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CONSERVATION  
LEADERSHIP



**AFRICAN WILDLIFE  
FOUNDATION**

# AWF FIELD UPDATE

*A roundup of field highlights from  
the African Wildlife Foundation*

**APRIL 2022**



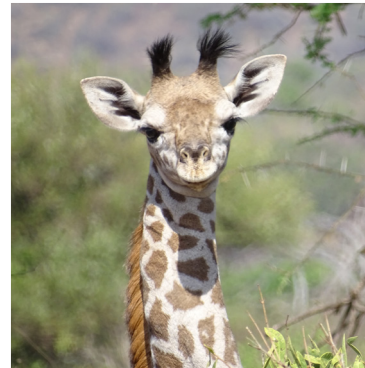
## KENYA

# TSAVO

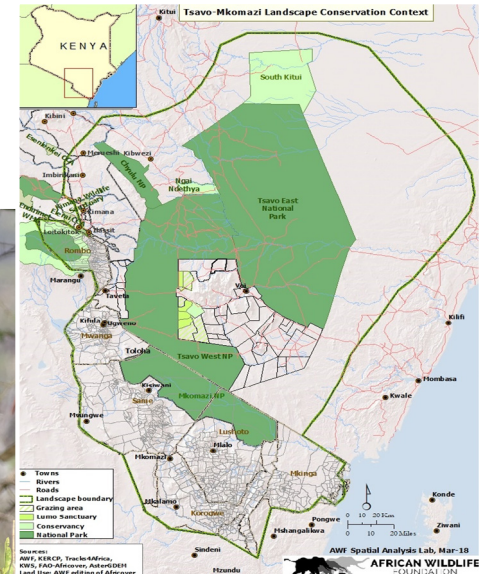
**AWF continues to provide technical support to judicial officers to ensure appropriate punishment of wildlife traffickers in Kenya and Tanzania. Between October and the end of December 2021, AWF's court monitors found that 176 wildlife crime cases were prosecuted. Of these, 21 involved the possession and ferrying of bushmeat and wildlife trophies.**

Over 700 kilograms of bushmeat were recovered. Among trophy cases, elephant ivory was the most trafficked, with 6 kilograms of elephant tusks seized. The conviction rates shot up to 100 percent during the quarter, as 77 cases out of the 124 tried returned a guilty verdict.

In this same period, AWF also worked with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) to organize a training workshop for members of the Kenya Magistrates and Judges Association (KMJA) to sensitize them to the realities and costs of wildlife crime. “We will continue engaging, sharing knowledge, and applying what is learned in our daily operations



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in the courts. Further, we will work hand in hand to help curb the menace of bushmeat crimes and poaching by providing sufficient sentences to wildlife offenders. KMJA is grateful to KWS and AWF for partnering to plan this workshop in order to engage us in wildlife matters,” said a participant.

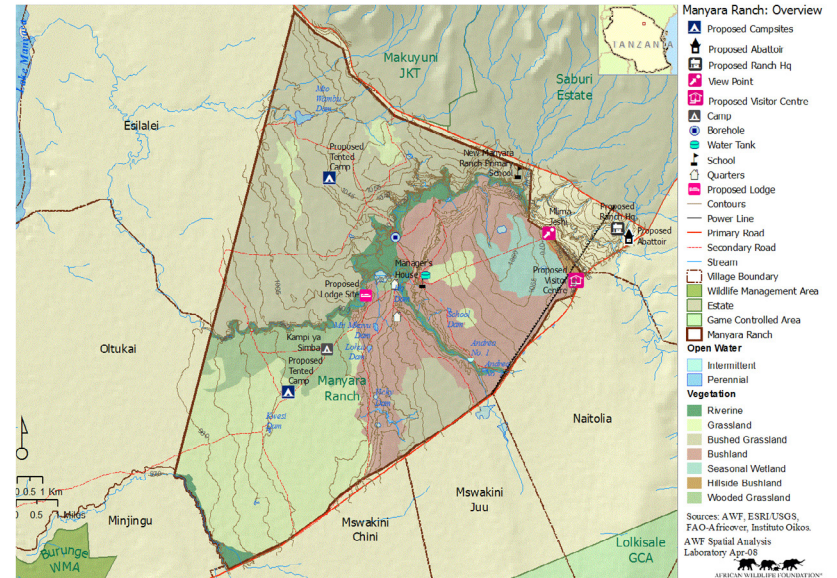
## TANZANIA

# MANYARA RANCH

**Anti-poaching work at Manyara Ranch continues through the AWF-supported Honeyguide Foundation, a grassroots nonprofit organization that organizes security patrols and uses AWF-trained sniffer dogs to track the movements of poachers and wildlife traffickers.**

