

AFRICAN

Heartland News

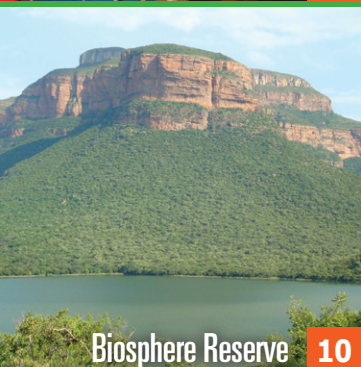
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In Pursuit of Sustainable Conservation

When the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) launched its African Heartlands programme in 1998, it was in recognition of the fact that lasting conservation in Africa could only be achieved if actions were pursued at the large-landscape level. Large-landscape conservation, however, often requires similarly expansive funding—something that is not easy to come by, particularly during a global economic recession.

AWF has thus been particularly fortunate to have a €10 million investment from the Royal Netherlands Embassy over the past four years. This grant enabled us to engage in a large-scale, multipronged project in our Samburu and Kilimanjaro Heartlands. Through the Integrated Management Programme for the Kenyan Landscapes, which ended early in 2012, AWF was able to achieve substantial conservation and livelihood impact, build a foundation for sustainable conservation in two areas in Kenya, develop more than 30 innovative conservation work tools and complete a plan for the Masai Mara National Reserve.

Securing land for wildlife

In Kenya, more than 75 percent of wildlife is found outside protected areas on community

and private lands. This, combined with land subdivision, unregulated development and the practice of pastoralist lifestyles in both Heartlands (for more on Kilimanjaro and Samburu, see “The Kenyan Heartlands” on p.7), has led to increased human–wildlife conflict and fragmented habitat for wildlife.

The Integrated Management Programme for the Kenyan Landscapes piloted approaches to increase the economic value of wildlife for landowners, increase local support for conservation and ultimately integrate landscape-level conservation and development across the two Heartlands. This included helping to establish conservancies, develop capacity for local management of wildlife, launch conservation enterprises to generate economic benefits, and implement human–wildlife conflict mitigation to reduce the costs of wildlife damage.

Securing land for wildlife was a priority for this project, according to Daudi Sumba, vice president for programme operations at AWF. “Wildlife needs space—without space, there is no wildlife. Through this grant, we were able to leverage, secure and improve the management of more than 600,000 hectares of land in protected and community areas,” he said. “That’s significant.” ► *continued on page 6*



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A Long-Term Commitment

Heartland conservation is a complex undertaking at all levels, from the ecological dynamics underpinning ecosystem functions to the interactions between social, cultural, economic and political forces that drive and affect them. Human needs within a particular landscape are diverse and those within and between communities are often unaligned—some community members want natural products out of the system, others are looking for farmlands and yet others rely on livestock and even wildlife for their livelihoods.

There are divergent political interests and gender differences that define ways in which people interact with their resources. Wildlife too has varied resource requirements whose availability may vary daily or seasonally; often species have to move over large areas to track these seasonal resources, exacerbating areas of serious human and wildlife conflict.

To bring these together into a coherent program that delivers both conservation and socioeconomic benefits requires a number of critical success factors. These include accessing a mix of disciplines and skills; building strong relationships with multiple stakeholders, especially local communities, local and national governments, and private sector partners; as well as a solid understanding of the dynamics and interactions listed above—and all built on good science to underpin management decisions.

Making a long-term commitment to specific Heartlands is critical, which requires us to find significant and sustained funding over a period of years to ensure we can design, develop, test and implement an integrated package of investments that will help deliver sustainable conservation and economic outcomes at scale. That is why long-term relationships with development partners such as the Dutch government (see our cover story), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and others are critical to our success.

As we begin 2013, AWF would like to announce the launch of such a partnership, with USAID Uganda. The “Tourism for Biodiversity” (T4B) program is a four-year, US\$10 million commitment. AWF will work with local partners to leverage the knowledge gained through previous work with Uganda’s nature-based tourism industry (see p. 4) to make a significant contribution to conservation and communities in this country.

It is our long-term commitment to Africa that is helping AWF and our partners deliver the results shared here, to best ensure that Africa’s wildlife and wild lands endure for the benefit of Africa’s people and the world at large.

