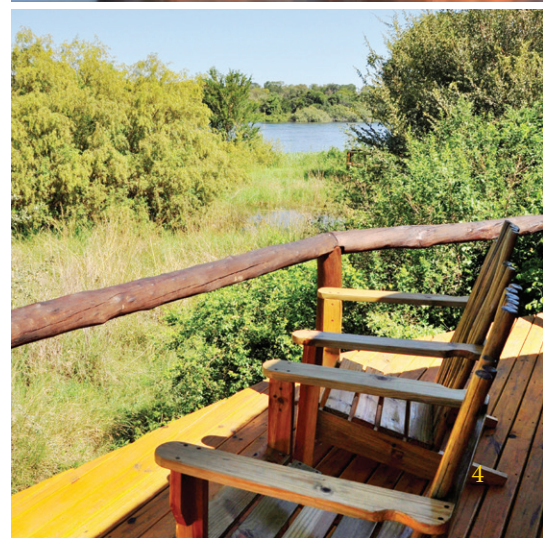
The community will receive a portion of lodge revenues, which will be put toward local development projects. Lodge revenues will also pay the salaries of the local scouts who protect the conservation area. Meanwhile, elephants now have a protected area through which they can pass peacefully between countries.

INFORMATION: machenjefishinglodge.com

LOCATION: Southern Zambia along
Zambezi River

NO. BEDS: 10

YEAR OPENED: 2013





LOCATION: Near Tarangire National Park,
Tanzania

NO. BEDS: 12

YEAR OPENED: 2010

Manyara Ranch Tented Camp sits at the heart of northern Tanzania's safari circuit. Its six safari tents provide comfortable accommodation in the bush while allowing excellent wildlife-viewing opportunities from private decks. The ranch is home to a significant wildlife population, including elephant, giraffe, wildebeest, zebra, oryx and eland. The landscape also supports carnivores, including lion, cheetah, leopard, hyena, jackal and more. All of this wildlife can be viewed from traditional safari vehicles as well as on bush walks, from horseback and during night game drives.

CONSERVATION LOGIC: The area between Lake Manyara National Park and Tarangire National Park functioned as an essential migration route between the two parks, but habitat degradation and fragmentation were posing enormous risk to the wildlife. Manyara Ranch was under threat of being sold and divided into small, unsustainable agriculture plots. Instead, AWF and the Tanzania Land Conservation Trust converted the ranch to a 44,000-acre conservation area and began working with a private-sector partner to develop new tourism opportunities.

WHO IS BENEFITING: In 2010, a semi-permanent tented camp was opened at the edge of a picturesque clearing near the conservancy's center. The tented camp has provided ongoing income to the local community and has additionally generated employment opportunities for local residents. The conservancy continues to be an operational ranch, and education in sustainable grazing practices has reduced the pressure livestock put on the landscape. Both plant and animal life has rebounded as a result.

AWF also partnered with the Annenberg Foundation to build an entirely new school campus and, more recently, a state-of-the-art IT lab, on the perimeter of the ranch.

INFORMATION: manyararanch.com





Ngoma Safari Lodge offers commanding views of the surrounding forest and the Chobe River floodplain from each of its exclusive river-facing suites. Each suite includes a sumptuous private bathroom with indoor and outdoor showers and a private outdoor sanctuary. The abundant ecosystem below sustains significant wildlife, including a large elephant population often visible from the lodge, plus lion, leopard, buffalo, zebra and giraffe.

LOCATION: Chobe, Botswana

NO. BEDS: 20

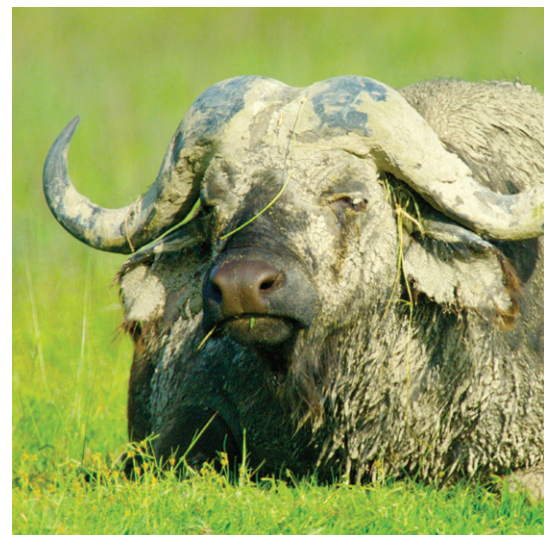
YEAR OPENED: 2010

CONSERVATION LOGIC: Chobe National Park in northern Botswana is densely populated by wildlife and boasts the world's largest elephant populations. Unfortunately, the park itself cannot provide sufficient room for all of its animal residents to roam comfortably, and animals often stray beyond the borders of the park, making them vulnerable to poaching. AWF worked with the 7,000 members of the Chobe enclave to set aside a portion of land for conservation, in return for developing Ngoma Safari Lodge.