On average, Honeyguide’s rangers patrol the ranch for eight hours daily, increasing the patrol time to 12 hours in hotspots when poaching activity is suspected. From October and December, the rangers conducted 187 patrols over more than 4,250 kilometers. Sadly, they found 22 wildlife carcasses, including those of elephants, zebras, and giraffes. All wildlife deaths were due to natural causes, and all the elephant tusks were accounted for. No human-wildlife conflicts or livestock predation were recorded in the quarter.

“Honeyguide rangers working at Manyara Ranch appreciate the support provided by AWF, including better working conditions, training, work plans, sharing of ideas, and cooperation with



communities near the ranch,” said a Honeyguide ranger. “We’re also thankful for the car replacement bought by AWF, which facilitates our daily activities in habitat and wildlife protection within this crucial wildlife corridor.”

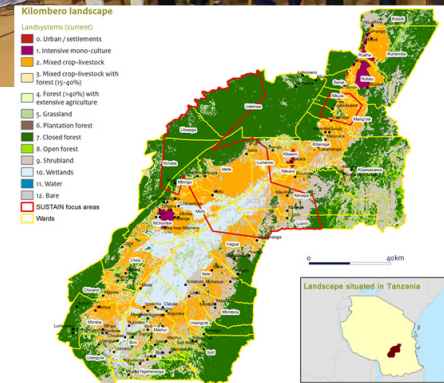
## TANZANIA

# KILOMBERO

**AWF presented five papers at the 13th Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute Conference in Arusha in December 2021. The three-day conference, themed “Wildlife Research for Enhanced Biodiversity Conservation and Livelihood Improvement,” sought to give governmental representatives, wildlife management authorities, conservation organizations, and the public a greater understanding of current conservation challenges facing Tanzania and the world.**

AWF’s papers included studies on giraffes, the landscape conservation process, engagement of community wildlife scouts, and socio-economic status of communities living in proximity to wildlife areas. They provide scientific grounding for AWF’s conservation work, contribute much-needed knowledge on conservation, and help raise the profile of Africans as conservation authorities and thought leaders.

“AWF employs applied science to make informed decisions to save wildlife and wild lands,” said AWF Species Conservation Officer Amos Muthiuru, who



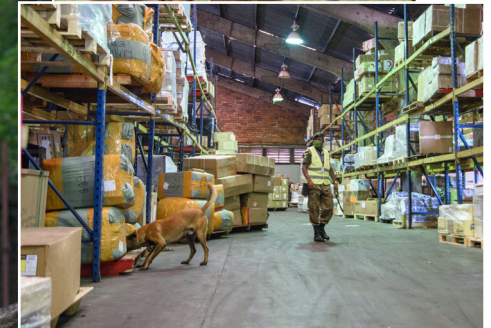
had carried out the giraffe research and presented it during the conference. “The need to support local studies to generate more information is paramount to decision-making. The importance of the study I undertook was to show the varying roles of different habitats under different management regimes within the Tsavo Conservation Area. This study will help establish priority conservation areas and support management of habitats that play key roles in giraffe conservation.”

## UGANDA

# MURCHISON FALLS NATIONAL PARK

**The presence of an AWF-supported canine unit on the periphery of the Murchison Falls National Park is turning the tide on poaching and wildlife trafficking in Uganda. Data from Quarter 2 shows that the dogs searched over 700,000 pieces of cargo and luggage, covering the Uganda-South Sudan border and Pakwach Bridge, a major artery that serves as the key entry to the western part of the country.**

“The canine unit has played a key role in the reduction of cases of transboundary wildlife trafficking because we have intensified border and highway spot checks,” said a representative of the Ugandan Wildlife Authority (UWA). “For example, before the establishment of the canine unit, Uganda was among eight countries code-named ‘the gang of eight’ by CITES for its role in severe transboundary wildlife trafficking. In 2018, Uganda was cleared from the gang of eight due to the successful seizures and arrests made by the canine unit both at the airport and during intelligence-led field operations.”