Daudi Sumba
Vice President of Programme Operations



AWF Thanks Helen Gichohi

AWF is sincerely grateful to Helen Gichohi for her many years of service and dedication to our organisation and to African conservation. As AWF president, Helen provided critical programme leadership and was a strong and eloquent voice in framing the conservation policy debate across the continent. Helen leaves AWF for a new career opportunity to help guide the economic development of her beloved Kenya. Stepping down from her presidential post with AWF, she will remain involved as a member of AWF’s board of trustees. All of us at AWF wish Helen the very best in her future endeavours, and we look forward to her continued input on how to best ensure that Africa’s wildlife and wild lands endure for the benefit of Africa’s people and the world at large.

Following Summit, AWF Takes Action on Rhinos

AWF has long supported rhino conservation projects. Following the emergency Rhino Summit hosted by AWF and Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) in April 2012 (see “An Africa Solution to Rhino Poaching,” *African Heartland News* 2012, Issue 2), AWF considered additional actions to help ensure the long-term survival of the African black and white rhino. Following are just some of the initial steps AWF has taken.

Reducing Demand

In an effort to reduce demand, AWF entered into a partnership with NGO WildAid to conduct a public awareness campaign in China. China is one of the main consumers of rhino horn. The campaign will include a series of high-impact public service announcements and advertisements featuring leading Asian celebrities, educating consumers about how their use and consumption of rhino horn leads to the illegal poaching of rhinos. Already the partnership has produced a billboard featuring former NBA player Yao Ming and a video featuring infographics about the poaching problem. More is expected going forward.

Caught on Camera

AWF donated 20 camera traps, along with metal casings, to KWS for rhino monitoring and surveillance in Ngulia Rhino Sanctuary, a fenced “safe” area for rhinos in Tsavo West National Park, and the Intensive Protection Zone (IPZ), an unfenced but heavily protected area to which many of the

Ngulia rhinos are relocated. These camera traps allow KWS to more easily locate and protect the Eastern black rhinos residing in the 103-sq.-km sanctuary and IPZ. (The cameras also recently captured poachers in action—KWS has reportedly submitted the photography to police for suspect identification.)

Sniffing Out Illegal Trafficking

KWS deploys a canine unit that detects wildlife products at international airports, but with only six dogs, the unit is currently understaffed. As a result, dogs and their handlers have to work 12-hour daily shifts, according to KWS canine master Charles Rono. He noted the ideal scenario would be to have units working six-hour shifts.

AWF will therefore soon fund up to 8 additional sniffer dogs—which are trained to detect elephant ivory, rhino horn and weapons with greater than 90 percent accuracy—and 10 handlers. The dogs will be deployed to an additional airport and Kenya’s main harbor, Kilindini.

Save Stabilization

Zimbabwe has the fourth-largest population of black rhino in the world, but since 2006, 89 percent of all black rhino losses on the continent have occurred in the country. Supporting anti-poaching units in Save Valley Conservancy, Zimbabwe’s largest—which has 100 Southern black and 35 white rhinos—provides a feasible way of stabilizing and eventually increasing the continent’s critically endangered black rhino population. ■

AWF has supplemented its usual rhino work with additional efforts to stem poaching.



New Tool to Evaluate Conservation Enterprises

By Giles Davies *Investment manager, African Wildlife Capital*

Africa-based conservation tourism projects are complex and have their own specific dynamics. It can nevertheless be helpful to have guidelines by which to evaluate the conservation impacts of such an enterprise. Understanding this, AWF developed a conservation tourism evaluation framework through the Uganda STAR II project.

The framework rates a conservation enterprise on nine attributes using a simple traffic light system (whereby an attribute being positively represented in the conservation enterprise receives a green, for example). Attributes included:

- Conservation relevance,
- Social impact potential,
- Enabling environment and
- Benefits management, among others.

Evaluation tool

While the framework primarily serves as a due-diligence tool for AWF and its subsidiary, African Wildlife Capital, to appraise new opportunities, it has already provided value as an evaluation tool for existing enterprises. AWF used this framework to evaluate five conservation tourism enterprises in Uganda and found a number of compelling themes. These included:

- The need to develop legal institutions through which benefits to local communities from tourism enterprises can be transparently, fairly and meaningfully managed; and
- The need for both enterprises and local livelihoods to be based upon target conservation values.

