

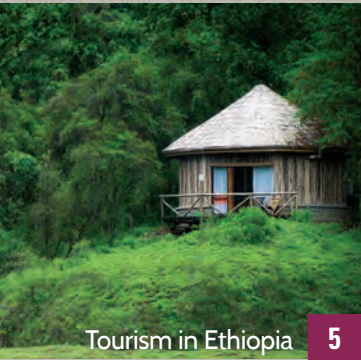
African Wildlife Foundation's AFRICAN LANDSCAPE

2015.ISSUE 2

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The Bili-Uele Protected Area Complex harbours the largest population of eastern chimpanzee in Africa.

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AWF Kickstarts Efforts in Remote Bili-Uele Protected Area Complex

By **Jef Dupain** *Technical director, West and Central Africa*

The Bili-Uele Protected Area Complex is the largest complex of protected areas in northern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Bordering the Central African Republic, it harbours important populations of elephant and chimpanzee, plus a full range of forest and savanna biodiversity.

Despite it being a complex of protected areas, DRC's wildlife authority, *Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature* (ICCN), has never succeeded in effectively protecting and managing the region due to its lack of resources and the site's extraordinary remoteness. In fact, until the beginning of the 21st century, it was not even known whether the area was inhabited by gorillas or chimpanzees. Only after field work by researchers such as Cleve Hicks, who with AWF support conducted a biodiversity survey of the area in 2012, was it discovered that the region harbours the largest population of eastern chimpanzees in Africa and, despite years of heavy poaching, a very important population of forest elephants.

Yet this area will not remain a haven for biodiversity without proper conservation intervention. Artisanal mining is a significant threat. At the same time, Mbororo pastoralists

from the north—along with poachers—are also freely entering the protected area complex.

At ICCN's request, African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) has agreed to support the wildlife authority in implementing effective protection and participative management in a portion of the Bili-Uele complex. With findings from Hicks' biodiversity survey plus information gathered from a follow-up mission AWF conducted in 2014, AWF identified a 10,000-km² core area with the highest potential for biodiversity protection and the lowest habitat destruction. This span of untouched habitat transitions from the forest along the Bili River in the south to savanna and dry land along the Mbomu River in the north. AWF call this area the Bili-Mbomu Forest Savanna Mosaic.

No single conservation or protection activity is happening here, most likely due to the very isolated conditions, lack of any solid infrastructure and presence of small groups of Lord's Resistance Army and other rebels. Considering the level of insecurity in the area, AWF decided to partner with Maisha Consulting, a company with experience in protected area protection in war or semi-war zones.

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African Wildlife Foundation's
AFRICAN LANDSCAPE



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The Whole of the Continent

Insecurity due to rebel activity, lack of infrastructure, limited funding... multiple factors make working in Central Africa a difficult region in which to pursue conservation. For a long time, African Wildlife Foundation focused our resources on the Maringa–Lopori–Wamba landscape in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), knowing that there would be no conservation gains if we spread ourselves too thin.

Like many of you, however, AWF were all too aware of Central Africa's tremendous ecological importance. We kept a close eye on conditions on the ground and

Maringa–Lopori–Wamba. Since 2013, AWF have been working with the protected area authority in Dja Faunal Reserve, providing technologies and training that enable systematic data collection from patrols and enhance decision-making. Earlier this year, we expanded our efforts to Campo Ma'an National Park (see page 8) and to Bouba N'Djida National Park (page 7).

Desire and capacity

While we assist protected area authorities in DRC, Cameroon and elsewhere (see page 11 to read about our revised programme in Uganda), we are also cognisant of the need to build capacity



“We are also cognisant of the need to build capacity at the local level”

continually evaluated our potential for engagement, knowing that we would eventually scale up our involvement in the region when the time came.

I am very excited to say that the time has come!

One of the sites where we are now working is the Bili-Uele Protected Area Complex in northern DRC. As you can read in our cover story, AWF have been laying the groundwork for our engagement in Bili-Uele for quite some time, having financed a biodiversity survey and some scoping missions in the past couple of years. We have recently accelerated our activities there, engaging a conservation security firm to assist Congo's wildlife authority in hiring and training ecoguards and begin protecting a core priority area within the complex.

AWF's conservation efforts in Central Africa are not limited to Bili-Uele and

at the local level. Making sure that local communities benefit from conservation is a key factor. For example, in southeast Zimbabwe, AWF provided a loan to the Gudo community to buy a stake in one of the country's most successful wildlife conservancies (page 4). And in Kenya's Mau Forest Complex, we are providing training for greater agricultural outputs and other benefits that help minimise residents' need to engage in deforestation (page 10).

Ultimately, our goal is a future where people want to, can and do engage in conservation across the whole of the continent.

Daudi Sumba
Vice president for programme design
and government relations

AWF Pushes for Policy on Environmentally Responsible Investment

By **Felix Otieno** *Assistant to the CEO*

Over the past year, together with the Aspen Institute, AWF has been convening a series of high-level dialogues with thought leaders from Africa and China in an effort to address the natural resource crisis facing Africa. The crisis comes in the wake of Africa's rapid economic development—in which China has played, and continues to play, a major role. The goal of this “China–Africa Dialogue” is to develop environmentally responsible investment frameworks for enterprises looking to invest in Africa.