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## RWANDA

# VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK

**Forest restoration for the planned expansion of Volcanoes National Park has achieved major milestones. Working with a local contractor, AWF and the Rwanda Development Board have planted bamboo seedlings and other native species on the 27-hectare expansion area that AWF donated to the Rwandan government in 2018. This rehabilitated forest patch provides habitat for mountain gorillas and other species such as golden monkeys and serves as a pilot for further park restoration.**

As it helps restore the forest, the project provides much-needed income to area communities. It currently employs 38 people: five at the nursery, 31 undertaking planting and land prep, and two field guards.

“The (forest landscape restoration) project has rented my land to establish tree nurseries, and the income I got helped me to pay for school fees for my children. In addition, I am now registered into a retirement scheme and a community health



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insurance plan and was also able also to buy two cows, from which I get milk and organic manure — all as a result of this project. We are very supportive of this project and we will help to maintain the planted trees and protect the park,” said Ezekiel Munyamasoko, a community member.



## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

# BILI-UELE

**AWF is equipping fishing communities in the remote Bili-Uele landscape with skills and tools designed to improve their livelihoods and curb the overexploitation of natural resources.**

Under a project funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, AWF organized training and capacity-building workshops in the Bili-Mbomu Protected Area Complex in two territories that cover six fishing sites.

The workshops addressed fish farming; conservation of fish; processing and storage of fish; handling of fresh fish; improved fishing techniques; the manufacture, assembly, and maintenance of fishing gear; the manufacture of innovative instruments such as chorkors for smoking fish; smoking racks; and drying techniques and equipment.

At the end of these trainings, AWF distributed fishing equipment to the local community and supported them in setting up fishponds.



“We have been trained on the creation of ponds and our hearts are filled with joy,” said Alibe Kusala, a fisherman. “With this training, we have the assurance of having several varieties of fish available, without worrying about the right time to fish. Before AWF came to our rescue, we thought that one cannot raise fish like one does poultry. But the knowledge we have gained is changing that. Instead of poisoning the streams to get more fish, we are now going to feed our own fish and get as many as we can.”



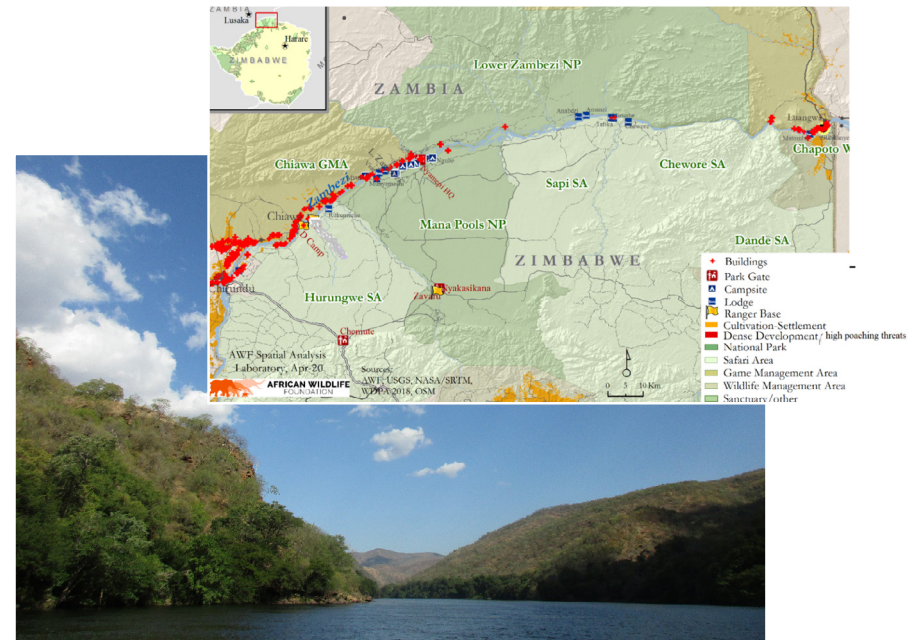
## ZIMBABWE

# MANA POOLS, ZAMBEZI VALLEY

**Between November 1 and December 16, 2021, AWF provided 18 security officers training toward Launch Master certificates to qualify them as boat drivers. The trainees included 12 officers from the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (Zimparks) and six from the Zimbabwe National Army. Rosemary Kateguru, a 24-year-old ranger from the marginalized Va Doma tribe in eastern Zimbabwe, was one of the officers who graduated and the first woman in Zimbabwe to acquire such a qualification.**

