



2020 Conservation Progress Report



African Wildlife Foundation
1100 New Jersey Ave. SE
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20003
202. 939.3333

www.awf.org

Conserving Africa's Natural Heritage and Empowering Local Communities

Africa is a dynamic and rapidly growing continent. A deep understanding of, and connection with, the aspirations and mindsets driving change on the continent is essential for the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) to achieve its mission. AWF recognizes the importance of connecting conservation to development goals on the continent, and leverages its nearly sixty decades of experience and relationships with governments and communities to move its vision forward.



Image 1: AWF's revised goals and theory of change

On behalf of AWF Trustees and staff, we are pleased to share with you some of the conservation highlights made possible by our generous donors. Thanks to you, AWF continues to work tirelessly to ensure the preservation of Africa's natural heritage for future generations, while directly benefitting people currently living in key biodiversity areas and near wildlife habitats. Your support made this vital work a reality, and AWF is pleased to provide this conservation report focusing on some key achievements over the past year.

Protecting Species

The world's economies are more interwoven than ever before. While this results in enabling the flow of people, goods, and services, it also allows the trafficking of wildlife and creates pressures on the natural environment. The global demand for illegal wildlife products has decimated Africa's wildlife populations. From ivory to rhino horn, pangolin scales, lion bones, giraffe skins, and more, Africa is being robbed of its remarkable heritage by crime syndicates servicing the demands of a global black market, subsistence and poverty-driven poaching, as well as the fragmentation of wildlife habitats. AWF works to preserve wildlife in its natural habitats through its three-pronged strategy to stop the killing, trafficking, and demand for wildlife and wildlife products.

Stop the Killing: AWF continues to ramp up its efforts in partnership with wildlife management authorities, governments, thought leaders, and rural communities to address the poaching and retaliatory killings of wildlife. By supporting rangers and scouts, providing facilities, infrastructure, and technology, facilitating surveillance training, and implementing mechanisms to deter wildlife from encroaching on crops and homes, AWF is making significant strides in protecting Africa's wildlife.

In the Tsavo-Mkomazi landscape (Kenya and Tanzania), AWF trained and equipped over 30 scouts, developed land use plans, and initiated cybercrime investigations to combat wildlife crimes. AWF also mitigated human-wildlife conflicts by increasing accessibility to water by distilling water pans in Tsavo West National Park for wildlife and training 1,440 farmers on strategies to protect their livestock and crops. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, and Uganda, AWF also strengthened the capacity of law enforcement agencies to combat wildlife crimes, convict offenders, and monitor wildlife crime court proceedings. AWF also enhanced the conservation efforts in the Lower Zambezi Transboundary landscape (Zimbabwe and Zambia) by establishing a river patrol unit, equipping the group with a boat and trailer for patrols, and training nearly 200 rangers. As a result, elephant poaching along the once-notorious river reduced by 100%.



Image 2: Training farmers on mitigating wildlife conflict in the Tsavo-Mkomazi landscape

Stop the Trafficking: To combat wildlife trafficking and strengthen the enforcement of wildlife laws across sub-Saharan Africa, AWF continues to collaborate with local and international partners to provide wildlife judicial and prosecutorial training to prosecutors, rangers, airport personnel, and anti-corruption officers. AWF also developed a First Responders Cybercrime Investigation Training curriculum as part of its *Wildlife Judicial and Prosecutorial Assistance Training* series. The curriculum addresses various themes related to ensuring the adequate handling of digital and electronic evidence. AWF also developed handbooks which act as a reference tool for frontline wildlife law enforcers who may be responsible for preserving a crime scene and collecting, as well as handling, digital and electronic evidence in the absence of an investigator.

AWF's Canine for Conservation Program has also been a significant deterrent to wildlife traffickers across critical transit routes in Botswana, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda, where AWF sniffer dogs and dog handlers are present. In the past year, AWF trained 24 officers as canine handlers, arrested 84 suspects, and recovered 860kg of ivory in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. AWF also built three canine facilities in Uganda, Cameroon, and Kenya, and is currently constructing one in Tanzania. AWF is working on expanding its canine program to Ethiopia and has developed and submitted the designs for the canine facility in the Bole International Airport to the Ethiopian Airline Authority (EAA). AWF is awaiting approval from the EAA as well as an ease on the movement restrictions as a result of COVID-19 before beginning construction of the canine facility. Additionally, in partnership with AWF's international partners and the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority, AWF is already working to counter wildlife trafficking in Ethiopia by strengthening the security of air transit points, training conservation law enforcement officers to investigate and handle evidence, and creating a handbook for the Ethiopian law enforcement agencies titled [Your Role as a Witness: A Handbook for Wildlife Rangers and Scouts \(Ethiopia\)](#). The witness handbook is designed to help Ethiopian wildlife rangers and scouts navigate the court system once they become witnesses to wildlife crime and are required to testify.



