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VISION

An Africa where human development includes thriving wildlife and extensive wild lands as cultural and economic assets for Africa's future generations.

MISSION

To ensure that wildlife and wild lands thrive in modern Africa.

APPROACH

To engage and support leadership at all levels in their efforts to stabilize Africa's wildlife habitats, protect wildlife and wild lands, eliminate illegal wildlife trade, and ensure the development of Africa is inclusive and green.

EMPHASIZING PARTNERSHIPS & A CRITICAL CONSERVATION MESSAGE



Dear AWF friends,

AWF enters the new decade with an ambitious and hopeful 10-year strategic vision. Carefully devised over several months, it's a comprehensive plan that in all aspects reflects our commitment to partnership and collaboration.

Whether fostering African conservation leadership, protecting wildlife, or conserving land and habitats — we can't do it alone. Nor should we. Conservation will only succeed over the long term and benefit the greatest number of people if its goals, planning, costs, and benefits reside with those who have most at stake — in this case, the governments, communities, and people of Africa.

That's why AWF emphasizes African leadership engagement and development as a primary means of creating large-scale change and conservation commitments. It's why one of our major activities in the next 10 years will be mobilizing women and youth to generate and demand conservation action.

We are advancing our advocacy and policy collaborations with African and global leaders, always with the immediate goal of elevating the African voice, which too often has been left out of international deliberations that impact African people, wildlife, and lands.

We've also adopted a new implementing structure, basing our activities out of country programs designed to reflect, serve, and inform national visions and sustainable development plans. This new alignment to our focal countries (Cameroon, Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe) will support our efforts to engage national leaders and other decisionmakers in critical conservation matters.

I've shared a bit about our forward momentum. Annual reports, of course, look at the year just passed. How many times have we each felt or thought, "What a year it's been."

In these pages, you can read about AWF's model response to the COVID-19 crisis, one that recognized the links between ecosystem and community health. We acted quickly to help communities survive and grow resilience to future pandemics or other crises. We supported protected-area authorities and staff. We convened multiple sectors to learn their needs and provide a platform for sharing solutions and developing collaborations.



Kaddu visits community mushroom farm © Talking Films

COVID-19 highlighted the links between human health and the misuse and exploitation of natural resources. Amid this heightened ecological awareness, AWF has a highly resonant message: Our wildlife and wild lands are inherently valuable, but their care is also a matter of our continued existence on Earth. In addition to the moral reasons, we must protect biodiversity for our own sakes.

I want to relay my profound thanks to you who recognized the terrible challenges facing African communities and protected areas. You stepped up to support our COVID-19 response. I hope as you review our activities, you find we have fulfilled expectations. I can tell you we not only raised our profile as Africa's conservation leader, we also deepened and strengthened essential conservation partnerships.

Most importantly, we helped prevent the loss of decades' worth of conservation gains and provided material relief and hope for struggling communities. Thank you for being a partner with us in this vital work.

Sincerely,

Selm

Kaddu Sebunya AWF Chief Executive Officer



In Memoriam H.E. BENJAMIN MKAPA: A SAGE CHAMPION FOR WILDLIFE & WILD LANDS

n July 24, 2020, Africa and the world lost an exceptional leader, former Tanzanian President H. E. Benjamin Mkapa, who served on AWF's Board of Trustees for 14 years, including nine years as vice-chair.

Mkapa's AWF journey started when then-CEO Patrick Bergin, who had lived and worked in Tanzania, made a humble request: Would the former president like to join AWF's board? Mkapa agreed, becoming a member in 2006. AWF trustees were thrilled that such an esteemed leader, skilled politician, and committed conservationist would help shape the future of African wildlife conservation.

AWF Senior Vice President Craig Sholley describes Mkapa as a great listener. "During board meetings, he would listen attentively, look for an opportunity to speak, and raise his hand. He would invariably go on to represent an insightful and forward-thinking African perspective." At times, his remarks aligned with the direction in which AWF was heading. At other times, he "helped everyone on the board recognize that maybe a westernized approach was not the way to go."

Mkapa was an architect of one of AWF's leading principles, that conservation versus development is a false choice. He encouraged African decisionmakers to prioritize conservation and integrate sustainability goals into development plans as the only way to assure long-term well-being for people, wildlife, and wild lands.

As Tanzania's president from 1995 to 2005, Mkapa worked to further sustainable development, strengthen Tanzanian democracy, entrench civil rights, and reduce poverty. One of his most notable achievements was his revitalization of the civil service. He also actively participated in international politics, instituting economic reforms and winning financial support from the International Monetary Fund and other actors.

He played an enormous role in Tanzanian conservation, pioneering community ownership and involvement. This approach paved the way





1: © David Macharia 2,3: At Esilalei Women's Cultural Boma © Mohamed Hashim 4: Volcanoes National Park expansion, Rwanda © Timothy Mukoya

for the preservation of places like Tanzania's Manyara Ranch — part of a vital wildlife corridor and a model, mixed-use, protected area (conservation and livestock).

Mkapa worked with the Uongozi Institute to create a space for Africa's influential elders to interact with young people around the continent's strategic challenges and find sustainable solutions. He was a mentor to many, including AWF CEO Kaddu Sebunya, with whom he immediately connected.

"Mkapa's commitment to wildlife conservation and his brilliant diplomatic statesmanship were second to none," Sebunya said. "He was passionate and clear-eyed about what works best in conservation — plans and policies that blend conservation priorities with Africa's development aspirations."



He was passionate and clear-eyed about what works best in conservation: plans and policies that blend conservation priorities with Africa's development aspirations.

KADDU SEBUNYA AWF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Just before his death, Mkapa was vocal about COVID-19's potential impact on conservation. In the face of travel restrictions and the shuttering of tourism, he urged AWF to be proactive to avoid losing decades of conservation gains, and he helped shape AWF's comprehensive COVID-19 response.

We are deeply grateful for the tireless service and exemplary leadership President Mkapa provided to AWF throughout his later life. It is no exaggeration to say that Africa's wildlife and wild lands never had a better champion.

In his honor, we are excited to launch the Benjamin Mkapa African Wildlife Photography Awards. Go to awf.org/mkapa to find out more. "

• AWF very quickly recognized that COVID-19 and its impact were not just about wildlife, but about wildlife and people — park managers and employees, communities and community members dependent on tourism, and others. We created solutions that ultimately benefited all.⁹⁹

CHARLY FACHEUX VICE-PRESIDENT, CONSERVATION STRATEGY

From the office to field & villages: AWF's COVID-19 response

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, AWF grappled with several unknowns. It was apparent that Africa's tourism industry would take an unprecedented blow. What would happen to the communities whose welfare linked directly to tourism — to safaris, guided treks, lodges, tourists spending money on food and crafts, drivers, and more? Without their livelihoods, people might turn to poaching. Certainly, subsistence hunting would increase. When it came to keeping communities disease-free, how challenging would interventions be in the remotest areas? How could we help ensure the health of our staff members, especially those in the field?

AWF moved quickly to 1) help communities prevent disease transmission, access sustainable means of survival, and strengthen resilience in the face of future crises and 2) provide support to parks and other protected areas for continued operations. In spring, based on a plan presented by senior management, the board of trustees quickly and unanimously approved an allocation of \$1.65 million to support AWF's COVID-19 emergency response

© Martin Jum







1,2: Mask-making, Dja, Cameroon © TFRD 3: Food distribution in wake of wildlife-tourism shutdown, Simien Mountains © AWF

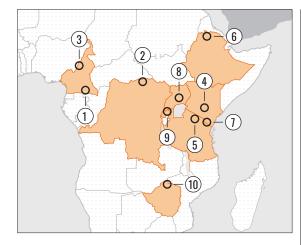
WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

Whith the organizing assistance of our landscape technical advisors, we provided handwashing stations, face masks, gloves, and sanitizers to scores of communities, even in remote areas such as the Bili-Uele Protected Area Complex in the northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We also ensured communities received virus-prevention information in the form of educational posters, information kits, and Q&A sessions — with area doctors' participation where possible.

Our commitment to serving communities in difficult places was never in question. "We didn't even consider closing offices or pulling staff. We are rooted in these field locations," said AWF's Vice President of Global Leadership Eric Coppenger. "There was nowhere for us to go because we live in these communities." In Dja, Cameroon, AWF and our partner Tropical Forest and Rural Development trained women from a local women's cooperative to make face masks and soaps; we also provided the raw materials. In just three days, the women made, and we helped distribute, 1,000 face masks and 1,596 bars of soap for area communities.

In Ethiopia, AWF distributed rations to the vulnerable Gich community outside Simien Mountains National Park. We also organized a cash-for-work program that paid over 600 community members to maintain the park by clearing rubbish, shoring up trails, and pulling invasive plants. To raise COVID-19 awareness in this remote area, we broadcast prevention information on rural radio stations.