WHO IS BENEFITING: The lodge sits in a triangle of land between two sections of Chobe National Park and the Linyanti Marsh. It serves the dual purposes of aiding wildlife protection by expanding the land available for conservation and by providing economic opportunities to locals through lodge employment and revenues, which simultaneously promotes conservation and disincentivizes poaching.

Ngoma Lodge also works closely with the Mabele Primary School by supporting its educational efforts, and allows guests to become involved in the school's development. Likewise, guests are offered the opportunity to interact with the community in Mabele Village.

INFORMATION: ngomasafarilodge.com





Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge
RWANDA

LOCATION: Near Volcanoes National Park,
Rwanda

NO. BEDS: 8

YEAR OPENED: 2007

Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge lies at the foot of Mt. Sabyinyo, one of Rwanda's quintet of dormant volcanoes, and just outside of Volcanoes National Park. In addition to being the verdant home of mountain gorillas, this region is a prime tourist destination for visitors interested in mountain climbing, forest walks and visits to the crater lakes.



CONSERVATION LOGIC: The region's lush ecosystem provides an ideal home for the endangered mountain gorilla, golden monkey and several other endemic species, but human encroachment has led to deforestation and decreasing mountain gorilla habitat. AWF assisted the local Kinigi-Nyange community in establishing Sabyinyo as a way of providing additional income and employment opportunities. Because the lodge's business is based on gorilla tourism, it further incentivizes the community to value the mountain gorillas that live nearby.

WHO IS BENEFITING: The lodge operator pays the community a percentage of total revenues as a lease fee and guarantees certain staff positions for local residents. With income from the lodge, the community has been able to build 10 school classrooms; distribute more than 150 cows to community members; build 20 houses, providing housing for 126 of the poorest members of the community; build six communal water tanks; and more.

Since Sabyinyo opened, the mountain gorilla population has increased from 380 individuals in the Virunga Massif five years ago to 480 as of the last census—a 3.7 percent annual growth.

INFORMATION: governorscamp.com





THE SANCTUARY
AT OL LENTILLE
YOUR OWN PLACE IN THE AFRICAN WILDERNESS.

The Sanctuary at Ol Lentille is perched on the flanks of a wooded kopje (hill) on the northern escarpment of Kenya's Laikipia Plateau. It boasts four luxurious, fully staffed country houses, all with courtyards, decks, gardens and lawns. Carpeted in grassy hills and deep valleys, this area is home to a wide array of wildlife, including the endangered African wild dog, greater kudu, leopard, both the spotted and striped hyena, and klipspringer.

LOCATION: Laikipia, Kenya

NO. BEDS: 16

YEAR OPENED: 2007

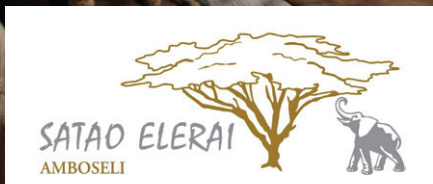
CONSERVATION LOGIC: The Laikipia Plateau holds Kenya's richest ecosystems with regard to endangered species and wildlife diversity—it boasts wildlife densities comparable only to those of the Masai Mara. This ecosystem, however, is under pressure from pastoral communities, which, as they become wealthier, expand their livestock herds, adding pressure to the delicate ecosystem and marginalizing wildlife. The Ol Lentille Conservancy was established as a partnership with the Maasai community in an effort to conserve wild lands while simultaneously allowing the community to own and profit from their land's resources.

WHO IS BENEFITING: Approximately 100 residents were employed in the lodge's construction, and many of the community members work as conservation personnel and members of staff. The community has been able to build a health clinic and provide increased educational opportunities from the lodge income. AWF also worked with the community to initiate livestock quotas and improve grazing practices. Vegetation has prospered and has attracted wildlife back to the area in increasing numbers.