Two ways in which we are addressing this include the African Union (AU) Vision 2063 and the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

In 2014, the AU Vision 2063 was being finalised for ratification. Its definition of natural resources, however, was focused only on extraction—of minerals, oils, timber and so on. AWF and the Aspen Institute recommended that the Union expand its definition of natural resources to clearly highlight and include wildlife and wild lands. The revised draft of the vision includes our recommended changes. Further, AU later invited AWF to take an active role in the International Conference in Illegal Trade and Exploitation of Wild Flora and Fauna in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, which took place 27 – 30 April.

FOCAC agenda

FOCAC is meant to strengthen friendly cooperation between China and African states, particularly on challenges around economic globalisation and development. FOCAC has three levels of dialogue. One of these is the Ministerial Conference, held every three years and attended by foreign ministers, ministers in charge of international economic cooperation and, sometimes, heads of state.

To create awareness at this level, AWF and the Aspen Institute in early 2015 invited all the African Ambassadors to China to a luncheon in Beijing, with the assistance of the Dean of African Ambassadors, H.E. Victor Sikonina. More than 35 ambassadors attended. At the luncheon, AWF CEO Patrick Bergin made the case for ensuring environmentally responsible investment in Africa and requested that this initiative be discussed at the upcoming Ministerial Conference.

A few days later, Bergin was called back to Beijing to meet with the Embassy of South Africa. South Africa is hosting the conference later this year and, together with China, will develop the agenda for the conference. With assistance from the Embassy, AWF submitted a letter to the Minister of Environmental Affairs, presenting our initiative and recommendation to add the same to the conference's agenda.

Through input into the agenda, AWF aims to influence those at the highest levels of government in both Africa and China to carefully consider how development affects Africa's natural resources, and establish policies that accommodate those considerations. AWF recently received a grant from the World Bank to implement a second phase of the China–Africa Dialogue series. ■



IN BRIEF

- > In January, AWF completed a validation audit of the Kolo Hills Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (or REDD+) project in north-central Tanzania. Local authorities have all signed the revenue-sharing agreements in anticipation of the community being able to sell carbon credits.
- > A representative of AWF attended the recent ivory burns in Kenya, Ethiopia and Congo–Brazzaville.
- > AWF signed a 3-year partnership agreement with the African Media Initiative to improve media coverage of wildlife and environmental conservation issues in Africa.
- > A rhino calf was born in Mosi-oo-Tunya National Park at the beginning of 2015. AWF has been supporting Zambia Wildlife Authority and conservation activities in Mosi-oo-Tunya for several years, including with an installation of 2 closed-circuit cameras in the park to enhance rhino protection.
- > AWF's vice president for conservation strategy, Kathleen Fitzgerald, has authored a chapter on land protection in a new book, “Protecting the Wild,” for the Foundation for Deep Ecology, published by Island Press.
- > An MOU was signed between AWF and the government of Botswana to collaborate in the conservation of wildlife and development of tourism.
- > With support from AWF, the Ngwizi Conservancy in southwest Zimbabwe became a legal entity in March and the country's first conservancy that is wholly owned by a community and local landowners.
- > An AWF-supported livestock market project in Imbirikani, Kenya, launched in February. The project provides a market for livestock trading for the livestock marketing groups supported by AWF in the Kilimanjaro landscape.
- > AWF officially registered our opposition to legalising the rhino horn trade with the South African Department of Environmental Affairs, which established a Committee of Inquiry to consider the issue.
- > The youngest Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Tanzania, Randilen, now has a board of trustees. Though only 7 months old, Randilen WMA has already collected more than US\$173,000 in fees.

AWF Loan Supports 1st Community Equity Deal in Zimbabwe Conservancy

By **Alistair Pole** *Director, land conservation*

The Save Valley Conservancy in southeastern Zimbabwe has been under intense political pressure over the past decade as the government has grappled with the issue of indigenisation and the fact that many of the properties are white owned. AWF was approached in 2011 by the then-director of the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZPWMA) to help find a solution to this problem. The hope was that a model could be developed for all conservancies in Zimbabwe.

After thorough research, analysis and stakeholder engagement, AWF produced its recommendations in 2012, but these were overtaken by political events on the ground. AWF has continued to assist where possible, with the goal of trying to find a lasting solution to Save Valley Conservancy that ensures community participation, strong business and management components and political acceptability.

Over the past year, a number of properties in Save were taken over by the Zimbabwean government, with authority for them being handed to ZPWMA. One of these was the Senuko 3 Ranch, whose previous owner is the world-renowned conservationist Clive Stockil, winner of the 2013 Tusk Trust Award. Stockil has long been trying to support a community-based model for Save Conservancy.

When ZPWMA announced it would auction a 5-year lease for the property in December 2014, AWF worked with the Gudo Community—whose communal land is adjacent to Senuko 3—and Stockil to ensure the ranch remained under local control, for community benefit. AWF offered the Gudo community a loan to allow them to bid on the auction.

The community's bid was successful, a first for Zimbabwe.