AWF'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IMPLEMENTATION

1 DJA FAUNAL RESERVE,	6 SIMIEN MOUNTAINS,
CAMEROON	ETHIOPIA
2 BILI-UELE PROTECTED	1) TSAVO-MKOMAZI,
AREA, DRC	KENYA
(3) FARO NATIONAL PARK,	(8) UGANDA WILDLIFE
CAMEROON	AUTHORITY, UGANDA
(4) KENYA WILDLIFE	(9) VOLCANOES NATIONAL
SERVICE, KENYA	PARK, RWANDA
(5) SERENGETI NATIONAL	ZAMBEZI VALLEY,
PARK, TANZANIA	ZIMBABWE

Working in protected areas

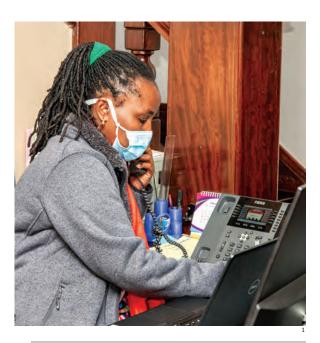
AWF also provided financial and material relief to those on the front lines of wildlife protection — scouts, rangers, conservancy staff, etc.

The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), for example, received 15 tons of maize flour, six tons of beans, and 500 liters of cooking oil to enable rangers to carry out their daily duties in the face of park closures and revenue loss. Our support helped the UWA maintain patrols and other security operations in Kidepo, Murchison, Queen Elizabeth, Lake Mburo, and Bwindi national parks. We also provided equipment worth 3.7 million Kenyan shillings to the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) for Lake Nakuru National Park's antipoaching unit.

Our policy and external affairs teams also played an important role — convening members of various sectors such as civil society, tourism, and protected-area management to facilitate collaboration and problem-solving (*See "AWF as a Convener," page 14*).

OTHER SUPPORT FOR PARKS & CONSERVANCIES





Keeping staff safe

AWF prioritized staff health and well-being throughout the year. For instance, at our Nairobi headquarters, we issued a work-fromhome order the day after Kenya reported its first COVID-19 case in March. We remained engaged with staff through our exceptional human resources staff, IT team, and an interdepartmental COVID-19 task force, which provided regional and national COVID-19 updates and weekly reports on every department's work.

In all decision-making, AWF consulted country directors so that policies would reflect the realities in different countries. As lockdowns eased and infection rates dropped, we instituted a return-towork plan, which we are implementing in phases. Staff in Africa, the US, and the UK are returning to work on a voluntary basis, which means many employees continue to work from home. All offices ensure protective measures such as mask requirements, easily accessible sanitizers, and kitchen closures.





1-3: A look at AWF's COVID-19 prevention measures and response planning, inside and just outside our Nairobi headquarters © AWF
4: Waiting for food and PPE, Simiens © AWF 5: AWF provided PPE to schoolchildren in our landscapes © Talking Films 6: Precautions at Manyara Ranch Conservancy, Tanzania © AWF



AWF'S COVID-19 RESPONSE GOAL: TO LIMIT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 AND REDUCE ITS IMPACT ON VULNERABLE WILDLIFE AND WILDLANDS CONSERVATION





Looking ahead

AWF's proactive, strategic COVID-19 response exemplified our core values — particularly our human-centered approach to wildlife conservation — strengthened many of our critical conservation partnerships, and elevated our standing as Africa's conservation leader.

"2020 dished out its share of challenges," said Lindsay Kosnik, AWF's vice president of development and public engagement. "But we tackled them with patience, perseverance, and thoughtfulness, and as a result, worst-case scenarios did not materialize for wildlife. Even our fundraising remained on course.

"I am personally excited for 2021, and that's largely because of the talented and hardworking people who are AWF. And our passionate donors, who recognized the realities and stepped up to support our COVID-19 response."





BRINGING HOPE TO REMOTE COMMUNITIES DURING A PANDEMIC

We got personal protective

equipment and information

hen we think about those on the pandemic's front lines, it's nurses, doctors, and other healthcare workers who come to mind. At AWF, field staff such as Julien Nkono are heroes as well, helping to ensure communities receive essential protective materials and information.

While most AWF staff members worked from home during the pandemic's first months, Nkono undertook an unusually challenging journey, primarily by motorcycle. He and a driver traveled hundreds of kilometers to deliver critical materials to communities in remote parts

of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The pair biked over 900 to communities who had kilometers, often using forest trails, hacking through thick accessing either. undergrowth and crossing gaps or waterways via shaky bridges. "It was a tough journey," Nkono said. "More than once, the driver and I fell off the bike more effec into the water in areas where bridges were training, m in bad shape." accept that

Traveling only during the day and resting at night, they finally reached Lomako, where AWF and the Arcus Foundation established the Lomako Conservation Science Center to support bonobo research. The center would act as Nkono's base for the awareness campaign and the distribution of face masks, handwashing stations, sanitizers, and informational posters.

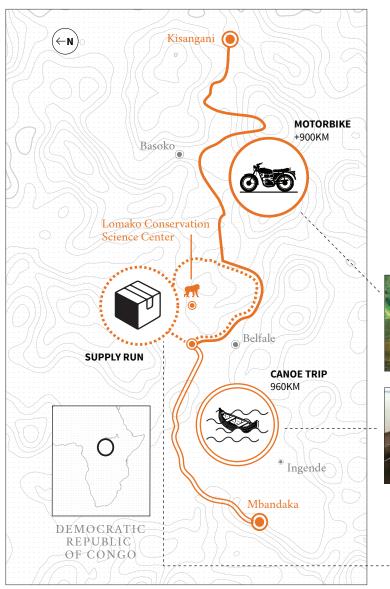
Although he had reached Lomako, Nkono's journey was not nearly over. He now had to buy the sensitization materials and protective equipment, which meant a 500-kilometer boat ride to Mbandaka — four days downstream and seven days upstream for the return journey.

Finally, the sensitization campaign could get underway. The targets were villages, schools,

marketplaces, hospitals, and churches, while the goal was to provide desperately needed PPE. "I mobilized a team made up of AWF staff, the wildlife management authority (*Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature*), and local government authorities to get the work done," he says.

To make the sensitization more effective, Julien involved doctors in the training, making it easier for the communities to accept that COVID-19 was real.

Later, from a Kinshasa hotel where he had stopped to rest for a few days, he reflected on the trip with satisfaction. "We got personal protective equipment and information to communities who had no other avenues of accessing either. The people now had a front-line defense against the



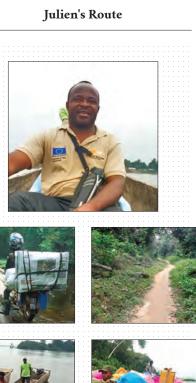
ABOVE: AWF's Julien Nkono made a heroic journey to deliver PPE and COVID-19 information to villages in remote DRC © AWF **1-2** (*at left*): AWF COVID-19 response in the DRC © AWF

disease. They knew why it was important to wear masks and to wash their hands.

"Making this kind of impact is why I got into conservation as a ranger nearly 20 years ago."

As for the rigors of the assignment, he said: "I'm used to tough conditions, and the results of my work keep me motivated, even when sometimes the challenges seem insurmountable.

"I hope to safeguard wildlife and empower communities for many more years to come."









AWF as a convener

Founded in 1961 during Africa's independence movement, AWF has always worked to foster African conservation leadership. Conservation success can endure only if ownership resides with those who bear the greatest costs and benefits. In our first years, we helped found the Mweka College of African Wildlife Management in Tanzania, and we provided scholarships to students who shared our vision of wildlife and wild lands as core to African heritage and futures. Today, many of these early partners are our colleagues, heading national wildlife ministries, environmental offices, educational institutions, and other organizations.

Through our 2020-2030 strategic vision, AWF has renewed and revitalized our commitment to African leadership. One of three fundamental goals is to promote African leaders who can help shape and drive policies, plans, and financing that leverages wildlife and wild lands as essential to

Mweka College, archival photograph



African Diplomatic Corps meeting at AWF HQ © AWF

development. In practice, this means we elevate the voices of those committed to conservation and convene our partners and other African leaders in global, pan-African, and national decision-making that will shape the future for wildlife.

Strengthening our role as a convener is critical to promoting African voices and leaders. Rather than look on as global processes dictate conservation efforts on the continent, we're supporting groups with the greatest interest in these conversations to not only articulate their interests but gain access to and reshape conversations if necessary.

Africa Protected Areas Congress

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, AWF's role as a convener took on new urgency. We responded quickly and strategically to help our partners navigate these difficult waters. In May, AWF CEO Kaddu Sebunya hosted the first of two listening sessions with protected-area directors to understand the needs, threats, and opportunities the COVID-19 crisis presented. The two sessions helped AWF prepare targeted, relevant COVID-19 responses and gave the protected-area heads a chance to build relationships, share challenges and winning strategies, and discuss diversifying funding models so that any tourism stoppages in the future would not be catastrophic.

These meetings were precursors to the APAC, which is rescheduled for 2022. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature has asked AWF to co-host the Congress, the first of its kind. It will unite representatives from all 54 African governments, NGOs, protected-area managers, conservation financiers and investors, and community representatives to discuss biodiversity challenges and highlight what works in conservation. The organizers seek to develop a unified voice regarding the value and management of protected areas, conservation goals (including development of the CBD global biodiversity framework), and sustainable development.





African CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) Biodiversity Alliance

Under AWF External Affairs Vice President Fred Kumah, AWF has established an alliance of civil society organizations interested in promoting biodiversity conservation. The members collaborate on African positions related to policy, legislation, and UN biodiversity negotiations and other highlevel gatherings.