Image 3: Graduation ceremony of Uganda Wildlife Authority canine handlers

Stop the Demand: In September 2019, AWF launched a two-month exhibition titled *Saving Africa's Endangered Species* at the Shanghai Zoo. The exhibition highlighted Africa's most vulnerable wildlife, including the African elephants, lions, pangolins, and apes, and the dangers of the illegal wildlife trade, which is fueled by demand in Asia and other parts of the world. Following the launch of the exhibition at the Shanghai Zoo, AWF's team also visited four high schools in Shanghai, reaching over 1,000 youth with a presentation on the poaching crisis in Africa as well as the screening of the short film, *Sides of a Horn*, highlighting the dangers of poaching.



Image 4: Highschool students and AWF staff in Shanghai

AWF and the Beijing Zoo also reached an agreement to host an African wildlife week at the Beijing Zoo annually. The proposed annual event will feature the African species already on exhibition in the zoo as well as AWF's conservation efforts in Africa to increase conservation education and advocacy in Beijing.

AWF also launched the online advocacy campaign titled *Scale Back Pangolin Trafficking* to denounce the use of pangolin scales in China and Vietnam. This campaign led to nearly 110,000 individuals contacting the Vietnam Ministry of Health and China's Food and Drug Administration to ban the pangolin trade. Meanwhile, AWF's advocacy campaign to protect Africa's big cats engaged 40,000 individuals who contacted Members of Congress to demand their support for the Big Cat Public Safety Act which will prohibit the private possession of big cats in the United States.

NEXT STEPS:

In the coming year, AWF is working to engage national authorities to develop at least three species action and recovery plans, namely, the Kenya National White Rhinoceros Management Action Plan, the Kenya National Elephant Management Action Plan, and the Kenya Lion and Hyena Action Plan. AWF also plans to support the implementation of The Pangolin Project in Maasai Mara in Kenya and Tsavo in Tanzania, and the elephant protection project in Dja and Faro in Cameroon. In the Zambezi landscape, AWF is working on finalizing the purchase of four vehicles for anti-poaching operations.

To continue to raise public awareness in China of the threats faced by African wildlife and the role China can play in mitigating those threats, AWF will host an exhibition in Shanghai Zoo in 2021. The exhibition which was postponed because of COVID-19 is titled *Building a Shared Future for You and Me: Safeguarding Africa's Threatened Biodiversity*. It will highlight the relationship humans have with the natural environment and detail the conservation strategies to improve human-wildlife interactions. AWF will also provide the Beijing Zoo with information including scientific facts, content about the importance of conservation efforts, and examples of AWF's work in protecting African wildlife for the exhibition.

Land and Habitat Protection



Image 5: Manyara Ranch Conservancy, Tanzania

Functional, healthy ecosystems are critical to the long-term stability and prosperity of life. Manyara Ranch, a 44,930-acre property in the Tarangire-Manyara ecosystem in northern Tanzania, is an area of immense ecological importance that requires attention and protection for sustainability. The ranch has abundant resident wildlife - being home to more than 50 species - with a lion population estimated between 500-1,000 lions; it is one of the four significant lion populations in Tanzania. Manyara Ranch is also critical to facilitating the migration of various wildlife populations from Tarangire through Lake Manyara to

the west, and Lake Natron to the north. The ranch is of vital importance to the growth and stability of wildlife and a healthy ecosystem. However, this essential migratory corridor has suffered from years of overgrazing by local cattle, and a history of rampant poaching in the area.

With the dedicated effort of an anti-poaching team at Manyara Ranch, there were no poaching incidents in 2019. For the first time in decades, a hippo was spotted on the ranch, a sign of the incredible ecological recovery the ranch has undergone. The ranch's canine unit has developed a particularly strong reputation within the region for its ability to locate criminals; local police also rely on the unit to help solve other crimes in the district such as acts of arson and burglaries. In just two months, 158 patrols were conducted, covering 3,251 kilometers and totaling 1,080 active patrol hours.

AWF also continues to invest in communities around the ranch by creating a cattle-breeding program and predator-proof bomas to mitigate human-wildlife conflict and protect the livelihoods of the local community. The tourism potential of Manyara Ranch is currently still underdeveloped, and there remains a single, underperforming tourism

operator who has exclusive rights to the ranch. AWF has engaged lawyers to assist the Manyara Ranch Management Trust to terminate the agreement with the current tourism operator to implement a better tourism plan for the ranch.