“I am very proud of myself, and I am thankful to AWF and Zimparks. They have transformed my life and my career. I am proof that even a girl from the Va Doma can achieve great things if supported and given an opportunity,” she said.

Rosemary and her crew are part of anti-poaching river patrols along the Zambezi River, part of the AWF-supported transboundary conservation work in the Lower Zambezi. Between October and the end of December, forces conducted 30 river patrols and 10 land patrols, covering a 205-km Zambezi



river stretch and 350 square kilometers on land. The patrols resulted in three arrests for illegal fishing and recovery of over 400 meters of illegal fishing nets. So effective have these patrols been that no elephant or other big-game poaching was recorded or detected during the period.





## ZIMBABWE

# MBIRE AND HURUNGWE

**In October 2021, Desire Chisunga, a 31-year-old community wildlife scout from Mbire District in Zimbabwe, fulfilled a lifelong dream and opened a barbershop. He received two hair clippers, a small solar panel, power inverter, battery, and controller under AWF's "Livelihoods and Conservation Enterprises for Game Scouts and Communities in Mbire District," a project funded by a generous AWF donor.**

"The African Wildlife Foundation has really transformed my life through their projects. I now have an alternative source of income apart from conserving wildlife," said Desire. "I am now capable of taking care of myself and family without struggling much."

He charges US \$1 for adults and US \$0.50 for children. By the end of November 2021, he had made US \$20 profit from his small business. He used part of his earnings to buy a fan for the comfort of his clients enduring Mbire's sweltering temperatures.



The livelihoods project promotes wildlife conservation by reducing pressure on natural resources and enhancing sustainable livelihoods for game scouts and their respective communities. It has so far provided seven scouts with equipment for small, sustainable businesses. In addition, over 40 youths have benefited from trainings related to online entrepreneurship resources. Additionally, 21 women are now making and selling bar soap, petroleum jelly, and perfume using non-timber forest products.

The project directly supports conservation initiatives too. For instance, it has facilitated the installation of satellite Wi-Fi hardware to support the transfer of data from ranger or scout teams in the field to the central district units. Quicker and easier communication means faster response times that improve conservation outcomes.



## ZIMBABWE

# CHIREDDZI

**Chiredzi is a wildlife-rich, semi-arid area where rainfall is limited, and residents are forced to compete for water and food with wildlife. This competition for resources inevitably leads to human-wildlife conflict.**

To build climate change resilience, AWF provided training to 300 farmers in three wards on climate-smart agriculture and provided seed for drought-tolerant varieties of sorghum and groundnuts.

“The biggest challenge we face here is serious drought every year. After years and years of no harvest, with climate-smart agriculture techniques that conserve soil and water I’ve managed to harvest five bags of unshelled groundnuts,” said 53-year-old Ronica Masibhera, a project participant. Her fellow smallholder farmers who used conventional farming methods saw smaller harvests, she said.





## CAMEROON

# FARO NATIONAL PARK

**Oumma Djaoudji is a 25-year-old woman living on the periphery of Faro National Park. She is part of an AWF-supported community team created to address transhumance — seasonal, migratory livestock herding that in this landscape poses a threat to habitat and creates competition for resources with local communities. The unit is known as TANGO (the full name is the Association for Peaceful Management of Transhumance).**

TANGO is an elite group of Fulani cattle herders and community members chosen by fellow community members for their honesty, integrity, leadership abilities and, most importantly, their love for biodiversity. TANGO’s mission is to raise awareness of the harmful effects of transhumance in the protected area and dialogue with herders to secure alternative pasture zones that do not threaten the fragile ecosystem.

“Since my enrollment as a TANGO team member, I have seen a lot of progress both in conservation and in my personal life,” said Djaoudji.