The group in 2020 held several webinars designed to mobilize advocacy and action around wildlife conservation. For example, a #FutureForGreatApes campaign highlighted great-ape conservation status, threats, and individual actions that could help secure a future for our closest cousins.

African Group of Negotiators (AGN)

The African Group of Negotiators has a clear mandate from African Union member states: articulate African perspectives in international negotiations related to biodiversity. In FY20, AWF helped formulate the group's platform on the post-2020 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) global biodiversity framework (*See article, page 19*). The CBD is a multilateral treaty (signed by 150 government leaders at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit) with three main goals: conservation, sustainable use, and equitable benefit sharing. AWF also facilitated a pioneering meeting between AGN and China's CBD negotiators to discuss conservation challenges and China's critical role in resource use and conservation.



Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG)

ABCG is a voluntary coalition of seven international conservation NGOs with extensive field programs in Africa: AWF, Conservation International, The Jane Goodall Institute, The Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Resources Institute, and World Wildlife Fund. It seeks to improve conservation practice by advancing collaboration as well as the understanding of critical challenges and solutions. In FY20, AWF's Eric Coppenger, vice president, global leadership, led the group to undertake a fundamental shift — transitioning to an African-led model.

Tourism industry leaders

From the pandemic's outset, AWF closely monitored the challenges facing communities, safari outfitters, and other tourism-dependent operations. In April, we convened CEOs of leading safari companies to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on their operations, threats to wildlife conservation areas and communities, and the best ways for AWF to assist.

AWF LEADERS

Meet Liz Kiambi

Liz Kiambi grew up in Kenya, in an area surrounded by wildlife and pastoral communities. Over the years, she saw changes in land use, the loss of habitat and wildlife, and human-wildlife conflict as well as community disagreements over depleting land and water. The weight of these issues inspired a conservation interest and led to a degree in environmental studies.

Kiambi's second passion was fashion and, after college, she melded both interests in her own clothing line. "My dream was a sustainable-fashion business model that promoted and spoke to conservation," she says. But competition with outlets selling low-cost clothes from China or second-hand items from Europe proved too difficult.

In the end, fashion's loss was the nonprofit world's gain. Kiambi joined AWF as an intern charged with reviewing the role of wildlife in pan-African policies. Within months, she progressed to a full-time position, ensuring our grants met donor requirements.

Her talent, courage, and ambition continued to propel career success. In 2019, Kiambi premiered on the global stage at the European Development Days, where she spoke on a panel alongside architects of the Africa Continent Free Trade Agreement. Her story anchored discussions of the agreement's impacts on young Africans and women.

After a year away to earn a Master's in Conservation Leadership from Cambridge University, partially financed by AWF's Charlotte Fellows Program, Kiambi rejoined AWF. She's now working in the UK to support research, strategy development, outreach, and business engagement.





"As business comes to the continent," she says, "I want to help AWF promote sustainable development by engaging developers in doing things the right way from the beginning."

Kiambi believes in the vision and drive of young people. "They are innovative. They have the answers. Why not work with them and even let them lead the way?"

With Liz's and other youth leadership, AWF will continue to prioritize youth conservation awareness-building and the development of youth leaders and advocates.



1: Photo courtesy of Liz Kiambi 2: © AWF 3:Youth summit participant Iddi Hamisi © AWF

AMPLIFYING THE AFRICAN VOICE AT A GLOBAL CONSERVATION SUMMIT

Y20 had AWF's policy team busy preparing for a landmark international conference — the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The CBD is a 28-year-old global treaty aimed at, essentially, saving the Earth. Ever since global leaders signed the first CBD at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, countries have met every 10 years to update specific biodiversity targets. These targets are designed to address the causes of biodiversity loss, promote sustainable use of natural resources and equitable benefit-sharing, and, of course, safeguard species of fauna and flora. (A target example: "By 2020, the rate of loss of all-natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced.")

In 2021, countries are set to meet against a backdrop of disappointment that the world failed to meet any of the 2010 targets. AWF seeks to help unify, elevate, and support African countries' conservation agendas in the negotiations so that actors on the continent have a greater chance of success now, when the challenges are greater than ever. Toward this goal in FY20, we facilitated significant dialogues, presentations, and discussions. For example, we convened African government, youth, and civil society leaders to discuss and negotiate CBD agendas, reflect on African interests, and prepare final negotiating positions and platforms. (*See previous article.*) We hosted and organized meetings of significant players, including civil society organizations (CSOs) from Africa and China, Chinese-national UN and African-government biodiversity negotiators, and African and Chinese youth at the forefront of youth conservation action in their countries.

The African CSO Biodiversity Alliance, which AWF created in 2020 and which represents 18 African CSOs, has developed a vision for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (the updated CBD strategy): "Africa's biodiversity thrives and underpins equitable, socially and economically resilient livelihoods based on the rights of people to sustainably use their natural resources."

The updated goals not only represent a united front for conservation, but they also determine the level and nature of conservation funding available from governments such as the US, EU, and Germany, and international funders such as the Global Environment Facility.

Championing this vision and ensuring the African leaders' meaningful participation in CBD discussions is critical. Goals won't be achieved if they aren't practicable, don't reflect realities on the ground, or fail to reflect the aspirations of Africa's people.





1: AWF school outreach in Shanghai © AWF 2: Photo exhibit at the Shanghai Zoo © AWF 3-4: © AWF

FOSTERING CHINA-AFRICA DIALOGUE & COLLABORATION

hina has become one of the most significant foreign influences on Africa's development. Last year AWF deepened its policy engagement with China, facilitating biodiversity and sustainability dialogues among Chinese and African government representatives, civil-society organizations, and youth groups.

We aim to ensure that Africa's development agenda with China incorporates wildlife populations and critical ecosystems as elements essential to success. Several dialogues focused on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, an international agreement that will set goals for conserving biodiversity, sustainable natural resource management, and sharing benefits equitably. (*See CBD, page 19.*) With the African Group of Negotiators (the government representatives charged with negotiating this agreement), we're helping unify the African voice prior to direct negotiations defining the framework — including facilitating direct dialogue with the China Ministry of Ecology.

AWF also has fostered working dialogues among African and Chinese youth — two constituencies that will help shape the future of conservation and development in Africa. Our dynamic China-African Youth Dialogue Series had youth deliberating core issues such as wildlife protection, illegal wildlife trade, and climate change. Most importantly, the participants explored ways youth can contribute meaningfully to conservation.

AWF has built a base of African-wildlife advocates in China over nearly a decade through awareness campaigns about the plight of African elephants, rhinos, and other species endangered by the illegal wildlife trade. We've spread the word from billboards and print advertisements and by engaging citizens in action opportunities via social media platforms such as Weibo.

Our most recent partnership with the Chinese government was a two-month exhibit at the Shanghai Zoo featuring informative profiles of Africa's most vulnerable wildlife. The exhibit's powerful images of elephants and other animals in their natural environments serve as a counterpoint to the terrible realities of poaching.

AWF premiered a similar exhibit in 2018 at the Beijing Zoo, attracting more than 200,000 visitors.

AWF LEADERS

Meet Jia Qiao

Jia Qiao has a pivotal role at AWF: helping strengthen relations and collaboration between China and Africa to prioritize Africa's biodiversity and conservation goals.

She's been with AWF since 2015, when she joined the organization's Conservation Leadership and Management Program. This intensive and competitive two-year post-Master's program seeks to develop influential conservation practitioners and leaders. Now she is AWF's manager of external relations with China, overseeing an engagement strategy that will help ensure Chinese influence and activities on the continent contribute to thriving wildlife and wild lands.

How did she become involved in African conservation? "While at the university in China, I became interested in China-Africa relations," she says. "I had several African friends at the university who taught me about Africa. I developed a passion for the people and cultures of Africa and decided to pursue my study in Kenya." She worked with the Great Apes Survival Partnership under the UN Environment Programme in Nairobi, where she learned about the severe threats facing Africa's great apes. Since then, she has been committed to promoting China-Africa relationships in the service of conservation.

In addition to helping facilitate dialogue between African and Chinese governments, civil society, and youth leaders to define an international cooperation agenda that benefits wildlife, she helps raise conservation awareness in China via educational campaigns and special exhibitions. Through her work, more people in China, especially young people, understand the challenges facing African wildlife and the detrimental impact of buying ivory and other





illegal wildlife products — that these purchases maintain a market demand that drives poaching.

Qiao hopes that, through continued engagement in China, the Chinese public, especially the youth, will become champions for conservation and sustainable development in Africa.

AWF large landscape: mid-Zambezi

The mid-Zambezi landscape is an area of remarkable beauty and conservation value, home to a magnificent, unique array of wildlife, including elephants, buffaloes, lions, cheetahs, wild dogs, and more than 450 resident and migratory bird species. It includes Mana Pools National Park — a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its sizable hippo and Nile crocodile populations. And it protects more than 50 kilometers of one of Africa's great rivers, the Zambezi.

"The Mid-Zambezi landscape offers a tremendous opportunity to secure a future for key wildlife populations and their habitats while benefiting communities," says Zimbabwe Country Director Olivia Mufute.

"But it is at risk."