The lodge's success has spurred neighboring communities to adopt similar conservation models. Indeed, the conservancy is currently in an expansion phase; when complete, three new tracts of community land will be added to become a single Ol Donyiro Conservancy.

INFORMATION: ol-lentille.com





LOCATION: Near Amboseli National Park,
Kenya

NO. BEDS: 28

YEAR OPENED: 2007

Satao Elerai Camp is set in a 5,000-acre private conservation area next to Amboseli National Park at the foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro. The area includes a rich variety of ecosystems, ranging from semi-arid savanna to wetlands, making for diverse game-viewing experiences. Guests have the unique opportunity to go on night game drives and game walks in the conservation area.



CONSERVATION LOGIC: The demands of livestock and agriculture, combined with increased development, were threatening many of the wildlife corridors that allowed for movement of elephants and other species in and out of Amboseli National Park in Kenya. AWF facilitated a partnership between the Elerai Group Ranch, the local community landowners, and Southern Cross Safaris to develop Satao Elerai Lodge. In return, the Maasai community agreed to break down fences and set aside 4,350 acres of land for conservation.

WHO IS BENEFITING: The members of the Elerai Group Ranch have been receiving income from the lodge since Day One. The community earned US\$24,000 in 2008; by 2012, that number had grown to US\$90,000. The income from the tourism operations has paid salaries of the group ranch staff and the game scouts who protect the conservation area, maintained community assets and paid for education and other social support. Wildlife surveys have confirmed an increase in wildlife numbers, and vegetation is thriving. Furthermore, development here has largely occurred away from designated conservation zones.



INFORMATION: sataoelerai.com

A Look Back: Lessons Learned

AWF has learned a number of key lessons from its years of establishing conservation lodges in Africa. These lessons now guide how our Conservation Enterprise team approaches new opportunities for development. Following are just some of AWF's best practices to ensure successful conservation enterprises, successful communities and successful achievement of conservation goals.

IDENTIFY PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS EARLY. The right operator brings to the partnership the expertise in managing tourism businesses, and can often assist—if not direct—the design and construction of the facility itself. Early engagement also provides the private sector partner an opportunity to build a level of momentum and belief in the business—critical factors that enable them to successfully sell the tourist experience.

A “build it and they will come” approach—finding a manager after the facility has been built—often leads to empty lodges and frustrated communities. If a potential operator can be found, they will often require infrastructure modifications or other alterations that are both unanticipated and expensive.

PROPER DEAL STRUCTURES WILL INCENTIVIZE THE COMMUNITY TO CONSERVE THE WILDLIFE AND WILD LANDS

ALIGN INCENTIVES OF ALL PARTIES. The right management partner will bring the required operational experience and hospitality know-how to manage an effective tourism business. Local communities, on the other hand, generally have limited expertise or desire to manage a tourism business. Where local communities often excel, however, is in the knowledge of the local wildlife, migratory patterns and general landscape.

Proper deal structures will incentivize the community to protect and conserve the wildlife and wild lands and incentivize the operator to bring more visitors to the area, generating more income. This encourages each party to focus on their area of expertise—a win-win for all involved.

SUPPORT COMMUNITIES TO USE FINANCIAL BENEFITS. Supporting the community to develop the tourism enterprise is only half of the process. AWF assists communities with development mechanisms that ensure the proper and fair distribution of tourism-based revenues. Often, AWF will work to develop or build capacity in an existing community trust, with proper governance structures and elected leaders, that will oversee the use of funds. Communities decide how the funds are used; best practices often see funds split between various initiatives, including payments to each household in a community, construction and development of health clinics, payment for school fees and other social/communal benefits.

For more information, please contact Brian McBrearity, AWF conservation enterprise director, at bmcbrearity@awf.org

A Look Ahead: Leveraging Capitalism for Conservation

By Giles Davies, investment manager, African Wildlife Capital

AWF has historically used its own, donor-driven capital to support the development of conservation tourism in key areas under threat. While this strategy has proved successful, it also has its limitations.

Simultaneously, a new segment of financial investors—impact investors—has emerged as an exciting source of capital. These investors seek financial returns, but also place a value on having impact through their investments, which is often measured in social or environmental terms.

AWF recognized this new and growing segment of the market as a potential opportunity to expand its conservation impact on the African continent, while providing financial returns to global investors.

LAUNCH OF AWC

In 2011, AWF launched African Wildlife Capital (AWC), a mission-related investment company wholly owned by, and operating under the mission of, AWF. AWC provides long-term debt and quasi-debt based development financing to conservation enterprises in Africa, including conservation tourism. The firm engages for the long term, investing capital in individual businesses for up to 10 years. Target investments typically range between US\$250,000 and US\$1.5 million.