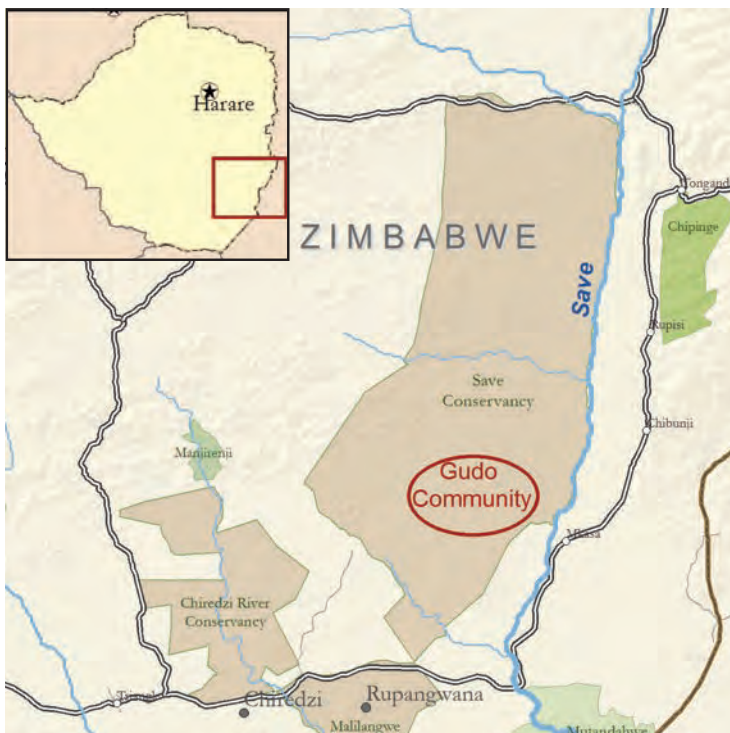
The loan has allowed the Gudo Community to become a stakeholder in one of the largest and most successful conservancies in Zimbabwe. After more than two decades of living next door to the conservancy and supporting its development, Gudo residents finally have a stake

in it. The community will offer Stockil the opportunity to manage the property, ensuring it will be operated on sound conservation principles. AWF are hopeful that this model can be utilised in other properties in the conservancy, and have offered its support to the other chiefs and communities in the region.

Significant conservation project

Save Valley Conservancy was established in 1992 from 21 former cattle ranches that had been struggling to maintain viable cattle operations in this drought-prone region. Originally 340,000 hectares in size, about 70,000 hectares was resettled during the government's Fast-Track Land Reform Programme in the early 2000s. Despite all the disruptions it has endured over the last 15 years, Save has maintained its status as a significant conservation project that currently supports a critical population of black rhino and white rhino, an estimated 190 lion, 1,400 elephant and 120 African wild dog as well as numerous other important wildlife populations. Outside of the loan to the Gudo community, AWF has been supporting Save with a series of Species Protection Grants, part of the AWF Urgent Response Fund.

While no solution has been adopted yet that incorporates the whole of the conservancy, it is hoped that the support for Gudo and its involvement in Senuko 3 will provide a successful model that can be used elsewhere. ■



A loan from AWF has allowed the Gudo Community to become a stakeholder in one of the largest conservancies in Zimbabwe, Save Valley Conservancy. Save hosts critical populations of the rhino.



Ethiopia boasts wildlife such as the Gelada monkey (clockwise from bottom right) but its nature-based tourism industry is underdeveloped. African Wildlife Capital has provided financing to build Limalimo Lodge in the Simiens (left) and in Bale Mountain Lodge in Bale Mountains National Park.



Building Nature Tourism in Ethiopia

By Giles Davies *Investment manager, African Wildlife Capital*

Ethiopia's protected area system covers 14 per cent of its land mass, a proportion that is larger than the global average. Bale Mountains National Park in the south-central part of the country hosts the world's largest Afro-alpine habitat, 17 endemic mammal species, 57 per cent of Ethiopia's endemic bird species and 60 per cent of the remaining Ethiopian wolf population—the world's rarest canid. It is also a critical water catchment for 12 million people living in the southeastern lowlands and Somalia. Simien Mountains National Park in northern Ethiopia, meanwhile, provides some of the world's most dramatic high-altitude scenery and is a World Heritage Site. It hosts 21 endangered species and 16 species of birds endemic to Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Despite the latent value of this natural capital, however, Ethiopia's national park system has not been developed or managed as the significant social and economic asset it could be, due in part to lack of resources and capacity. In practice only two national parks have been formally gazetted, and encroachment has become a considerable threat in a country whose population is approaching 90 million people. The need to demonstrate the economic development potential of these assets, both for local communities

and the nation at large, has become an increasing imperative. Over the past couple of years, AWF subsidiary African Wildlife Capital (AWC) has taken a lead in addressing this issue.

Engaging private sector

AWC was founded by AWF in 2011 as Africa's first impact-investment vehicle for conservation enterprise. The company provides investment financing to small and midsize enterprises that have the capacity to make a significant conservation and socioeconomic impact, thereby positively engaging the private sector in conservation efforts.