Where the landscape once harbored more than 30,000 elephants, today there are 19,000 or even fewer. Poaching is a leading threat, as are retaliatory killings of elephants and other wildlife that raid essential crops and competed

FRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

with struggling communities for land and water. Meanwhile, smugglers use the river to move illegal wildlife products such as ivory across borders.

Additional threats include unplanned agricultural expansion, mining and other extractive activities, and poverty that drives unsustainable activities such as commercial bushmeat hunting. Climate change is an overarching challenge — and a dire one, as the world saw in 2019 when a drought killed hundreds of animals, leading media outlets to publish devastating pictures of elephant and buffalo carcasses at the edges of dried pools.

AWF has worked in Zimbabwe intermittently since the 1990s, with a focus in recent years on combatting an increase in organized poaching. Today our work aligns to a multi-faceted landscape-scale strategy for the mid-Zambezi with several ambitious goals that all spell "community resilience":

- Ecosystem integrity with viable populations of AWF's focal and other species
- Cross-border collaboration in service of conservation objectives (Zambia and Zimbabwe)
- Progress toward a vibrant wildlife economy, including but not limited to thriving ecotourism enterprises
- Improved community access to natural resources
- Support for community livelihood projects

With the support of several funders, including the European Union, Swedish Postcode Foundation, and others (See sidebar), we work on both sides of the river, partnering with Conservation Lower Zambezi on the Zambia side and communities and government on the Zimbabwe side, where the land is under protected status. As in all AWF landscapes, our interventions are shaped by the challenges at hand and by our long experience in African wildlife conservation.



1: © Mohamed Hashim 2: © Joe Dodson 3: © AWF 4: © Mohamed Hashim 5: ©Andrew MacDonald/ Conservation Lower Zambez









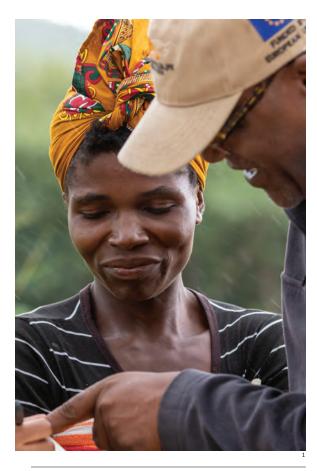


Anti-IWT

To help curb the poaching and trafficking of elephants and other wildlife, AWF has engaged fishers who live along the Zambezi River, heightening sensitivity to the long-term costs of illegal wildlife trafficking. As a result, many community members act as eyes and ears to relay information about suspicious activity to authorities. We strengthened community scout and ranger forces through training and the provision of much-needed gear and equipment. For example, we provided ZimParks with patrol vehicles, and we helped build an anti-poaching rapid-response unit – complete with boats and a new brick-and-mortar base — to apprehend rivertransiting poachers.

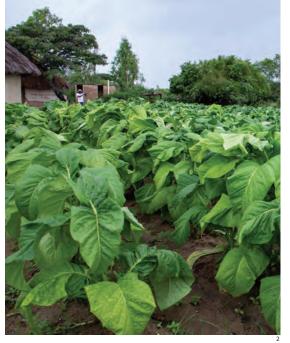
Such support has been critical to revitalizing forces suffering from lack of even the most basic equipment. One result: In Mbire District, scouts can now go on 14-day extended patrols, thanks to our provision of rations and field supplies. In FY20 in the landscape, we saw a 25-percent decline in elephant poaching from the previous year and a 50-percent reduction relative to the baseline average.

AWF has also worked to strengthen fieldmonitoring processes and data collection through ranger training in CyberTracker and SMART (ecomonitoring) technology, as well as provision of the required hand-held eco-monitoring devices and spatial analysis software.



Tobacco farmers

Zimbabwe is a major tobacco supplier, and tobacco is a significant foreign-currency earner for Zimbabwe. But tobacco curing can use a lot of wood and lead to significant deforestation. In 2019, AWF helped 10 mid-Zambezi farmers construct new or convert existing tobacco barns to be energy-efficient. The key to the improved process is the fireplace — its small cavity can support an intense burn with very little wood, even twigs, and better channel heat. The new curing barns in Huyo, Chitindiva, and Kabidza villages of Hurungwe District have been a real success. They cure high-quality tobacco and reduce the time and effort needed to gather fuelwood. "Some farmers are using their own funds now to construct the same kind of barns," Mufute says.







1: Zimbabwe tobacco farmer © AWF 2-4: © AWF

Other initiatives

AWF supports myriad other landscape activities, creating an ecosystem of interventions that benefit communities while protecting biodiversity. We support community members in alternative livelihoods such as beekeeping and honey production. We help reduce conflict between people and elephants through chili briquettes that repel elephants and thus stem crop-raiding. We have worked with communities in Mbire to develop a land-use plan that clarifies and builds consensus around what areas of land (outside the protected area) can be used for grazing, farming, conservation, etc.

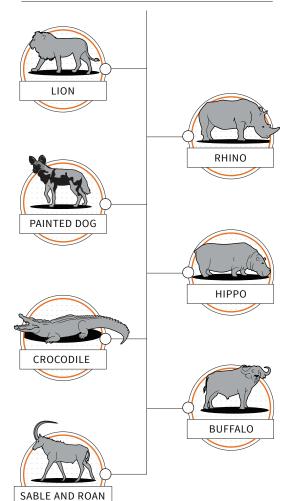
At the institutional level, we've supported ZimParks in various ways, including helping develop a national human-wildlife conflict policy and facilitating monthly cross-border patrols between Zimbabwean and Zambian wildlife lawenforcement forces. This kind of information- and experience-sharing is critical in cross-border regions that host traveling wildlife as well as furtive smugglers.

In 2020, one of the mid-Zambezi program's major funders, the European Union, evaluated our progress in this high-value landscape. The assessment found the program had exceeded virtually all of the grant targets and met the criteria for long-term success.

Our mark in this landscape has not gone unnoticed — numerous parties, including governmental representatives and NGOs, have reached out to AWF as a potential partner. It's evident that there is widespread interest in helping Zimbabwe achieve its tremendous potential as a world-class wildlife mecca and green economy.



Focal Species in mid-Zambezi Landscape



AWF LEADERS

Meet Olivia Mufute

From working in the government sector for nearly 20 years to serving as the first female chief ecologist at ZimParks (the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority) and now AWF's country director in Zimbabwe, Olivia Mufute's career is an inspiring success story.

"What I love most, " she says, "is the opportunity to raise awareness about the interconnectedness of nature — how biodiversity and ecosystem services underpin every aspect of human life: food security, health, livelihoods, sustainable development."

Mufute joined AWF in 2017 as a volunteer and a consultant, advising us on major issues and engagement strategies in Zimbabwe, proposal development, and fundraising. Her skills, confidence, and dynamic personality were unmistakable, and soon AWF hired her as a project manager.

As Mufute and her small team implemented successful, impactful programs, the team's portfolio grew, and in 2019, AWF promoted her to the position of country manager. Within another year, she was AWF's Zimbabwe country director.

Mufute's primary role is to drive AWF's strategic conservation vision through a country strategy that prioritizes the following: community engagement; support for park authorities as they stabilize wildlife habitats and populations; reduction of the illegal wildlife trade; and participation in Zimbabwe's sustainable development planning. Her team and partners also support community development of business models that can help transform the landscape into an engine of green economic growth.



She is proud of her team's progress and impacts in the mid-Zambezi valley. A sampling includes:

- Starting the first anti-poaching team in Mbire District with female representation.
 ("Seeing the highly driven, assertive, confident, young rural female voices in the conservation field is truly exciting!" she says.)
- Helping develop a land-use plan for the Mbire district
- Assisting communities with chili farming to curb human-elephant conflict and improve livelihoods
- Fostering cross-border collaboration between Zimbabwe and Zambia's wildlife law enforcement agencies
- Equipping rangers with the training and tools to manage poaching and human-wildlife conflict in the Mana
 Pools Transfrontier Conservation Area.
 Our infrastructure support has included construction of a new, rapid-response river base and ranger housing.

Such wide-ranging activities involve diverse partners and collaborators, a "big tent" that ultimately serves the conservation mission. "I have a vision," Mufute says, "of an increased visibility of the role of nature in economic development, and that future generations safeguard these beautiful and pristine wild lands, benefit from them, and celebrate them."

(For more information about AWF's work in Zimbabwe, see story, page 22.)



WHY LANDSCAPE SCALE?

hy does AWF operate at the largelandscape scale instead of solely focusing on discrete protected areas and their wildlife?

Seventy percent of the African elephant's range lies outside of protected areas. We follow elephant movement routes to help create a network of linked conservation areas - often anchored by parks and conservancies - that span a mosaic of community, commercial, and government lands. Protecting such expanses for wide-ranging elephant populations serves to safeguard a wealth of other species. And with eyes on a whole landscape, we can comprehensively assess threats and help protect critical systems such as wetlands and montane forests that deliver clean water and other ecosystem services to human populations inside and outside the landscape. Landscape conservation is therefore crucial to enhancing resilience for humans and wildlife, especially in the face of a rapidly changing climate.

AWF began the large-landscape or "Heartlands" program in 1998, ushering in a new era for our conservation work. Early on, we focused on eight landscapes key to sustaining a diversity of species. Today, we work in 16 landscapes with priorities linked to our focal countries' conservation strategies. Priority species' ranges help us select and prioritize landscapes. Other criteria include wildlife population viability, habitat connectivity, and feasibility factors such as political stability and an area's security.