Findings from the Uganda STAR II process will no doubt be relevant as AWF launches its new programme work in Uganda (see “A Long-Term Commitment” on p. 2). ■

AWF Lays Foundation

By Etotépé A. Sogbohossou

Straddling Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger, the W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) ecosystem is one of the largest transboundary protected ecosystems in West Africa. This region is home to West Africa's last major population of savanna elephant—numbering at around 4,950 as of a 2003 census—and the highly endangered West African giraffe, of which only 250 remain in the wild.

“This region is home to West Africa's last major population of savanna elephant

The main factor threatening the future of these animals is habitat conversion and degradation. With unplanned settlement and agriculture increasingly surrounding the Sahelian ecosystem's protected areas, many migration corridors essential for the unimpeded movement of elephant and the West African giraffe are being blocked and critical habitat being lost, jeopardizing these species and the rich biodiversity of this unique ecological landscape.

Under two grants—from the Swedish Postcode Lottery Foundation and the MAVA Foundation for Nature—AWF has begun working with local partners and authorities to monitor and map elephant and giraffe movements across the landscape to improve our understanding of their habitat requirements and the types and levels of threat they face, information that is essential to designing programs to improve wildlife protection, habitat conservation and land-use planning in the region.

Partners for elephant monitoring include park authorities in Burkina Faso and Benin, local associations, and universities in those two countries. AWF is working with Niger Wildlife Directorate and the local guides association, Association for the Valorisation of Ecotourism in Niger (AVEN), plus universities in Niger. For all activities, AWF is paying special attention to potential linkages with other conservation



for Elephant, Giraffe Conservation in West Africa

Ecologist, Regional Parc W Heartland

work that is under design or implementation by other stakeholders working in the landscape, especially the European Union's Programme d'Appui aux Parcs de l'Entente and WAP regional programs.

Initial efforts

AWF has supplied monitoring equipment—composed of GPS units, cameras and binoculars—to the rangers of the Pendjari Biosphere Reserve in Benin and Parc W Burkina, as well as the AVEN giraffe guides. Pendjari and Parc W rangers received a short training on how to use the equipment, and the effective monitoring of elephants started in Pendjari in June and in Parc W Burkina in July. During their patrols, they collect and record data on elephant groups and habitats. Forms are designed to capture information about herd size and composition, such as sex ratio and number of adults and sub-adults.

AWF is working with the Ministries of Environment in Burkina and Benin to get authorisation on elephant collaring and will hopefully soon begin planning with the field staff and veterinarian. We are aiming to conduct the collaring in Q1 or Q2 of the 2013 calendar year.

AWF has also contacted the University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin and the University of Ougadougou in Burkina Faso to seek students to help monitor human–elephant conflicts as part of their training and experience provision in the field. One student has already surveyed the conflicts around W Burkina, and the data is being analysed. Conflicts are a great problem in the area: Local people are feeling abandoned by the government, which communities say has not stepped in to help mitigate the challenges, especially the losses of crops and livestock.

Meanwhile, AWF has prepared a detailed giraffe-monitoring program with wildlife authorities and park staff. Giraffe guides received a short training and started in June with the monitoring of individual giraffes. Every day, they follow a handful of giraffes and record data on their movements in the ecosystem, within both their core and extended ranges.

Together with the Niger Wildlife Authority rangers and AVEN guides, AWF identified priority degraded areas in the core giraffe range for restoration. About 4,890 plants

have been planted, mostly by local women. Additional local people will soon be trained in nursery plant production.

Challenges

Initial efforts on elephant and giraffe conservation have not been without their challenges. For example, only Pendjari is collecting data on elephant currently, because the rainy season and limited means of transportation have temporarily halted all patrolling in W Burkina. With giraffe conservation, there were some delays in the organising of a national workshop on developing a giraffe conservation action plan in Niger. AWF is hoping to facilitate such a gathering of stakeholders in coming months.

Despite these challenges, we are excited about the projects that are underway and confident that these efforts will allow for greater conservation gains in the future in the WAP ecosystem. ■



continued from page 1

► Among the activities that AWF pursued were the development of a joint management plan for Samburu, Buffalo Springs and Shaba National Reserves in the Samburu Heartland, leading to improvement in the conservation and management of the three reserves (and for the first time as a single unit for conservation and tourism). The Protected Area Planning Framework (PAPF) was used as the principle planning tool and is under use in other reserves owned by county councils and Kenya Wildlife Service. AWF also helped with the renovation of 19 rangers' houses at Shaba and Buffalo Spring to improve monitoring and patrols (see "AWF Improves Infrastructure at Buffalo Springs," *African Heartland News* 2012, Issue 1). Reserve revenues have subsequently increased, according to Benson Lengalen, former Samburu Heartland natural resources management officer and now Heartland coordinator.