AWC has invested a total of US\$2 million to develop the first two eco-lodges in Ethiopia's national park system: Bale Mountain Lodge in Bale Mountains National Park and Limalimo Lodge in Simien Mountains National Park. Both lodges received in excess of US\$800,000 in financing from AWC. AWC has also financed the award-winning community-based tourism company, Village Ways, to develop its operations—which originated in India—in Ethiopia with an initial focus on the Simien Mountains. AWC has further worked with the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority to ensure that global best practices in private-sector concessioning in national park contexts were built into these developments.

Demonstrating its ability to innovate, US\$200,000 of the AWC funding in Limalimo Lodge was used to create a revenue-based royalty, secured by AWF, to generate an ongoing revenue stream for a new local conservation primary school that AWF is constructing on the edge of the national park. This creates a unique circular symbiosis between conservation, tourism and education in and around a national park.

Continued involvement

Bale Mountain Lodge opened in early 2014. It employs nearly 50 people and generated occupancies of more than 50 per cent in its first full year, following extensive international media interest. Limalimo Lodge is currently under construction, with a planned opening in the fourth quarter of 2015, together with five new Village Ways sites in local community villages surrounding Simien Mountains National Park.

AWC will continue to remain involved with all three entities and will maintain a presence on the boards of each of these companies. The aim: to work with Ethiopia's private sector to build on these pioneering developments in nature-based tourism. ■



> continued from page 1

Getting started

In February 2015, the newly appointed conservator, Bernard Iyomi, two AWF staff and Maisha Consulting's Nir Kalron and Remi Pognante travelled on site to Bili to assess conditions. As a testament to Bili's remote location, getting there involved travelling 340 km by car from Kisangani in DRC's Orientale Province to the town of Buta and 240 km by motorbike from Buta to Bili, with river crossings conducted in dugout canoes. The effort was worth it, however, as the team were able to meet with authorities and local communities and identify a permanent field office where both AWF and ICCN staff are now based.

Since that mission, AWF and Maisha have arranged for equipment to be flown into Bili (via Entebbe, Uganda, and Aru, DRC). Potential park rangers are being selected per existing ICCN criteria. After a thorough training, a final selection will be made. Under agreement between the parties, at least 50 per cent of the rangers will come from local communities.



Forest elephants are among the fauna said to be found in the forests of this protected area complex.

A scoping trip to Bili-Mbomu in February by AWF staff also included representatives from the Congolese wildlife authority and security firm Maisha Consulting.

Training will cover the following topics:

- ICCN will cover Congolese legislation, ICCN procedures and rules, and protected area management;
- Maisha will train rangers on preventing ambushes, improving discipline and ensuring communication and security in unsecure and isolated situations; and
- AWF will focus on community outreach, the use of CyberTracker and the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (or SMART) for improved anti-poaching and ecological monitoring. (For more on AWF's CyberTracker and SMART work, see page 8.)

Major activities

Several additional major activities are planned for the first six months. AWF will conduct intelligence gathering on the perception of existing insecurity, determine how local communities and intruders use the Bili-Mbomu core area, and map out all the stakeholders and get a better understanding of the risks and opportunities here. AWF will use satellite images; tools provided by Global Forest Watch, from which we received a grant to generate deforestation prediction risk models; information collected amongst the local communities; and the first results from CyberTracker-guided anti-poaching and ecological monitoring patrols to develop and implement an improved protection and conservation management plan. The aim is for this to be done by the end of 2015.

If all goes as planned, in the second half of 2015, about 20 to 30 ICCN ecoguards will be patrolling and securing at least the southern 30 percent of the 10,000-km² target area, protecting for the very first time this important population of chimpanzees and elephants—as well as many other fauna. After securing this initial core area, AWF will expand its program to cover more of this important region. ■



Kathleen Fitzgerald

AWF Supports Bouba N'Djida

Bouba N'Djida National Park in northern Cameroon catapulted into public consciousness in 2012 when it became the site of a stunning elephant massacre: Between 400 and 600 elephants were slaughtered in the space of just a few months, by poachers on horseback. Though the Cameroonian government stationed troops in Bouba following the elephant killings, it has not been fully successful in securing the park.

AWF recently received funding from the European Union in a collaborative project with GIZ to hire and train rangers to man the national park, which is part of a crossborder protected area complex with Sena Ouara National Park in Chad. Assisting AWF in this effort is Paul Bour, who was manager of the lodge in Bouba N'Djida at the time of the elephant massacres, has extensive experience in Bouba and is thoroughly committed to its conservation. We recently asked him about the current situation on the ground.

Q: How was tourism in Bouba N'Djida several years ago, compared to now?

A: When I first came to Bouba in 2006, tourism in the park was near zero, as no proper accommodations were available. In 2011, Bouba N'Djida had about 680 clients within the five-month tourism season, with most staying an average of three to four days. Most of the guests were expats living in Cameroon, as domestic tourism was, and still is, nonexistent.

After the elephant slaughter, the tourism has totally gone down, and even more recently with Ebola and Séléka and Boko Haram events in the extreme north of the country. This is especially because the European Embassies are advising tourists not to visit the North.

Q: What are the biggest threats to tourism, to wildlife and to conservation efforts in Bouba?