At the inception of a landscape program, we identify conservation "targets" — components of a landscape representing or sustaining its biodiversity. Targets range from threatened, high-profile species like lions to the ecological communities and systems underpinning wildlife habitats like grasslands. To explicitly connect our work with landscape communities, AWF may also set "human well-being targets" to represent ecosystem services like clean water. We then map these targets' distribution to guide the landscape's demarcation into functional zones — driven by a vision we've established with communities and other stakeholders in collaborative land-use planning sessions.

Our goal is to benefit all biodiversity as well as communities. Throughout, we follow the tenets of AWF's rights-based approach, which is underpinned by global and local human rights standards.

1: © AWF 2: Giraffe on the Maasai Steppe © Billy Dodson

Linking conservation & agriculture in Southern Tanzania

After he learned how to grow his sugar cane in more efficient, climate-smart ways, Southern Tanzania farmer Zakaria Robert Waronge planted one of his 22 acres with a new, drought-resistant seed. The pilot project was part of a larger AWF-supported effort to create agricultural systems that safeguard biodiversity and maintain ecosystems while improving livelihoods.

Waronge's plot served as a teaching model for other farmers in Tanzania's Kilombero Valley, a landscape rich in biodiversity that is part of Tanzania's breadbasket, targeted by the government for intensified agricultural activity. AWF has been working with businesses, governments, researchers, and farmers to show how agricultural production can grow while protecting important wildlife corridors, forests, and wetland habitat.

Waronge sold three-quarters of his output as seed cane (earning TZS 2,100,000). The farmers who planted the cultivars noted how well the seed cane germinated. As for his own crops — before the AWF program, Waronge harvested 16-20 tons of sugarcane per acre; now, his average yield is 30 tons per acre, and he sees nearly double the revenue.

Thanks to improved yields, Waronge and the other small-holder farmers in the program can finally reinvest in their farms, pay school fees and supplies, build homes or improve existing ones, buy plots, and more.

AWF has been working in the region since 2015, so when some of the governments set targets for companies to double production, "we had a voice in the process to help Kilombero Sugar Company and farmers shape strategy to double production, and minimize land needed," says Andrea Athanas, AWF's senior director, business engagement and Europe. "We found a way to improve efficiency and productivity of existing cane land instead of converting forests, wetlands and wildlife corridors." At a time when we are searching for ways to minimize our footprint, this landscape is a model for Tanzania and even the world, she says, helping establish a new vision of how landscapes can maintain conservation and agriculture in harmony.

Under the umbrella of IUCN's SUSTAIN program, AWF and partners have implemented a suite of projects designed to help deliver growth for Southern Tanzania based on sustainable resource management and agricultural methods that improve communities' economic resilience. The immediate goals are improved incomes for small-scale farmers in ways that provide strong conservation incentives. The program has involved more than 2,000 small-holder farmers in 13 villages.

In FY20, our activities focused on improving cocoa and rice value chains as well as sugar's. In addition to upskilling farmers such as Waronge, we facilitated better links to markets, ensuring higher prices for crops, and we mentored farmers on nursery establishment and management. We supported the construction of a solar-fueled, larger-volume cocoa-bean dryer that not only



AWF-sponsored new variety of sugar cane seed. It is droughttolerant, short-seasoned, and delivers better yields of cane with almost double the sucrose content.



minimizes post-harvest losses, it also improves the quality of the beans. Similarly, we helped villages rehabilitate a rice storage facility to minimize post-harvest losses and thereby increase revenues.

Our focus in Southern Tanzania extends to habitat restoration as well. An assessment performed by AWF and partners identified 38,656 hectares of degraded areas in Kilombero's Mngeta Valley suited to various restoration methods such as agroforestry and riparian rehabilitation. Communities in the Mngeta Valley went on to plant more than 20,000 seedlings. The reforested area will improve water provisioning and help reestablish ecological connectivity for wildlife. Our work with communities has heightened sensitivity to water conservation, and we have seen a reduction in activities like building houses and farming along the banks of the river.





1: Kilombero Farmer's Day © AWF 2,3: Campo Ma'an indigenous people learn agro-forestry techniques © AWF

FOSTERING COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP OF CONSERVATION

hrough public-private partnerships and support for small-scale eco-enterprises, AWF helps foster indigenous and local conservation ownership, which is critical for long-term success.

Most recently, we helped develop entrepreneurial capacity among hunter-gatherer peoples in Cameroon, mobilizing women who live near Dja Biosphere Reserve to undertake forestbased enterprise projects. The women learned to harvest non-timber forest products for cosmetic products — soaps, butters, and lotions handcrafted from native fruits, seeds, and bark. Their training also focused on maximizing harvest, accounting methods, financial management, and conflict management.

Seeking to develop sustainable agro-forestry in the region, AWF and our partner Tropical Forest and Rural Development are replicating this model with new villages on the outskirts of the Campo Ma'an National Park. In recent months, the project expanded to nearby Nkolekoul village and further west to Nyambandé village. The projects link participants with reputable buyers across the country and organize the women into formal cooperatives. Pooling profits, the women can increase their incomes and grow their operations. In Nkolekoul, for example, the group installed a modern dryer/ storage facility to minimize raw-material spoilage and increase efficiency.

Empowering women through small-scale sustainable enterprises yields results in tandem with our other conservation efforts, such as strengthening surveillance of wildlife and habitat by training rangers and providing equipment for ecological monitoring and anti-poaching patrols.



High-end eco-lodge uplifts communities & conservation

Around Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park, home to the rare mountain gorilla, the world today can see the results of a model AWF pioneered in the 1990s — one which united communities with a private-sector partner to operate a high-end eco-lodge that would funnel revenue to communities.

Via a trust called the Sabyinyo Community Livelihoods Association, or SACOLA, the communities own Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge, which AWF built with partners including the International Gorilla Conservation Programme.

Since Sabyinyo opened in 2007, it has delivered over \$3.3 million to communities, \$1.3 million in the last three years. The trust has built two new villages, created green jobs, helped tens of thousands of households gain health insurance, enabled hundreds of families to purchase land and/or livestock, and built schools, health clinics, bridges, administrative offices, and new roads. With the SACOLA income via the lodge, economic pressures to clear forest for small farms or to hunt bushmeat for profit are lessening.

"There's no doubt this project has transformed the lives of communities around Volcanoes," says AWF Senior VP Craig Sholley, who was integral to developing the SACOLA program. "It has been a model for us elsewhere and indeed has been a model for other NGOs operating around the world."



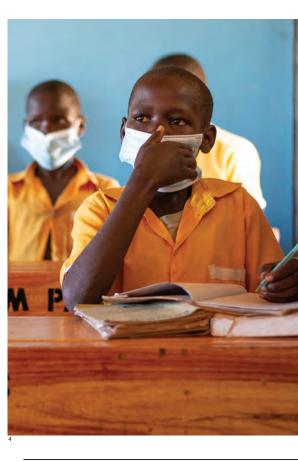


We know intuitively that conservation success relies on African ownership.... We will raise a voice for local communities who live in wildlife-rich areas and ensure their needs guide our interventions.

AWF 2020-2030 STRATEGIC VISION

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1: Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge © AWF 2-3: © AWF 4: Learning in process, Sarachom Primary School in Uganda © Talking Films 5: Formal handover of Kidepo Primary © AWF 6: AWF Uganda Country Director Sudi Bamulesewa © AWF







CLASSROOM AFRICA: TWO NEW SCHOOLS, A NEW STRATEGY & A NEW MANAGER

A frica's future is in the hands of young people, who comprise 75 percent of the continent's population. Through our flagship Classroom Africa program, AWF seeks to strengthen young people's natural affinity for wildlife, heighten ecological awareness, and create a corps of future conservationists and conservation leaders.

Investing more broadly in children and youth is one of the core strategies in AWF's new ten-year strategic vision. Going forward, we will devote more resources to promoting conservation learning at schools in our landscapes rather than primarily investing in brick-and-mortar projects. We hope to reach 12,000 children annually in schools throughout the landscapes where we work. By inspiring a conservation ethic early, we seek to strengthen community support for conservancies and other protected areas and reduce community engagement in the illegal wildlife trade. The schools we have built are a point of pride for AWF but more importantly for communities. In FY20, AWF officially opened Kidepo and Sarachom primary schools in Uganda, making six bright, airy, modern schools built by Classroom Africa.

FY20 saw progress at our other Classroom Africa schools as well as those in Uganda. At Manyara Primary in Tanzania, we are close to completing construction of a new dining hall and library block for the school's 900 boarding students; both projects are on course to be finished in 2021. We also undertook renovations at Ilima Primary School in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and at Kidepo Primary (new fencing).Meanwhile, at the high-performing Lupani School in Zambia, we supported six students with secondary school, tuition-fee scholarships.

Helping range states & partners safeguard rhinos

With new data showing a 2.5 percent population increase between 2012 and 2018, Africa's black rhinos — though still critically endangered were a qualified conservation success story in 2020. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature projects a slow but continued population uptick over the next five years. But continued poaching is a grave threat, especially in Kruger National Park, home to the world's largest rhino population.