In Kilimanjaro Heartland, AWF launched an innovative land lease program whereby AWF pays landowners an annual fee to keep their land open for wildlife coming out of Amboseli National Park to Kimana and Tsavo National Park further east. The process led to the creation of three conservancies—Osupuko, Kilitome and Nailepu—and established a wildlife corridor to the east of the park. In Kilitome Conservancy, the high-end Tawi Lodge has agreed to take over the land-lease payments, presenting a potential solution for ensuring sustainability of the land-lease program.

AWF field staff additionally worked with representatives of the Olgulului Group Ranch, which surrounds Amboseli, to create a community-led land-use plan. Specific areas of the ranch were designated for wildlife conservation, combined pastoralism and wildlife, settlements, and agriculture, streamlining land use and creating four conservancies in the process. Once fully implemented, the land-use plan is projected to generate increased revenues of up to US\$1.2

million each year, providing incentives for the community to better manage this area for wildlife.

According to AWF Vice President for Conservation Strategy Kathleen Fitzgerald, "Connected land units that are appropriately zoned for various uses allow communities to better adapt to impacts of climate change, which in many cases has serious consequences on livelihoods and poverties."

Of the 661,955 hectares of land leveraged for conservation, 350,165 hectares—44 percent—were set aside for conservation in 20 community areas. "That communities have chosen to set aside this much land for conservation shows that community-based conservation has been accepted as a legitimate land-use option for local socioeconomic development and sustainability," remarked Fiesta Warinwa, Kilimanjaro Heartland director.

“The programme piloted approaches to increase the economic value of wildlife

2 key elements

AWF recognised that sustaining conservation, however, required two key elements: the existence of businesses that provide a continual influx of revenue and a certain level

of capacity among the local population. "One of our biggest lessons learned is that you must secure space for wildlife through a combination of natural resource planning and local capacity building to manage the land and wildlife," Sumba explained. "You must give wildlife value in the eyes of the people."

AWF therefore supported the establishment of 12 conservation enterprises and 27 natural resource management institutions during the four-year grant. These ranged from women's groups that improved livelihoods, to livestock market access companies, to a bioenterprise program focusing on business opportunities in honey, aloes and wild botanical plants. With inputs from Kenyan law firm Coulson Harney, AWF's Samburu Heartland staff is helping to resolve some key challenges between the community and private sector partner in OI Lentille Lodge and to restructure the partnership between the community and private sector partner in Lumo Tented Lodge. The aim is to arrange new terms that generate higher incomes for the community.

During the life of the grant, enterprises generated more than US\$2 million in income for communities and directly benefited 33,835 people in Samburu and Kilimanjaro Heartlands. AWF's use of money transfer, and the requirement for beneficiaries to open bank accounts to ensure direct benefit-sharing, was a welcome departure from the communal benefit sharing arrangements that



Scouts are effective in addressing threats and providing wildlife security.

historically had provided opportunities for corruption and mismanagement. More than 4,200 individuals were trained in a wide range of skills—including livestock management, ecological monitoring, scout and security training, and basic financial management and governance—improving their capacity for effective natural resources management and livelihood diversification.

AWF faced a number of challenges during the life of the Integrated Management Programme for the Kenyan Landscapes, including a drought in 2009 that resulted in massive livestock and

wildlife deaths. “Extreme drought really impacted pastoral livelihoods and threatened the well-being of some species of wildlife,” observed Philip Muruthi, AWF’s senior director of conservation science. AWF had channeled some of the funding for conserving a number of flagship species, including the endangered Grevy’s zebra and African wild dog, elephant, rhino and large carnivores. While a 2010 census found that these cornerstone species had increased in population between 2 percent and 25 percent since the 2003 census—Samburu Heartland’s Lengalen noted in particular that the Grevy’s zebra population has now stabilized, while the wild dog population increased remarkably, from 250 to 350 individuals, between 2008 and 2012—others had experienced a steep decline because of the drought.