A: Tourism is threatened by security issues, while wildlife is especially threatened by nomadic grazing. This is done by people

Bouba N'Djida National Park suffers from insecurity, but rangers will soon undergo training by AWF to help address this problem.

coming from neighbouring countries with huge cattle herds, referred to as transhumance. There is also artisanal mining for gold and commercial poaching. Most of all, however, wildlife is threatened by a lack of management in the park.

Q: Does the elephant poaching continue?

A: The poaching is still going on, but very few people seem to know or care. At this point, I believe it may be difficult to find even more than 100 elephants left in the entirety of the Binational Sena Bouba (BSB) Yamoussa Complex. It's uncertain whether they are the same people behind the 2012 incidents, but it is the same *modus operandi*.

Q: What are the biggest impediments to properly securing the park and protecting wildlife?

A: First, there is a question of will. But even with a strong military presence, it is a tremendous challenge to secure a 2200-km² space—and that's only Bouba. The ecosystem is much, much larger. The whole BSB measures more than 5500 km², and the elephants are even moving beyond this area.

To make matters more difficult, no one knows the exact details behind these poachings. Where are these poachers coming from, who is hiring them, and who is managing them on the ground and giving them ammunition and horses?

Q: How will the AWF ranger training be conducted?

A: AWF has engaged Maisha Consulting [who is also working with AWF to conduct ranger training in the Bili-Mbomu Area, see cover story] for this effort. They will select some existing guards who have the potential to be patrol leaders, train them in antipoaching and patrol management, and then help them to replicate their knowledge to the rest of the group. So far Bouba N'djida has around 70 ecoguards on the paper, but very few are properly trained to conduct patrols. ■



Liliana Pacheco IJGE

AWF kicked off support to Campo Ma'an National Park with technology-based ecological monitoring training in January.

Technology, Training Improve Anti-Poaching and Ecological Monitoring in Central Africa

By **Jef Dupain** *Technical director, West and Central Africa*

It was more than two years ago that AWF, through the African Apes Initiative, began reaching out to priority African great ape sites to offer our assistance in improving protection. Priority sites were chosen on such factors as the presence of a critical great ape subspecies, presence of endemic species, need for intervention and availability of local partners. AWF's aim was to help the protected area authorities in these priority sites implement new technologies, specifically the CyberTracker software, plus the linking of this software to the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART).

Based on the lessons learned by AWF during implementation in the Lomako–Yokokala Faunal Reserve in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), similar ecological monitoring and anti-poaching efforts are now being implemented in a portfolio of other sites. These include: the Dja Faunal Reserve and Campo Ma'an National Park in Cameroon, Niokolo–Koba National Park and Dindefelo Community Reserve in Senegal, and the Iyondji Community Bonobo Reserve and the Bili–Mbomu target zone (see cover story) in DRC.

Training in Campo Ma'an

In January, a team of AWF experts, including members of AWF's geographic information systems (or GIS) team, travelled to Cameroon to begin implementation of CyberTracker and SMART in Campo Ma'an National Park. AWF worked with about a dozen park ecoguards to provide training on use of the tool. The presence of the GIS team was particularly helpful, as individuals were able to get a better understanding of the potential uses of CyberTracker and SMART in decision-making for future patrols. Further, this two-way learning,

between AWF and members of the protected area authority, was constructive.

Overall, the training was positive, with the chief warden and ecoguards all expressing excitement about using this technology on future patrols. In addition to helping the protected area authorities to improve efficiency and performance on patrols, the trainings will hopefully improve the perception of ownership, at all levels of the protected area authority, over ecological monitoring in Campo Ma'an.

Currently, most of the priority sites that have been provided AWF training in use of CyberTracker and SMART are applying it for anti-poaching purposes. Data gathered via CyberTracker and inputted into SMART can help the chief warden make informed decisions on deployment of his teams and anticipate potential hot spots for poachers, such as in areas where there is concentration of forest elephants, for example. With regular patrols and continued use of CyberTracker and SMART, the hope is that poaching will be reduced and patrols can begin to apply the tools for ecological monitoring.

In the meantime, AWF continues to facilitate networking between these protected area authorities, as such opportunities provide the best way for individuals involved in this work to improve their skills and knowledge base. To that end, AWF in April hosted the second annual African Apes Initiative workshop for those protected area authorities receiving support from AWF on great ape conservation work. This was followed with a practical field exercise in Dja Faunal Reserve by a number of the workshop participants. ■



Detection dog project will be initiated at airports and ports in East Africa—most likely in conjunction with Kenya Wildlife Service and Tanzania Wildlife Division.

Continentwide Detection Dog Programme Launched

By Will Powell *Director, canine conservation programme*

As part of our US\$10 million Urgent Response Fund to fight wildlife trafficking, AWF in 2015 established a canine programme in Africa to provide African wildlife authorities and other conservation organisations with detection dogs to uncover illegal shipments of ivory, rhino horn and other wildlife products at ports, and tracking dogs to support anti-poaching operations.

The detection dog project will be initiated at airports and sea ports in East Africa, in conjunction with Kenya Wildlife Service and Tanzania Wildlife Division.