AWF contributes to this progress by disrupting the rhino-horn trade at crucial points in the illegal supply chain. Our three-pronged strategy, "Stop the Killing. Stop the Trafficking. Stop the Demand." is part of a carefully designed ecosystem of services, interventions, and advocacy and policy efforts helping to thwart illegal actors and safeguard critical rhino populations.

© Peter Chira



Stop the Killing

Because rhino sanctuaries are essential to the species' survival, we provide financial and material support to rhino-protection sites such as Kenya's Ngulia Rhino Sanctuary and Ol Pejeta Conservancy, the largest black rhino sanctuary in East Africa.

We also recruit, train, and equip scouts and rangers in skills such as tracking and ecomonitoring, allowing protected-area authorities to keep a steady eye on rhino population numbers and health status. For example, at the Savé Valley Conservancy in southern Zimbabwe — which has one of Africa's largest rhino populations we've helped strengthen anti-poaching efforts by facilitating training in area surveillance, tracking, wilderness survival, and other essential skills.

Meanwhile, our Canines for Conservation detection and tracker dogs enable authorities in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Botswana, and Mozambique to capture smugglers of rhino horn and other illegal wildlife products. Simply by doing their jobs and being visibly present, the dog-and-handler units serve as deterrents to wildlife trafficking.

1: Ol Pejeta Conservancy driver and ranger © Umiliki Investments 2: Black rhino © Martin Harvey 3: White rhino @ Cindy Hopkins



Stop the Trafficking

Our pioneering Wildlife Law Enforcement Program conducts training and supports a mentorship program to help ensure prosecutors and law enforcement officers are well-equipped to investigate and prosecute wildlife crime. AWF has court-monitoring programs in three countries: Kenya, Ethiopia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These programs support and build capacity among witnesses, rangers, prosecutors, and other individuals so that wildlife crimes will be efficiently and successfully prosecuted. Training covers topics such as legal procedures, effective testimony, and proper handling and storage of evidence (which can include live specimens that will walk or fly away if not carefully housed).



Stop the Demand

In the fight against the illegal rhino-horn trade, curbing demand for rhino horn is as vital as species protection and anti-trafficking. To this end, we engage the public in awareness efforts about the rhino horn trade and the horrors of poaching. In China, in FY20, we helped raise awareness of the plight of rhinos and other threatened wildlife through a special exhibition at the Shanghai Zoo, "Saving Africa's Endangered Species."

These strategies are implemented to the benefit of all our priority species and groups: elephants, rhinos, giraffes, large carnivores, and great apes.

Strategic support

In FY20, AWF supported the development of Kenya's first White Rhino Conservation Action Plan, whose goal is to maintain a demographic and genetically healthy population of southern white rhinos for community conservation, education, and tourism. If the current 6.6percent growth rate continues, Kenya will have 2,500 white rhinos in 20 years. "This is a key milestone in rhino conservation in Kenya and the region," said AWF Vice President of Conservation Science Philip Muruthi. "I look forward to seeing the growing white rhino population help repopulate community conservancies and even countries like Uganda, growing the declining continental rhino herd."

Northern white rhino

In August, AWF financially supported Kenya's Ol Pejeta Conservancy in a vital project: recovering the northern white rhino. Led by the Kenya Wildlife Service and scientists from Germany and the Czech Republic, the project involved harvesting eggs from the last two northern white rhinos on the planet — Fatu and Najin. Using artificial insemination, scientists created three embryos with frozen sperm from now-deceased northern white rhino bulls. The next step will be finding suitable surrogates (southern white rhino females) because the two females cannot carry a pregnancy to term.

Have you seen "Sides of a Horn"?

This powerful, award-winning short film by Toby Wosskow, an AWF Council member, dramatizes the fight against rhino poaching and the impacts of the illegal trade on communities. It compellingly portrays the danger and difficult choices African communities face due to poverty.

VISIT RHINOMOVIE.COM



ELEPHANT CONSERVATION UPDATE

Recent findings show that, after peaking in 2011, elephant poaching rates in Africa are declining. But even with new bans on ivory trade in several of the world's leading markets, the continent's iconic species is still under grave threat. At current levels of killing, neither subspecies (forest elephants, savanna elephants), with their relatively low reproduction rates, will survive over the long term. Conserving elephant populations in their natural habitats and putting an end to the illegal wildlife trade is critical.

AWF approaches elephant protection using diverse strategies that include anti-poaching activities in elephant landscapes, antitrafficking programs such as Canines for Conservation (*See rhino article, page 36*) and provisionof non-lethal elephant deterrent technologiesto mitigate conflict.

Human-elephant conflict (HEC) is one of the major challenges facing both elephants and human communities in Africa. In Mbire District, northern Zimbabwe and around Murchison Falls in Uganda, we support chili growers who use the pungent crop as a non-lethal method of repelling unwanted pachyderm visitors. The chili crops also help farmers diversify their incomes, thus building community resilience and providing a sustainable livelihood option.

In addition to agricultural training, we've provided the Murchison farmers materials to build solar dryers that improve the quality of the products they bring or send to market. In 2019, despite weather changes and other unexpected challenges, the farmers, on average, managed to double their yield.

Meanwhile, in the Tsavo-Mkomazi crossborder landscape in Kenya and Tanzania, AWF has trained over 3,000 farmers in HEC mitigation and provided the communities noise-based repellents such as torches, vuvuzelas, and whistles.







Looking Ahead

AWF has set goals for the coming years to safeguard critical elephant populations in priority landscapes. They are:

- To assist in development of species action and recovery plans in Cameroon, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and other countries with significant elephant populations or potential for recovery
- To help elephant range states in implementing their National Elephant Action Plans (NEAPs), which address capacity building, antipoaching, countering wildlife trafficking, mitigating conflicts, securing space, coordinating between stakeholders and countries, recovering and growing populations, and more
- To provide financial support and technical advice to managers of protected areas with significant elephant populations

1: Elephants at Murchison Falls © Ricardo Nunez Montero 2: Mother and calf in Tanzania © Dana Thompson/ danaleethompson.com 3: Chilies are a cash crop but also repel elephants © AWF 4: © Raymond Mhlanga





RADIO COLLARS & BOMAS HELP KEEP LIONS SAFE IN AWF LANDSCAPES

s human settlement expands in Africa and squeezes the wide-ranging lion into smaller and more fragmented habitats, human-wildlife conflict looms ever larger as a danger to the big cats in many landscapes.

Confronting these challenges is the work of Bernard Kissui, a leading researcher whom AWF has supported throughout a two-decade academic and conservation career.

In the Manyara-Tarangire landscape in Northeastern Tanzania, Kissui's team tracks the status and movements of radio-collared lions to better understand the population's needs, monitor their status, and track interactions with local people and livestock. The ecological and demographic monitoring uses radio telemetry to track and "see" lions in the study area. With this ability, Kissui and his team have vital knowledge. Not only can they inform villagers about places lions frequent and when, they also can humanely direct lions away from livestock.

Knowledge of lions' favorite hangouts and travel patterns also informs land-use planning, including early efforts to secure and manage a conservation corridor connecting Tarangire National Park and Manyara National Park. Meanwhile, in Tanzania's Manyara Ranch and Kenya's LUMO Conservancy, AWF works with communities to install predator-proof, portable metal kraals (*bomas*) that protect livestock from predation, in turn protecting lions from retaliatory killings. With fewer lion incursions, pastoralists are less likely to attack the big cats with spear or poison. In return, the lions remain secure to play their vital ecological role and contribute to the local and national economies, largely through tourism.

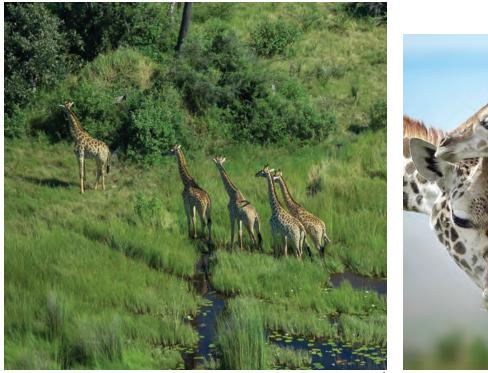
In FY20, AWF funded and hosted a workshop in which conservationists from several organizations gained expertise in surveying lion populations. The weeklong training attracted participants from the Kenya Wildlife Service, universities, and other conservation groups. This training is helpful to the implementation of a Kenyan National Lion Action and Recovery Plan, as lion censuses generate the necessary baseline data. AWF is happy to be an integral part of the task force overseeing the development and implementation of the national lion action plan, which was ratified and launched in 2020.



1: Collared lion with cubs © Alison Langevad / www.alisonlangevad.com.au 2: © Kim Wolhuter 3: Camel caravan, Tsavo © AWF 4: Manyara Ranch livestock program © AWF 5: Livestock in a predatorproof boma © AWF







SAFEGUARDING GIRAFFES IN KENYA & TANZANIA

G iraffe populations are increasingly threatened by poachers who target the graceful, iconic species for body parts, hides, and meat. Climate-change effects and habitat loss resulting from unplanned agricultural expansion also pose significant challenges. In the last 30 years, these gentle giants' continental population plummeted by 40 percent, with two subspecies, Kordofan and Nubian giraffes, recently escalated to "critically endangered" status.