Changes in land use have seen more settlement into historical wildlife areas in recent years. AWF countered these trends by supporting 285 community scouts and building predator-proof bomas. The bomas enjoyed close to 100 percent success when all guidelines were implemented. Scouts, too, were effective in addressing threats and providing wildlife security—but Kilimanjaro Heartland’s Warinwa observed that scout systems should be formalized in wildlife policy to increase their effectiveness.

Another challenge: ensuring strong governance throughout the project areas. Philip Lenaiyasa, senior community development officer for AWF in the Kilimanjaro Heartland, noted that poor community governance in some cases had delayed AWF efforts. “Conservation will thrive in areas with strong leadership that can set and enforce rules,” he said.

Continuity of work

AWF will have additional opportunities to increase and perfect its conservation efforts: It recently received another grant, worth about US\$12 million, from the Royal Netherlands Embassy to continue work over the next four years in Kilimanjaro and Samburu. With this next round of funding, AWF plans to deepen the sustainable management

of water and expand its focus from single enterprises to value-chain enterprises, which produces greater benefits to communities. The grant will also allow AWF to conduct systematic restoration efforts in the Mau Forest, including tree replanting, watershed protection, water harvesting and more.

“Through this grant, we were able to secure more than 600,000 hectares of land.

—Daudi Sumba, vice president for programme operations, AWF

“This new grant will give us the opportunity to consolidate the work we are doing and scale up the successes that we’ve had before,” Sumba explained. “Continued funding from the Dutch allows AWF to continue pursuing conservation outcomes, most of which are achieved over the long term.” ■

The Kenyan Heartlands

The 26,000-sq.-km **Samburu Heartland**, located in central northern Kenya, features extensive wildlife throughout its semi-arid landscape and serves as a major tourist attraction. The main livelihood here is pastoralism. Land ownership is a mix of extensive private ranches, community-owned pastoralist areas and state-owned national parks and wildlife game reserves.

The **Kilimanjaro Heartland**, meanwhile, measures 24,000 sq. km, with Amboseli National Park as its anchor. The park is surrounded by seven large Maasai community group ranches, where the main occupation is again livestock rearing. Many Maasai, however, are adopting irrigated and rain-fed agriculture. Tourism also serves as an income generator. The landscape extends south to Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.



The main livelihood in Samburu Heartland is pastoralism.



Along with new uniforms, Zambia Wildlife Authority will be equipping its rangers with modern law enforcement equipment to fight poaching.

Zambia Wildlife Authority Launches New Uniform as Government Declares War Against Poachers

By **Nasson Tembo** *Director, Kazungula Heartland*

Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) had over the years been using a jungle-green uniform—until September, when Minister of Tourism and Art Hon. Sylvia Masebo, MP, launched a new zebra-patterned camouflage uniform at Chunga Wildlife Training College in Kafue National Park. The move was in line with ZAWA's effort to re-brand itself and ensure easy identity. The launch was witnessed by Zambia Army, Air Force and Police commanders and 100 wildlife police officers clad in the new uniform.

During the launch, Minister Masebo declared war against poachers and announced that ZAWA would work closely with other defence forces in order to curb poaching. She noted that the government attached great importance to its wildlife resources and curbing poaching would enable the country to attract more local and foreign wildlife-related investment.

The minister also indicated that the government will be equipping ZAWA with modern law enforcement

equipment to fight poaching, as poachers had become more sophisticated. She pointed out that even traditional hunters had turned commercial, posing a threat to both wildlife and officers. Severe poaching had impacted prime wildlife species, such as elephants, whose population had reduced from 250,000 to 17,000 during the late 1980s and early 1990s, and black rhinos, which were wiped out.

ZAWA Director General Edwin Matokwane noted that the statutory instrument that provided for the launch of the new uniform raised ZAWA's portfolio to its rightful position as a paramilitary organization.

The procurement of uniform was made possible by contributions from a number of ZAWA partners, which included AWF, at a cost of US\$333,480. The uniform includes combat shirts, trousers, combat coats, jerseys, combat boots, berets, helmets and caps, and chest webbings. Each of the 1,800 wildlife police officers received two pairs of the new uniform. ■

“The government attached great importance to its wildlife resources

In Kenya, Firing Up Communities About Wood-Fuel Security

By Philip Lenaiyasa Senior Community Development Officer, Kilimanjaro Heartland

Communities within and surrounding Imbirikani Group Ranch in southern Kenya are experiencing a rising paucity of fuel wood, which serves as key sources of energy for cooking. This wood-fuel deficiency is exacerbated by several factors, including the harvesting of wood for building materials, lack of direct access to technological innovations, a dry environment where tree growing conditions are difficult, a rapidly growing population and ever-increasing cost of fossil fuel cooking alternatives, such as liquefied petroleum gas and kerosene.