Work already begun

The dogs used for this work are typically selected in Europe. Breeds include German Shepherds, Belgian Malinois, English Springer Spaniels, Labradors and German Short-Haired Pointers. In January, AWF's canine team looked at close to 200 dogs and handpicked eight with which to launch our programme. All are highly driven dogs that had been bred to be and were already being trained as working dogs.

The dogs were flown to the AWF training facility in Tanzania, where they were acclimatised before starting their training. We began the training by using small pieces of Kong (a dog toy) as a neutral odor, and have since introduced the dogs to ivory, to be followed by rhino horn. By starting the dogs on the slightest odors, we ensure any stronger scents from wildlife products will be relatively easy for them to detect. Positive reinforcement keeps training fun for the dogs.

To ensure continuity of commands and handling style from training through to deployment at a port, dog handlers are selected from the staff of the organisations or government departments partnering AWF. They are then trained alongside the canines. After pairing dogs and handlers, the teams will undergo further training, including vehicle and building searches and more environment-specific training at a real airport. They will eventually be deployed to ports and airports, together with AWF supervisors who will ensure the teams work effectively and the welfare of the dogs is maintained.

Alongside the detection portion of the canine programme, AWF intends to provide support on tracking dogs. So far canine teams trained to track and apprehend poachers in Africa have been a successful and effective deterrent.

In addition to Kenya and Tanzania, AWF is in discussions with either wildlife authorities and NGOs from Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Botswana and Togo to supply either detection or tracker dogs. 'Canine technology' can be an effective means of detecting rhino horn and ivory and catching wildlife traffickers, and early indications tell us the canine programme will contribute significantly in our battle against this illicit trade. ■

In Mau Forest, an Adjusted Approach to Reforestation

By George Okwaro *Programme officer, Mau Forest*

The past three decades have seen the Mau Forest in Kenya, an important watershed, face wanton deforestation and degradation, which has in turn threatened the lives of more than 4 million people within and outside the catchment. Previous restoration efforts have involved simply planting trees and leaving them to grow, without taking into full account the reasons behind the degradation. These efforts have rarely been successful.

This is why, in the Enderit block of the forest complex, AWF began a restoration project in 2011 by first addressing the pressures that led to degradation.

Grazing is a key cause of degradation here: Seedlings left alone can get trampled or eaten by livestock. AWF therefore demarcated newly planted areas and declared them non-grazing zones while also providing community members clearly designated areas for grazing. Planted areas will be opened to grazing after about five years, as by this time the seedlings will have grown into saplings tall enough not to be affected by livestock.

This will provide an opportunity for the areas currently under grazing to be replanted again. For communities, this method offers a more palatable alternative to fencing off the entire forest for restoration.

So far about 500,000 seedlings are surviving from AWF's restoration efforts in the Enderit—about 468 ha of critically degraded forestland that has been rehabilitated through the direct planting of indigenous seedlings.

Addressing other factors

Meanwhile, a baseline socioeconomic survey of area communities found that many of the other degraders of the forest are those trying to eke out a living through farming or seasonal farm labourers who revert to charcoal burning, timber sawing and fuelwood sales in the off season.

To increase incomes for farmers and labourers, and hopefully reduce the unsustainable off-season activities, AWF is working to improve agricultural productivity of key crops, such as Irish potatoes and carrots, on the local farms.

AWF is also providing seedlings for home gardens, alley cropping and boundary planting with select multipurpose trees that suit the area. The trees will enhance nutrient cycling, stabilise the soil, contribute to soil and water conservation, and provide wood fuel and fodder for livestock at the individual farm level.

Finally, to reduce community conflicts around water demand, AWF is rehabilitating riparian areas, protecting springs by fencing off sensitive areas from livestock encroachment and constructing water access points such as troughs for livestock and kiosks (run by local water committees to ensure sustainability even after AWF project life) for domestic use. So far 5.5 km of riparian land have been rehabilitated through the planting of indigenous trees and bamboo, and two springs have been protected.

Given time and resources, this approach is set to restore the important watershed and guarantee provision of ecosystem services to the people around and beyond the Mau forest complex for generations to come. ■



By declaring newly planted areas as non-grazing zones and providing community members with alternative means of income, AWF are successfully reforesting the Enderit block of the Mau Forest Complex.

Peter Chira

AWF Uganda Programme Redesigned to Achieve More Biodiversity Conservation

By **Kaddu Sebunya** *Chief of party, USAID/Uganda Biodiversity Programme*

In 2012 AWF entered into a corporate agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/Uganda to implement the 4-year USAID Tourism for Biodiversity programme in five high-biodiversity protected areas. These included Murchison Falls, Kidepo Valley and Lake Mburo National Parks, which are managed by Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), and Kalinzu and Budongo Forest Reserves, under National Forestry Authority management. The programme was initially designed to use tourism to increase the constituency for biodiversity conservation.