NEXT STEPS:

Manyara Ranch remains a priority landscape for AWF. In the coming year, AWF, with the support of the Honeyguide Foundation, will enhance its anti-poaching efforts to ensure wildlife population numbers continue on a trajectory of stability or increase. To achieve this, AWF will continuously invest in the capacity building and equipping of the canine unit and rangers on the ranch. AWF also plans to drill a borehole to provide sustainable clean water for approximately 850 students in the Manyara Ranch school, a boarding school which is part of AWF's Classroom Africa program.

AWF signed an agreement with Cottar's Safari Group to protect the Olderkesi landscape, a 106,000-acre area situated on the adjacent edge of the Maasai Mara National Reserve in Southern Kenya. The landscape is a crucial region for wildlife dispersal and acts as a corridor for elephants to move from the reserve to the nearby Liotta Hills. As part of this partnership in the years to come, AWF aims to expand the area under protection, empower the community in conservation management training, and enhance the lives of the Olderkesi community through the introduction of conservation enterprises that increase revenue and improve the overall standard of living.

Community Empowerment

Rural communities in the diverse landscapes around wildlife are some of the most marginalized communities and face a plethora of socio-economic challenges. AWF believes that these communities are allies and essential to the success of conservation efforts on the continent. As such, AWF partners with communities to preserve the continent's remarkable heritage while bringing direct benefits to communities by improving their standard of living and access to opportunities. By providing quality education, empowering youth, providing access to funding and resources for microenterprises and farmers, AWF continues to add long term value to these communities and develop conservation allies.

Classroom Africa: On February 3, the first day of the 2020 school year, AWF officially opened two new Classroom Africa schools in the Kidepo region of northern Uganda, Kidepo Primary School and Sarachom Primary School, bringing the total number of Classroom Africa schools to seven. Kidepo and Sarachom primary schools both enrolled over 400 students at the start of the 2020 school year. Teachers at the school in Kidepo are receiving skills-based training, students have access to quality education and extra-curricular activities, and the Kidepo National Park has now become a desirable employer because of its proximity to quality educational facilities. The community served by the Sarachom Primary School is located in the heart of a wildlife corridor that leads to the Kidepo National Park. Elephants and other wildlife rely on this corridor as they search for water, resulting in conflict with nearby communities. In exchange for rebuilding the Sarachom Primary School, the community agreed to a land-use plan and to work with the Uganda Wildlife Authority to mitigate potential human-wildlife conflict.



Image 6: Classroom Africa students in Kidepo, Uganda

Youth Leadership: AWF strongly believes in empowering youth on the continent to ensure the conservation of Africa's heritage is prioritized for generations to come. In partnership with the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN), AWF coordinated two workshops in Kenya and Uganda to equip African youth to build their capacity to negotiate and advocate for change. This past year, the program trained 40 youth in Uganda and Kenya on evaluating their country's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and gathered their perspectives on the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Meetings for an additional 40 youth in Cameroon and Zimbabwe were postponed because of COVID-19.



Image 7: Ugandan youth at the AWF leadership training

Enterprise: The Maringa Lopori Wamba (MLW) landscape is located in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), encompassing 74,500 km² of lowland rain and swamp forest. MLW is a critical carbon sink and an invaluable landscape with various endemic wildlife species, 600 known tree species. The landscape has a population of approximately 800,000 people who rely on its natural resources for their livelihoods. AWF is actively tackling this dependence through a project designed to provide sustainable livelihoods in the Lomako Yokokala Wildlife Reserve by training and providing seed capital to 80 microenterprise groups of 240 business owners. In Dja, Cameroon, AWF also teamed up with Tropical Forest and Rural Development to support 180 farmers with high-quality cocoa seedlings and provide training on sustainable cultivation techniques and trade insights. Through the AWF COVID-19 response, AWF is also working to address the pressing challenges of protected areas authorities, conservancies, local institutions, and communities. AWF efforts are helping to strengthen coping mechanisms to the current pandemic and safeguard the livelihoods of communities. AWF is helping local enterprises and markets build ecologically resilient businesses by planting tree nurseries as well as through cocoa and chili farming. AWF is also providing cash for work programs for those affected by the decline in tourism.