Currently, less than half of the population uses domestic household energy-saving stoves, or *jikos*. Almost all community members are wood-fuel

users (either charcoal or firewood), gathering wood from a section of the community-owned Chyulu Forest and the woodlands within the group ranch. This constitutes a very large amount of energy waste and increased pressure on indigenous woodlands with *acacia melifera* and *acacia xanthopholea* as the most affected tree species. Furthermore, indoor air pollution from inefficient stoves and black carbon-producing soot leads to intractable respiratory ailments.

This loss of trees and other woody vegetation, diminishing water resources and limited income opportunities are further imposing pressure on community, its livestock and wildlife. Serviced by a newly upgraded road, neighbouring towns are rapidly growing, leading to even higher demand for wood resources, especially charcoal—resulting in high prices of forest by-products. A 50-kg bag of charcoal in Kimana town, 20 kilometres from Imbirikani, has exceeded US\$10. Thus a household of five would spend at least US\$20 on charcoal per month using traditional metal charcoal stoves. They could save up to 50 percent using an improved cook stove.

Well-stocked shop

It is against this background that AWF in collaboration with Woodland 2002 Trust and Masaailand Preservation Trust introduced wood-fuel security and conservation initiatives

Given increased pressures on nearby woodlands, AWF has opened a shop selling eco-cookstoves.

aimed at saving the Chyulu Forest. The project made proven energy-saving biomass cook stoves available to the communities, establishing a fully approved, licensed and well-stocked shop in Kimana town and employing two sales staff from local communities to manage the business. To generate product exposure and awareness, the AWF project team conducted mobile road show demonstrations and sales in Kimana, Loitokitok and Imbirikani towns. Another retail shop was also established in

Imbirikani. A steady supply chain of the energy-saving stoves to the shop was developed in conjunction with the Eden Wildlife Trust.

The Kimana jiko shop has recorded very satisfactory sales results so far, with about 30 paying customers each month. General consumer response has been very positive. Many people find the jikos to be quite highly priced but concede it is due to the high quality. Inquiries from people interested in wholesaling the stoves have started coming in from as far as Arusha, Tanzania. Woodland 2002 Trust has plans to increase the dissemination of forestry-related information, including tree seed species that are appropriate for the area and planting and agro-forestry techniques to the communities. ■

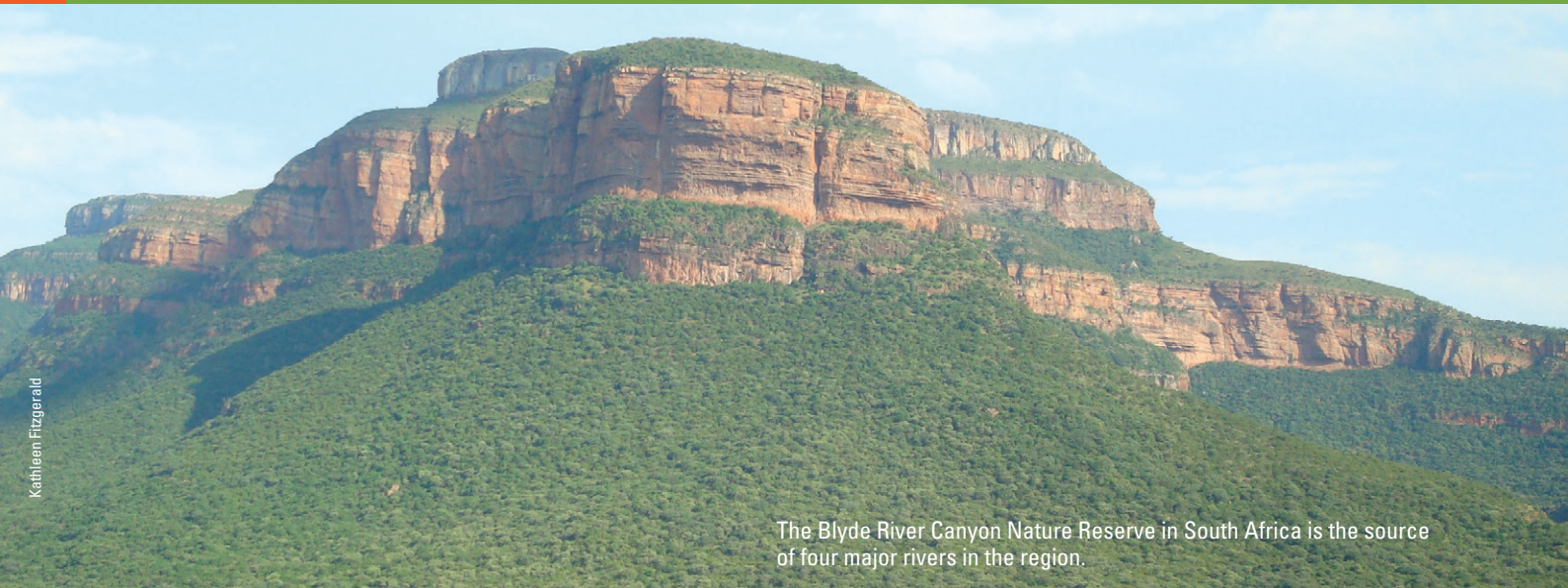
Currently, less than half of the population uses domestic household energy-saving stoves