AWC does not invest in general “green” business. A linkage must be made to priority conservation landscapes or specific wildlife populations, and investments must contain a specific conservation logic. This may include:

- Generating income that can sustain the operations of a conservation area or initiative;
- Generating economic and social benefits for local communities, creating incentives to conserve a target conservation area or wildlife population; and
- Increasing the productivity of buffer landscapes in a manner that reduces encroachment into neighboring natural areas.

AWC has pioneered the use of “Conservation Covenants”—key conservation requirements incorporated in each of its investment contracts that provide a basis for measuring a business’s non-financial, conservation-driven returns.

AWC takes pride in its disciplined commercial approach explicitly linked to conservation. As of mid-2013, the company has invested in conservation enterprises in the tourism, agricultural and livestock sectors across both East and Southern Africa. Grootberg Lodge in Namibia and Bale Mountain Lodge in Ethiopia are two such AWC investments in the tourism sector—providing further opportunities for tourists to visit scenic locales while supporting local conservation.



LOCATION: Bale Mountain National Park, Ethiopia

Bale Mountain Lodge is a planned boutique lodge set in the pristine wilderness of south-central Ethiopia's Bale Mountain National Park. The park, Africa's largest remaining tract of Afro-alpine moorland, cloud forest and grasslands, supports a number of endemic species, such as Ethiopian wolves, mountain nyala and Menelik's bushbuck. The lodge is set to open in late 2013.

INVESTMENT LOGIC: AWC's direct financial investment in the lodge represents the first commercial foray of a high-end, low-impact lodge in Ethiopia's national park system. Currently, none of Ethiopia's national parks is financially

self-sufficient, and local populations engage in illegal logging, poaching and farming activities. Through this investment, AWC seeks to stimulate the development of a robust conservation based industry throughout Ethiopia.

WHO IS BENEFITING: AWC anticipates that Bale Mountain Lodge will create 50 permanent jobs as well as additional economic benefits through local suppliers and service providers. These jobs are an important first step in demonstrating the value of Ethiopia's wild lands to both residents and government officials who have not yet capitalized on the potential of their national parks.

INFORMATION: balemountainlodge.com



LOCATION: Damaraland, Namibia

Grootberg Lodge Grootberg Lodge offers luxury accommodations in Namibia's Damaraland region. The location presents a unique array of activities, from tracking desert elephants and rhinos to visiting an authentic Himba village or exploring this arid landscape on horseback.

INVESTMENT LOGIC: Grootberg Lodge is the first lodge in Namibia to be fully owned by a community conservancy. The 850,000-acre Khoadi-Hoas Conservancy has 2,000 members with varying levels of household wealth. While the lodge enjoys a high occupancy rate and provides 30 jobs in a region where employment is hard to come

by, several structural design flaws have limited its potential. AWC's investment allowed Grootberg to make improvements that would increase its economic value.

WHO IS BENEFITING: The updated lodge is expected to offer returns of more than four times the current annual distribution of US\$45,000 to the local community. Employment could also increase by more than 30%. The lodge has established a fund to renovate one of the only primary schools in the area, With an educational trust to assist families that cannot afford schooling. Meanwhile, wildlife has returned to the conservancy as the land has recovered.

INFORMATION: grootberg.com

About African Wildlife Foundation

Founded in 1961, the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) is a leading conservation organization focused solely on the African continent. AWF's programs and conservation strategies are based on sound science and designed to protect both the wild lands and wildlife of Africa and ensure a more sustainable future for Africa's people. Since its inception, AWF has protected endangered species and land, promoted conservation enterprises that benefit local African communities and trained hundreds of African nationals in conservation—all to ensure the survival of Africa's unparalleled wildlife heritage. AWF is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Kenya and registered as a 501(c)(3) in the United States. For more information, visit: awf.org



*Various lodges within this
book were developed with financial
support from the following funding partners:*



*This book was developed with
financial support from:*



Royal Netherlands Embassy



AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION®

Headquarters

Ngong Road, Karen | P.O. Box 310, 00502 | Nairobi, Kenya
+254 20 2765000

Washington, DC Office

1400 Sixteenth Street, NW, Suite 120 | Washington, DC 20036 USA
+1 888 494 5354 | fax +1 202 939 3332

africanwildlife@awf.org | awf.org