Image 8: Second cycle seed capital disbursement at Mpukaunga

AWF has a long history working with safari outfitters and other tourism partners on the continent, as well as establishing community-owned lodges. In light of the impact of the global pandemic on tourism, AWF moderated a meeting of lodge owners, safari operators, and other leaders to discuss the impact COVID-19 is having on the tourism sector across Africa and strategize for the future. Convening these key partners, listening to their experiences and feedback, and taking their suggestions and recommendations is critical for AWF as the organization responds to this crisis.

NEXT STEPS:

AWF is working to engage schools and children beyond Classroom Africa constructed schools, to multiple schools spread across priority landscapes. By doing this, AWF seeks long-term conservation success across priority landscapes and aims to impact at least 20 schools and 7,250 students.

Policy & Advocacy

To successfully combat the threat to and loss of the continent's wildlife and wild lands, AWF actively advocates at the highest levels of governments and works to ensure wildlife and wild lands are considered both cultural and economic assets to preserve. AWF is uniquely positioned and qualified to advise and propagate a vision for the future of the continent in which wildlife coexists with modern cities, productive farmlands, expanded infrastructure, rural areas, and manufacturing interests.

Looking specifically to Uganda, AWF provided guidance and advice on the development of the new Ugandan Wildlife Bill, which the President of Uganda assented to in 2019. The act increased the maximum sentence of wildlife crimes to life in prison. It also fines up to 20 billion Ugandan Shillings (over \$5 million) for offenses involving wildlife species classified as extinct in the wild or critically endangered. In addition to its anti-poaching components, the bill addresses human-wildlife conflict and introduced funding to compensate individuals who are injured or have crops and livestock damaged by wildlife outside of protected areas. The bill also focuses on creating a path for communities to take ownership of managing conservation areas.

Considering the Post-2020 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) agreement, AWF contributed to the creation of the Africa Group of Negotiators (AGN) platform, whose mandate from the African Ministers of Environment is to negotiate as a collaborative group on Africa's position and priorities. AWF also helped the platform develop a common Africa position on the Post-2020 agreement that outlines the global policy and finance that Africa seeks. AWF is also working to gain the commitment of all African governments and to get Africa's priorities adopted into the global agreement. AWF facilitated a meeting between the AGN and China's Director of the Ministry of Environment to discuss the position and priorities of both parties.

In the wake of the ongoing pandemic, AWF continues to intensify and disseminate information about the dire implications of poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking, and the importance of conservation in preserving lives – both human and wildlife – and businesses. The biggest challenges faced by protected areas in this pandemic were highlighted during a meeting held by the Africa Civil Society Organizations Coalition (Africa CSOs), which is made up of representatives from 95 countries, of which AWF is a member. The policy working group of Africa CSOs, which meets to collaborate on international policy positions, resolved to give focus to zoonotic diseases and ways in which stakeholders could prevent, mitigate, and better manage the pandemic and its consequences on protected area management. The coalition in agreement with other organizations also endorsed an open letter on COVID-19, calling for a total wildlife trade ban worldwide.

NEXT STEPS:

AWF is in discussions with China Civil Society Organizations (China CSOs) to host a series of China-Africa dialogues with the potential to scale this effort up to a South-South CSOs dialogue by including CSOs from Latin America and Southeast Asia. AWF also seeks to further engage with Chinese companies operating in AWF's critical landscapes and would commission a consultancy on sustainable Chinese investment and business in Africa. The consultancy aims to influence the decision making of these investments and inform AWF's engagement with Chinese companies and investments in Africa.

Special Initiatives

C-suite Safari Experience: AWF believes that without an African conservation movement, international efforts to conserve wildlife in Africa will fail in the long run. As a result, AWF is working to empower African ownership and

stewardship of the continent's natural heritage, as well as get conservation on the development agenda of African leaders and business owners. In February 2020, AWF convened business leaders and influencers to explore the role of African nationals in mitigating the looming threats to Africa's remarkable wildlife and wild lands. The group was hosted by Wilderness Safaris at Davison's Camp, in Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park. Participants at the inaugural C-suite Safari discussed the role of conservation in Africa's development and how AWF should craft a narrative of the integral function of Africa's wildlife and critical ecosystems that speaks to African audiences more directly. Through the weekend's discussions, game drives, and community visits, participants came to recognize the need to be disruptive in the continent's approach to conservation and influence macro-level policies that impact conservation outcomes. Attendees further proposed the creation of a network to expand the sphere of African influencers engaged in these essential conversations that would shape the trajectory of Africa's future.