Teddy Kinyanju



Teddy Kinyanju



The Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve in South Africa is the source of four major rivers in the region.

Kathleen Fitzgerald

South African Biosphere Reserve Fertile Ground for Biodiversity, Land Claims

By **Kathleen Fitzgerald** *Vice President for Conservation Strategy*

Since 2000 AWF has worked on various initiatives in the Limpopo Heartland, a transfrontier landscape that includes parts of northeastern South Africa, southwestern Mozambique and southeastern Zimbabwe. Projects have included leopard research in Kruger National Park, park improvement for Banhine National Park and community capacity development with various local communities.

Part of the Limpopo Heartland includes the Kruger to Canyons (K2C) Biosphere Reserve, designated as such in September 2001. Integral to the reserve is the Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve (BRCNR), along with several other protected areas, including Kruger National Park and some private nature reserves that help link Kruger to BRCNR.

Ecological importance

This region is home to a variety of wildlife, such as elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion, wild dog and leopard, together with rare antelope such as tsessebe, sable, roan and hartebeest. The biosphere reserve also boasts the highest concentrations of giraffe in Southern Africa. The escarpment region contains 140 endemic species of plant, reptile, amphibian and invertebrate, while the highest point in the escarpment contains well over 2,000 plant species—more than the whole of Kruger.

“Recognising the ecological importance of the biosphere reserve, AWF is exploring possible conservation initiatives with partners

But it is not wildlife alone that makes this region so ecologically important. BRCNR contains the third-largest canyon in the world and the Blyde escarpment is the source of four major rivers: the Selati, Makutswi, Blyde and Sand Rivers. All of these, except the Sand, join the Olifants, the largest river in Kruger, and form the Lower Olifants Catchment Basin flowing into Mozambique. Many ecologists believe that if not for the Blyde River, in particular, little or no water would reach Mozambique via the Olifants in times of drought.

Land claims

Recognising the ecological importance of the K2C biosphere reserve, AWF conducted a scoping mission and is exploring possible initiatives with partners including the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency and the K2C Association.

Now as South Africa works to reconcile past injustices pertaining to land, a process for communities to lodge claims for historical lands has been implemented. A significant portion of the BRCNR, Kruger National Park and K2C region is under land claim, yet to be reconciled. With support from Citi Foundation, AWF has begun working with a community in the K2C area that has obtained title to land through the claims process. The goal: to leverage conservation in this unique area and improve community livelihoods through enterprise development. ■

Carnivore Census Provides New Answers to Old Problems

By **Fiesta Warinwa** *Director, Kilimanjaro Heartland*

The populations of large carnivores, from hyenas and jackals to lions and leopards, across the African continent are rapidly declining due to increased pressure from an ever-expanding human population, dwindling habitat, and continual conflict with rural communities. Lack of information about carnivore population size and trends, distribution and habitat use, and nature and pattern of conflicts with people have hindered the development of effective conservation and management strategies for their conservation in many African ecosystems.