AWF is partnering with the Kenya Wildlife Service to execute the country's first-ever giraffe recovery and action plan. The five-year strategy (2018-2022) focuses on the three giraffe subspecies found in Kenya (Maasai, Rothschild's, and reticulated). It calls for a holistic approach, including direct and enhanced species protection, improved land management, collaborative research and monitoring of giraffe populations, and education and awareness-raising.

AWF is also implementing a holistic conservation approach in the cross-border Tsavo-Mkomazi

landscape, the Maasai giraffe's last stronghold. Despite a significant increase in the number of giraffes in the Kenyan-Tanzanian landscape between 2014 and 2017, humansettlement expansion threatens giraffe habitat and food sources.

To support giraffe populations in this critical landscape, AWF is:

- Establishing baseline giraffe population data
- Mitigating poaching and humanwildlife conflict
- Engaging communities in conservation and compatible development, and
- Helping secure a promising future for giraffes through proven strategies, including strengthening tourism as a livelihood alternative for communities

MOUNTAIN GORILLA RECOVERY MODELS CONSERVATION BENEFITS

The steady return of mountain gorillas from near extinction is a point of light in the often bleak conservation landscape. Although mountain-gorilla recovery is still extremely fragile, the past decade's success with this iconic species offers a crucial lesson: Conservation can significantly benefit not only species and ecosystems but human communities, too.

AWF worked with the governments of the DRC, Uganda, and Rwanda, as well as partners including the International Gorilla Conservation Programme, to help communities surrounding Volcanoes National Park acquire a world-class eco-lodge — Sabyinyo Silverback, named after nearby Mount Sabyinyo, an extinct volcano whose craggy summit is often veiled in clouds.

A three-year impact report the community trust released in July highlights a remarkable array of benefits accrued from this pioneering conservation enterprise, including over \$3.3 million filtered to communities, more than 60,000 community beneficiaries, and two villages created for marginalized people, some of them widowed or otherwise left bereft by the Rwandan genocide.

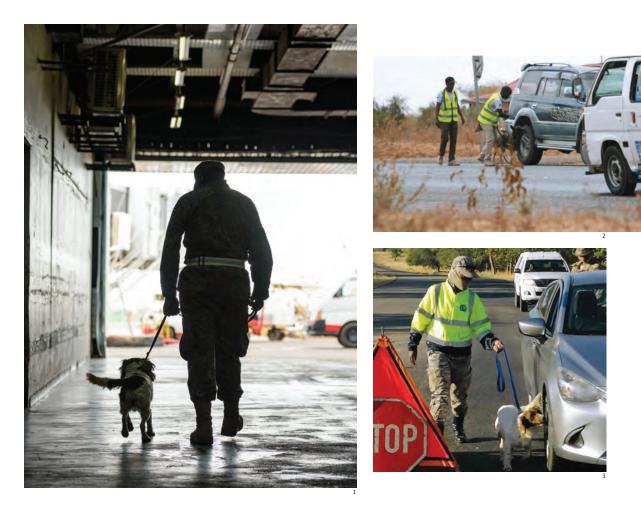
The Sabyinyo Community Livelihoods Association (SACOLA) also has supported an electrification program and built a water supply system that serves thousands. (*For more information about SACOLA, see page 34.*)

All of this activity not only helps transform the lives of rural communities, it also reduces economic pressures to clear forests — helping ensure continued recovery for Africa's precious mountain gorillas.





1: © Paul Runze / PCRimages.com 2: © Dana Thompson / danaleethompson.com 3: © Talking Films 4: © Doug Steakley



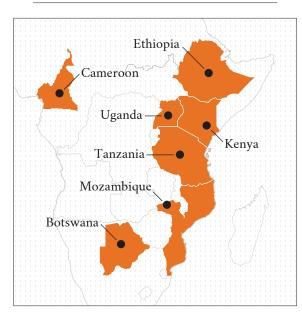
UPDATE: CANINES FOR CONSERVATION

S ince July 2015, when the first class of detection dogs and canine handlers graduated from AWF's dog training facility in Tanzania, our Canines for Conservation program has steadily grown in size and reputation. We now have canine teams supporting anti-trafficking work in five African countries — and the list is growing — helping authorities leverage limited resources to catch smugglers and deter future illegal operators.

AWF's partners deploy the highly skilled canine teams to airports, seaports, border crossings, and other hot zones to sniff out and arrest traffickers of ivory, rhino horn, and other contraband. A growing focus of the program is the training and deployment of tracker dogs, who work in the field and follow trails from kill sites to poachers' doorsteps, often over many kilometers and several days. (*See the following article.*)

Canines for Conservation teams have made hundreds of busts representing millions of dollars in seized goods and an inestimable cost in lost animal lives — elephants, rhinos, lions, pangolins, and other endangered species. But another measure of the program's effectiveness is the number of governments interested in working with us. Botswana and Mozambique are now on the list of countries with Canines for Conservation units (joining Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania), and we're on track to deploy teams to Cameroon soon. Meanwhile, Canines for Conservation director Will Powell and his team look forward to starting canine facility construction at the busy Bole International Airport in Ethiopia.

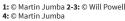
CANINES FOR CONSERVATION PROGRAM LOCATIONS



Culture of Canine Care

Our wildlife-authority partners commit to a code of care that includes Five Freedoms designed to ensure the dogs' well-being:







New landscape realities

As for everyone, 2020 was an unprecedented time for Canines for Conservation. Near protected areas, communities that depend on tourism as their sole source of income suddenly faced a dire situation. Some would no doubt turn to poaching to feed their families. (*See pages 6-13 for information about AWF's COVID-19 crisis response.*) At airports, passenger flights halted, but air-cargo operations continued meaning smugglers would continue. The upshot: authorities had a greater need for tracker dogs in the field even as they still needed detection dog teams to search warehouses and dockyards.

To fulfill government requests, AWF last year graduated new handler classes and procured additional dogs. New units are now based at Kilimanjaro International airport. We also delivered dogs to work in the wildlife-rich Serengeti protected areas (Tanzania) and supported tracker units in Manyara/Tarangire ecosystem in Tanzania as well as Lake Nakuru National Park and Ol Pejeta Conservancy (Kenya).

What happens when canine teams deploy to a new base? Says AWF species team head Philip Muruthi, "Our data shows when you put in a unit, you see an initial increase in arrests and then a decline in trafficking." But the reality is tricky. "We know the dogs are a deterrent. But sometimes traffickers move elsewhere. So, you must keep studying the problem and follow the activity —that's why the canine units are mobile."

AWF-trained dog-and-handler teams are known for their top-notch skills and a carefully crafted culture of care for the dogs. Even in the dynamic context Muruthi describes, they remain steadfast and proven soldiers in the fight against the illegal wildlife trade.









1: Kaddu visits Canine Training Center, Arusha © AWF 2,3: © AWF 4: Tracker dog and handler on the trail © Will Powell 5: Happy after a job well done © AWF

DOGS WITH A NOSE FOR CONSERVATION DETER POACHERS IN PROTECTED AREAS

anines for Conservation detection dogs have been essential in reducing the trafficking of ivory, rhino horn, pangolin scales, and other illegal wildlife products. Seizures of wildlife contraband happen weekly, disrupting trafficking routes and applying pressure on poaching syndicates and local perpetrators. (See previous story.)

Trained working canines are also quite effective as tracking dogs patrolling poaching hotspots and supporting wildlife law enforcement officers with investigation of wildlife crimes in the field. For example, since the AWF-trained tracking unit began operating in Manyara Ranch and Serengeti National Park, teams have made over 100 successful poaching busts, resulting in multiple arrests.

In September 2020, AWF CEO Kaddu Sebunya visited Northern Tanzania and met with Canines for Conservation Director Will Powell. They discussed the Canines for Conservation tracker dogs and the impact of the dogs and their skilled handlers in Serengeti National Park.

Why is it important to deploy tracker dog units in protected areas?

Tracking dogs are an amazing deterrent in protecting national parks. The key is to focus on few but exceptional tracking dogs, who will make all the difference. In Tanzania, the unit's high level of efficiency has instilled fear in the perpetrators of illegal wildlife crime.

Recently, not far from the site's dog compound, a ranger saw some tracks in an area where there should not be any people. He reported his suspicions, and the team opted to "all-in" the dog team. When the dogs picked up the tracks, they led the team to a line of snares at the edge of the park. The dogs traced these steps to a poacher's camp and later to the village and the perpetrator's house — where we found the bushmeat. Eventually, the team arrested the perpetrator in the village.

The great thing — it sends the message to the whole village and the rest of the poachers: If you poach wildlife, you will be caught.

How does the training regimen differ for tracker dogs and detection dogs?

There is a different approach. We teach detection dogs to look for a specific smell or item, and we reward them when they find it and indicate. The game is to look for a particular scent amid various other smells, and when they find it, alert their handlers. Once the dog understands the routine, the canine and handler will be moved from the training area to the real environment — high-traffic transport terminals to search luggage and cargo.

When it comes to tracking dogs, at the initial stages, the training tracks are set up by the training teams but as the dogs develop, it becomes harder to guide them. The dog must be accorded time and space to figure out the track; it could be described as an evolutionary process to train the dogs fully. As time goes on you begin to push the dog for longer periods, sometimes even for days. Once the dogs get the hang of it, it is a great thing!