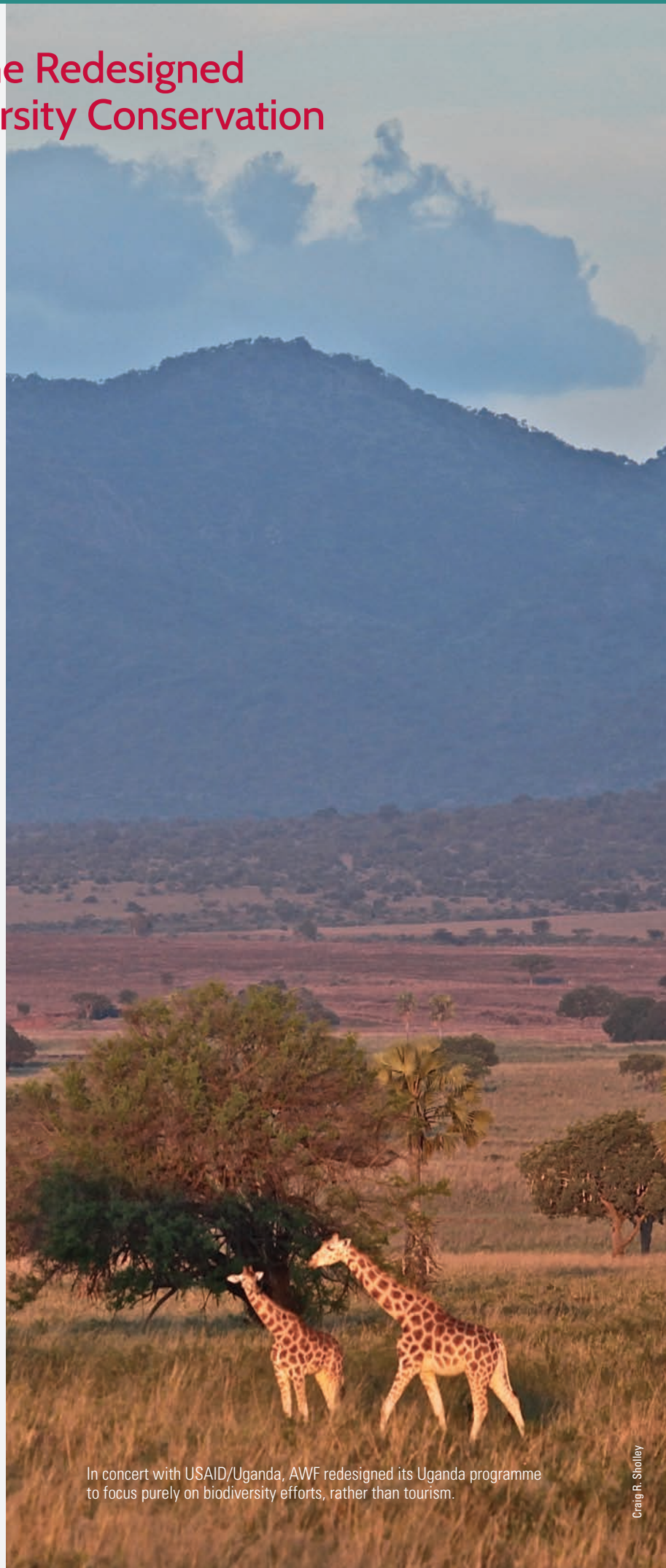
Last year after consultation with USAID/Uganda, AWF redesigned the programme to focus purely on biodiversity, adopting a conservation enterprise modelling strategy that could then be replicated in other areas of high biodiversity. The programme continues to support UWA and National Forest Authority and improve their capacity to better protect Uganda's ecologically significant natural resources.

Overall, we expect that by: (1) improving the capacity of conservation institutions to effectively implement protected area management; (2) improving awareness of conservation by addressing key conservation knowledge gaps and perceptions and mobilising political will; and (3) creating opportunities for communities to benefit from biodiversity conservation, critical threats to Uganda's biodiversity will be addressed, ensuring that it will not only survive, but thrive, for generations.

Key achievements

AWF through this new USAID/Uganda Biodiversity Programme has already enjoyed a number of key achievements. For example, we:

- Published 9,000 park information books on Murchison Falls, Kidepo Valley and Lake Mburo National Parks, which have been distributed to education and information centers. More than 700 of these were handed over to Makerere University and Mbarara University of Science and Technology.
- Launched a Women in Conservation programme where young women are being encouraged to join conservation leadership.
- Supported more than 200 households living around Kidepo Valley and Murchison Falls National Parks in planting chili, thereby addressing human-wildlife conflict while also generating income.
- Installed 145 highway and park directional signs as a way of increasing awareness about Lake Mburo Conservation Area.



In concert with USAID/Uganda, AWF redesigned its Uganda programme to focus purely on biodiversity efforts, rather than tourism.