To improve these conservation and management strategies, AWF staff, in collaboration with Kenya Wildlife Service and the Tanzania National Parks Authority, conducted a large-carnivore census earlier this year in the Amboseli–West Kilimanjaro cross-border ecosystem in AWF’s Kilimanjaro Heartland. “Just like an aerial census, a cross-border census is an expensive undertaking and requires adequate preparation,” said Fiesta Warinwa,

director of AWF’s Kilimanjaro Heartland. The players involved have to develop and agree upon a study design and census methods. Of the 43 individuals involved in the project, six were AWF staffers.

Populations are not evenly distributed across the ecosystem

Various methods were used to obtain a direct count of the large carnivores. These included the use of play-back systems, where hyena and jackal calls, for example, were played and individuals that show up were photographed. Other methods included interviews with communities using structured questionnaires; the use of radio telemetry; and the use of camera traps for smaller carnivores such as aardwolves, caracals, and mongoose.

Hyenas greatest threat

Data is still being analysed, but preliminary results indicate that lions,

hyenas, jackals, cheetahs, leopards and wild dogs are found in the ecosystem, with hyenas being the most abundant carnivore, followed by jackals and lions. Leopards, cheetahs and wild dogs are found at relatively low densities. Populations are not evenly distributed across the ecosystem: Hyenas and jackals tend to be clustered about 4–5 km away from human settlement, and hyenas pose the greatest threat to livestock, followed closely by lions. Lions do not show a clear distance relationship to human settlement.

Already this data on carnivore locations and population densities is leading to fresh approaches to human–predator conflict mitigation. Outreach is generating new awareness of predator importance among locals, while new strategies for protecting livestock and humans have begun to lessen hostilities. As more information is released about carnivore behavior, locals will be better able to live alongside these creatures, and ensure a vibrant and diverse ecological landscape here for years to come. ■

Preliminary results indicate that hyenas (inset) pose the greatest threat to livestock, followed by lions.



Mark Boulton



Engaging in Critical Discussions at Rio+20

By Jimmiel Mandima *Director of policy, program design*

As the whole world converged on Rio de Janeiro in June for the United Nations (UN) Conference on Sustainable Development (or Rio+20), AWF joined the numerous partnership dialogues and in so doing showcased experiences and lessons learned through the AWF Heartlands Program.

With the Summit's themes of "A Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development (Poverty Eradication)" and the "Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development," there was every reason for AWF to engage in Rio+20.

AWF participated in two day-long technical seminars. The first, the 4th Agriculture & Rural Development Day, hosted by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (or CGIAR), shared messages that reinforced AWF's landscape approach, which integrates conservation and livelihood improvement and emphasises how to holistically deal with issues that relate to the nexus of natural resources, energy, food and water.

A second event, hosted by the Rome-based UN agencies (the Food and Agriculture

Organisation, International Fund for Agricultural Development, World Food Programme and Bioversity International), engaged key stakeholders in a dialogue to identify the actions required for a food-secure future. Here, AWF's Heartlands Programme was shared as a participatory model that engages national and regional entities to inform policy.

AWF also participated in a number of UN Partnership Forum Sessions that provided unique networking opportunities with senior-level participants from the financial, governmental and international sectors. During one of the sessions, AWF presented highlights of its work in the Maringa-Lopori-Wamba landscape in the Democratic Republic of Congo (part of the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment, or CARPE) where we are integrating community forest management, agriculture development with value chain work to link communities to markets and biodiversity protection.

AWF's participation at Rio+20 offered much-needed visibility as we look to expand our programme portfolio. ■



Jimmiel Mandima represented AWF at Rio+20

AWF's African Heartlands Programme

AWF achieves conservation impact in Africa by focusing on high-priority, large landscapes that have the potential to conserve viable populations of African wildlife as well as key habitats and ecological systems well into the future. These are our African "Heartlands."

Heartlands are composed of different land units—national parks, private land and community land—within a single ecosystem ranging in size from 7,000 km² to 95,000 km². Many extend across the borders of multiple countries. When selecting Heartlands, AWF conducts a detailed analysis that looks at the region's

biological, ecological, social and economic opportunities. AWF's initial Heartland commitment is 15 years. In each Heartland,

AWF works closely with partners and stakeholders—including national and local governments, communities, research organisations, other NGOs and the private sector—to develop priority interventions specific to the area. AWF works in the following strategic areas: land and habitat conservation, species conservation and applied research, conservation enterprise, capacity building, and policy. ■



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