The determined team of handlers from the Tanzania National Parks Authority understand that the dogs need time and space to figure it out by themselves — this type of support is key to success.



How are the canine handlers selected and trained for tracking units?

We select handlers who are already trackers in their own rights. They can follow tracks using their honed instincts, their senses, and their knowledge about the environment.

Most of Tanzania National Parks Authority's canine handlers grew up in rural areas where they would look after a herd of livestock and have to search for the missing flock by tracking hoofprints — this is where their journeys began. This early experience really helps in training for the canine program.

When you combine a skilled tracker with a trained tracker dog, this culminates in a powerful and focused team.

Which dog breeds make for excellent tracker canines?

The Belgian Malinois is a good all-round dog that is great at detection; but individuals must possess the right personality for tracking because they are naturally highspeed dogs. German Shepherds, who are a bit slower and take longer to teach, are steady and track very well.

There has been some success in Southern Africa breeding Fox Hounds and Dobermans, so we will look at integrating these breeds into the program. We have also had some success with German Shorthaired Pointers.

Ideally, we are looking for a dog who wants to track and enjoys it but also has the stamina to keep at it while withstanding the heat.

Letter from the Chair



Dear Friends of AWF.

This past year has led many of us to consider two questions: What have we gained? And what have we lost? I think there is a third and important question: What have we learned?

While the AWF staff has always been passionate, committed to conservation, and willing to work hard, this year led us to learn resilience in the face of the unknown, focus on essentials, recognize limitations but work around them — all the while being collaborative and gracious with one another.

We learned that AWF is gaining a reputation for convening. The tourism industry on the continent appreciated our pulling together government and industry people throughout the year for fruitful conversations about the state of the tourism economy.

We learned that our new strategic plan works even in a COVID world. The strategies are still correct. However, as we implemented the plan, we had to navigate around COVID and so relied on flexibility, creativity, and sometimes very out-of-the-box thinking.

We learned to be courageous as our staff stayed in the field to safeguard the results of 60 years of hard work in the conservation arena. We emphasized protocols for health and safety, and, so far, we have been very fortunate not to have had serious illness among any of our staff... in Africa or abroad.

While we did not just learn this...that AWF is a family, this past year underscored how deeply everyone cares for one another, the work, the wild lands, the animals, and the people of Africa.

I am proud that as we close out this difficult year and enter 2021, we look forward to celebrating our 60th anniversary. The African Wildlife Foundation is Africa's oldest conservation organization and, to my knowledge, the only one of the leading conservation NGOs that focuses solely on Africa.

Thanks to all of you for being a part of the AWF family writ large. We could not do our work without your enthusiasm, financial support, ideas, and ambassadorship. Please know how much we appreciate you...during the hard times as well as the easier times.

Saying goodbye to 2020 is not difficult. But what I have learned is that saying hello to a bright new 2021 is a lot more fun!

With gratitude for all that you do,

Heather Stint Hazage

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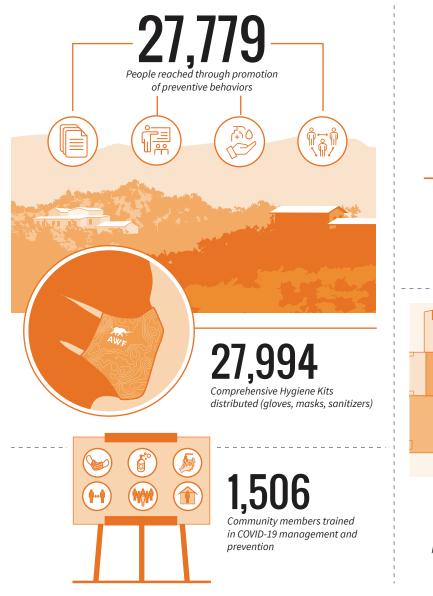
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AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

AWF by the Numbers **COVID-19 RESPONSE**

A metrics-based look at how AWF responded to the impact of COVID-19 in 9 countries in FY20. In Africa, the conservation sector was among the worst hit, along with the people who depend on wildlife tourism for their livelihoods.

> **OBJECTIVE 1** Scale up preventive measures to limit the spread of COVID-19

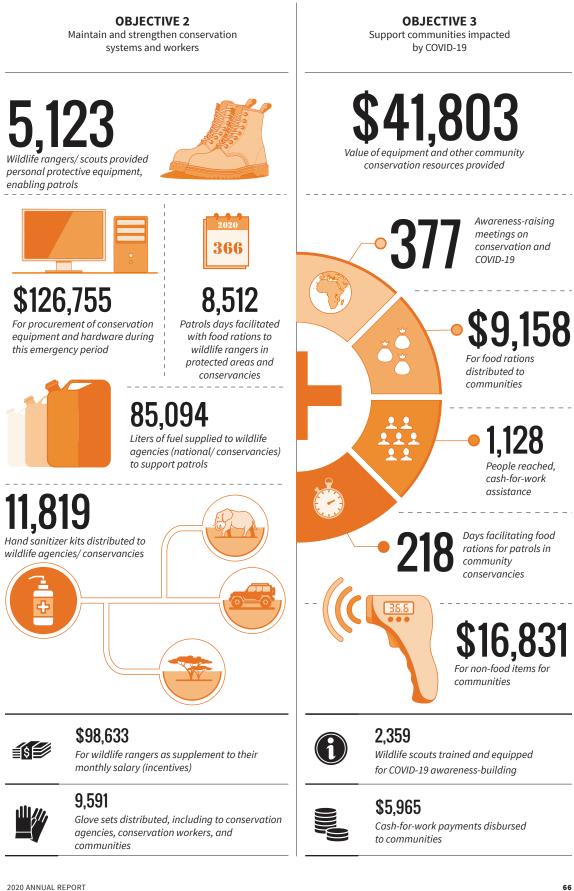




31 Handwashing stations established/maintained in communities



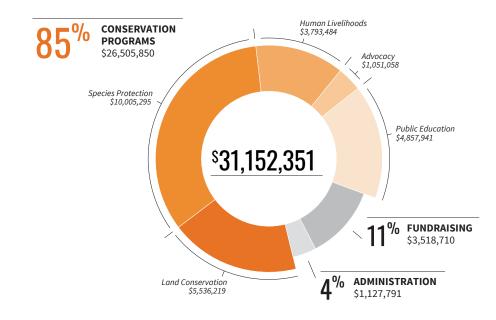
2,005 Community members provided with preventive materials

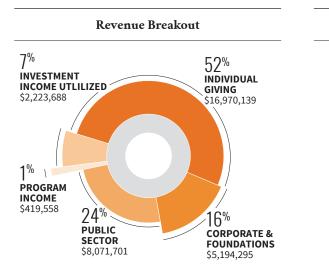


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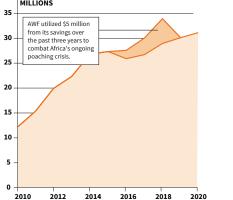
Since AWF's beginnings nearly 60 years ago, we've been a responsible steward of your contributions in service to Africa's wildlife and wild lands.

Organizational Efficiency









Summary of activities for the year ended June 30, 2020

OPERATING REVENUE	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Gifts from individuals	12,903,711	4,066,428	16,970,139
Corporate & foundation support	1,027,195	2,570,625	3,597,820
Public-sector grants	8,071,701	-	8,071,701
Program income	418,949	609	419,558
In-kind contributions	1,596,475	-	1,596,475
Restricted net assets utilized	5,224,273	(5,224,273)	-
Total Operating Revenue	29,242,304	1,413,389	30,655,693
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Conservation programs	20,596,851	-	20,596,851
Education & outreach	5,908,999	-	5,908,999
Total program expenses	26,505,850	-	26,505,850
Finance & administration	1,127,791	-	1,127,791
Fundraising	3,518,710	-	3,518,710
Total supporting services	4,646,501	-	4,646,501
Total Operating Expenses	31,152,351	-	31,152,351
Non-operating activities	-	-	-
Net investment income	1,893,368	330,320	2,223,688
Total Non-Operating Activities	1,893,368	330,320	2,223,688
Change in Net Assets	(16,679)	1,743,709	1,727,030

Financial position as of June 30

	2020	2019
Cash and equivalents	5,595,065	4,821,219
Investments	31,019,447	30,145,511
Gifts and grants receivable	6,430,794	5,710,301
Accounts receivable	115,597	563,221
Prepaid & other assets	739,417	767,918
Impact loans receivable	684,454	4,273,674
Property & equipment, net of depreciation	4,123,355	4,462,010
Rights of Use asset	4,363,588	-
Total Assets	53,071,717	50,743,854
Impact notes payable	-	4,762,500
Accounts payable & accrued expenses	2,118,036	1,624,010
Refundable grant advances	1,012,195	1,309,499
Loan payable	802,337	-
Lease liabilities	6,042,452	1,796,624
Other liabilities	157,528	39,028
Total Liabilities	10,132,548	9,531,661
Unrestricted net assets	28,516,802	28,533,481
Restricted net assets	14,422,421	12,678,712
Total Net Assets	42,939,223	41,212,193
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	53,071,771	50,743,854



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Thank you for all you do.

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