African Wildlife Foundation is grateful for the support of all our funding partners, including:



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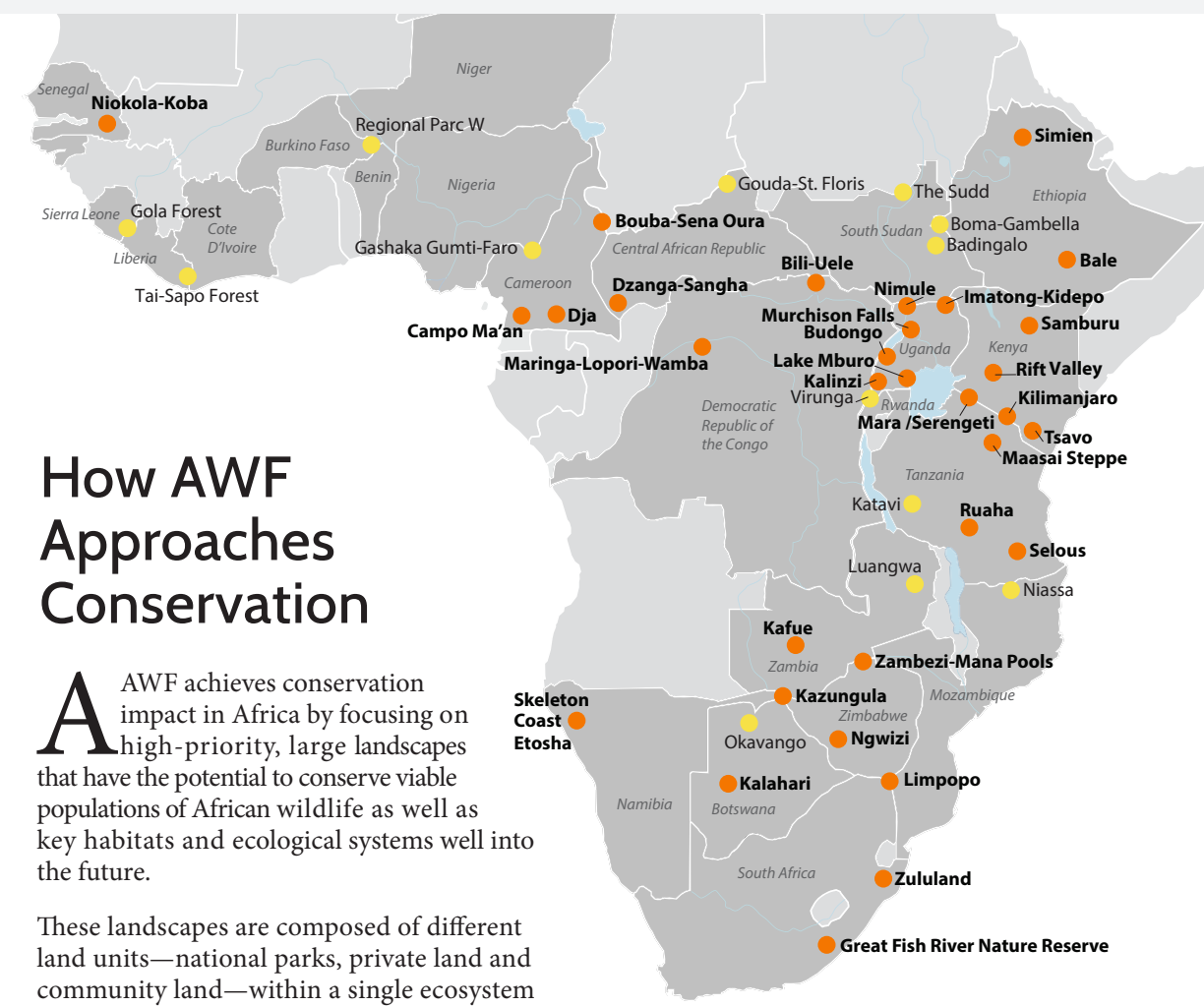
Cover Photo Credits: Limalimo Lodge, AWF and CSSL.

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Meanwhile, to increase the capacity of UWA, communities and the private sector in managing wildlife outside protected areas, the programme organised a one-week study tour to Kenya to understand how conservancies in that country are developed and managed. A delegation of 17 members—composed of UWA, community leaders and private landowners from Lake Mburo and Kidepo Valley National Parks—visited four conservancies at the end of January and additionally met with community scouts and lodge managers to learn from their experiences. This trip was key for the two sub-counties of Karenga and Lobalangit outside Kidepo Valley National Park and private land owners around Lake Mburo National Park, who are

working with AWF to develop land-use plans. These land-use plans are critical in both guiding proper usage of the land and in managing wildlife outside protected areas, and will assist communities in setting up planned economic activities for sustainable development.

The new biodiversity programme is closely aligned with the priorities of the government of Uganda and the U.S. government and supports Uganda's National Development Plan and USAID's Country Development Cooperation Strategy. It is being delivered in partnership with Jane Goodall Institute, and in collaboration with the private sector and local communities. ■



How AWF Approaches Conservation

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 landscapes 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.

Target landscapes are selected based on a detailed analysis that examines the region's biological, ecological, social and economic opportunities. AWF works closely with partners and stakeholders—including national and local governments, communities, research organisations, NGOs and the private sector—to develop priority conservation actions specific to the area. AWF works in the

- Current Projects*
Aspirational Projects
* Current projects represent both AWF-operated and AWF-funded programs, and include holistic programs as well as individual projects.

following strategic areas: habitat conservation and management, species protection and conservation science, conservation enterprise and conservation schools. Policy, climate change, advocacy and capacity building are cross-cutting themes that underscore all of AWF's programmes. ■