Image 9: Participants on a game drive

Responding to COVID-19: AWF developed an organizational response to the COVID-19 pandemic ravaging lives and economies across the world. Recognizing its position in amplifying African voices and wildlife, AWF is working to ensure the conservation successes garnered over the past years are not lost and that communities build resilience to withstand the pandemic. In the wake of the crisis, AWF launched the COVID-19 Emergency Response, hosted information gathering sessions for protected area leaders and partners in the tourism industry whose revenue has been deeply affected, and provided thought leadership through articles and other media outreach.



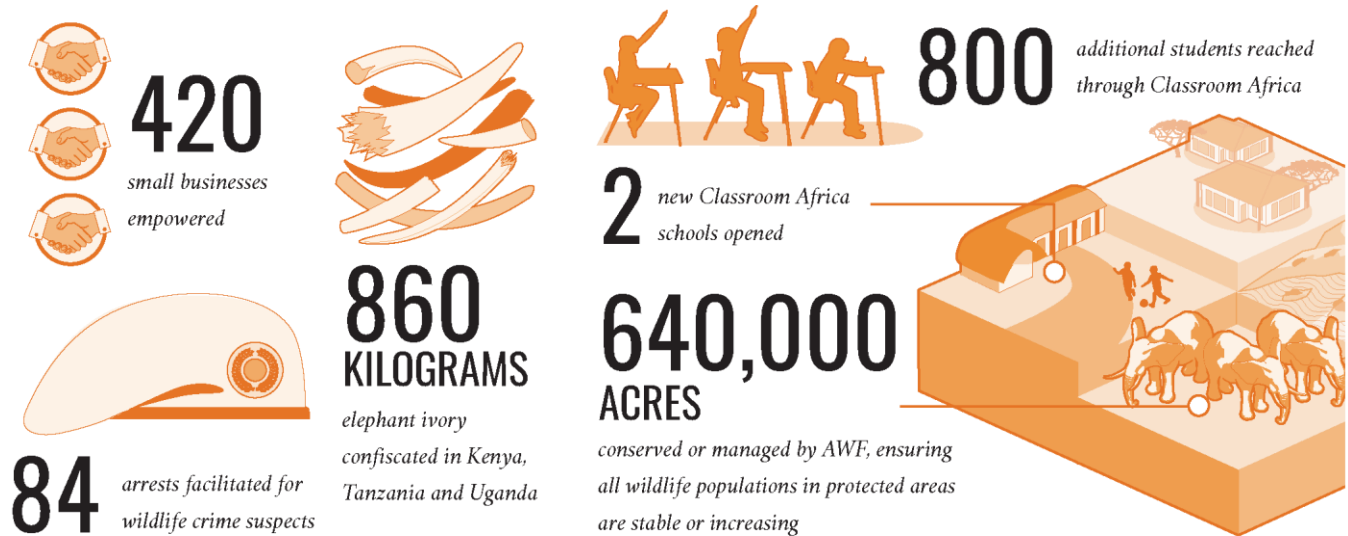
Image 10: Presentation of soaps and masks by women in Dja Faunal Reserve, Cameroon

Thus far, AWF has held 153 awareness campaigns on conservation and COVID-19, distributed 9,608 comprehensive hygiene kits to communities, paid \$7,367 to wildlife rangers to supplement salaries, and spent \$8,808 on feeding rural communities. Click [here](#) for more updates from the field.

Kenya's Lion Survey: In February 2020, AWF hosted a week-long training for organizations participating in Kenya's first-ever National Lion Survey. This initiative is in response to Kenya Wildlife Services' estimate that Kenya is losing 100 lions every year. Kenya's most recent estimation of lion population is under debate, and the techniques taught at the training as well as the technology to be used in the new survey will lead to increased accuracy and a higher level of confidence in the final study. A universally acceptable number of the total lion population in Kenya is vital in informing conservation strategies in the region.

Evaluation

With the help of our supporters and partners, AWF made significant conservation gains in 2020. Some of these include adding over 640,000-acre to the land area that AWF is working to conserve or manage, facilitating the arrest of 84 wildlife crime suspects and confiscating 860kg of elephant ivory in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. AWF also impacted communities by empowering over 420 small businesses and opening two new Classroom Africa schools, reaching 800 additional students.



The Value of your Support

Through your commitment AWF is protecting and advocating for the unique species on the African continent, supporting habitat conservation and providing local communities with access to alternative forms of livelihoods that are not detrimental to the natural environment. Although COVID-19 has hampered some of AWF's programs, we have deployed a COVID Urgent Response that allows us to address the unique challenges the pandemic has presented. More than ever our most loyal friends have stood with us to ensure that all our conservation gains to date remain on track and are not erased. Thank you for your dedication to our resilient mission and vision for the future of that makes AWF and the communities we serve resilient.