“The project has helped to reduce conflict between protected-area managers and herder communities. In addition, the allowances I earn as a TANGO member have made my life better.”

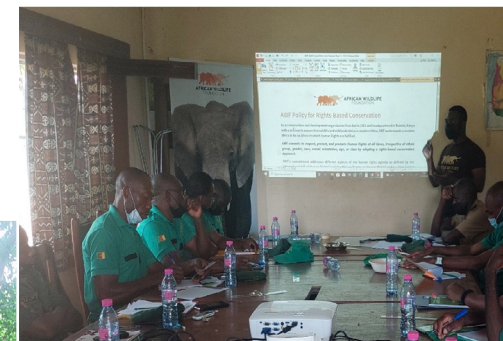


## CAMEROON

# CAMPO MA'AN

**Between October to December 2021, AWF helped organize 38 anti-poaching patrols in the landscape, supporting the ranger teams with patrol rations and fuel. The rangers covered 2,347 kilometers. The patrols led to the seizure of four shotguns, 25 pieces of ammunition, 600 kilograms of bushmeat, and the arrest of three poachers. During the same period, 30 rangers also received training on patrol tactics, communication, and different data collection methods using tools such as SMART, a field data management software. The training also included a module on human rights, in keeping with AWF's rights-based conservation approach.**

“AWF has continued to provide support to protected-area management, which is helping to unveil the level of pressure faced by the protected area. The good results we have gotten from anti-poaching operations during this quarter are due to a collaboration between AWF and the Cameroon government to target poaching hotspots. I believe AWF will continue to strengthen this support to



help address threats to biodiversity,” said Sambou Mamballa Patrick, conservator of Campo Ma’an National Park.

A direct impact of these efforts shows a thriving wildlife population in the landscape during the period under review. Camera traps captured images of 31 species of large, medium, and small mammals and birds, including elephants, gorillas, chimpanzees, giant pangolins, and mandrills. The highlight was the encounter rate of elephants observed outside the protected area in the forest management unit, where the pachyderms appearing in all 10 cameras installed.



## CAMEROON

# DJA

**December festivities in Dja were exceptionally cheerful last year, with cocoa farmers enjoying a harvest boom that brought them over US \$26,000 in profits. Seventy-four farmers, all part of AWF’s sustainable livelihoods program in the landscape, produced more than 17,000 tons of cocoa, which they sold through market value chains developed by AWF. The farmers also enjoyed training workshops on sorting, fermenting, and weighing cocoa for best market value, as well as the role that sustainable cocoa farming plays in conservation.**

“I started a shop and I have now started constructing a house with money from cocoa cultivation. I just paid for building blocks from the sale of the last cocoa harvest,” says Jacques Nkol, a community leader in Kolenkul village and one of the beneficiaries of AWF’s sustainable livelihoods support activities.

Nkol is a rehabilitated poacher who left the illegal trade to pursue farming. “I have stopped poaching,” he said. “The advice I can give to my children is to stop poaching. We need to cultivate cocoa.



Poaching is not good because we destroy the forest, and this forest is not only for ourselves but for everyone in the country, so we have to preserve it for our well-being,” he added.

AWF has also helped the farmers set up and develop a cocoa farmers co-op (currently with more than 110 members), which not only allows them to enjoy better prices for their products, but also provides a vehicle for savings and investment.



# COMBATING CYBER TRAFFICKING OF AFRICA'S WILDLIFE

**In December, AWF handed over badly needed forensic workstations to the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). The four workstations ensure that UWA investigators can adequately investigate and prosecute wildlife cybercrime. The stations included the requisite software to enhance wildlife cybercrime forensics.**

Following the handover, AWF conducted a Digital and Electronic Evidence Training of Trainers Workshop for UWA officials and Uganda Police Force. The workshop taught the investigators to train first responders in digital-evidence identification, acquisition, storage, chain of custody, and case management.

“The world has become small as a result of the internet. Business can be done digitally, and so can crime. As such, law enforcement must stay ahead of the game to ensure that we disrupt this new frontier for wildlife crime,” said Bashir Hangi, UWA communications manager. “We must learn how to collect evidence acceptable in a court of law in order to successfully prosecute suspects.



This training is therefore very important to build the capacity of our investigating officers. We are grateful to AWF for all their support.”