



CONSERVING AFRICA'S ELEPHANTS

2020 Elephant Conservation Progress Report



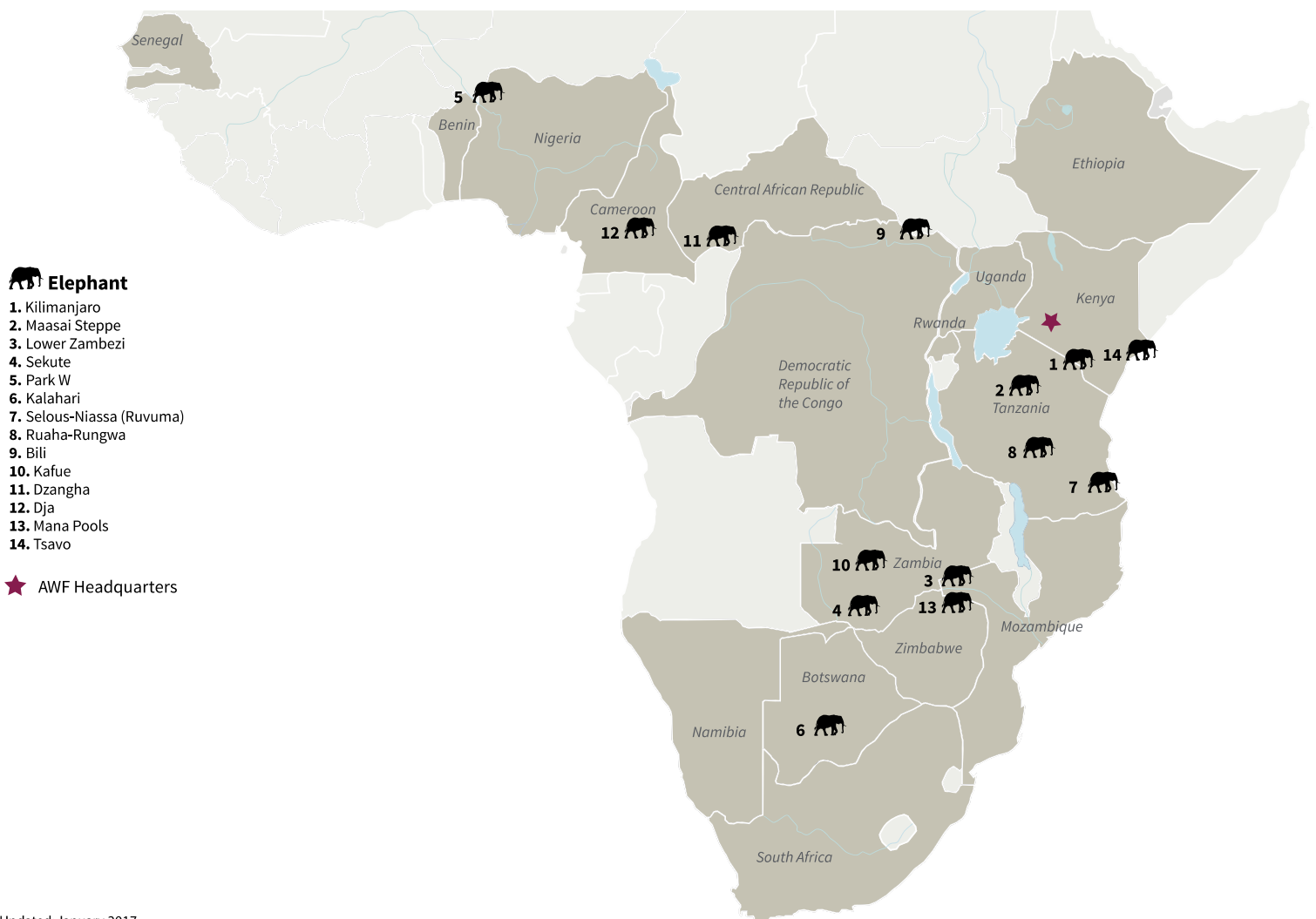
African Wildlife Foundation
1100 New Jersey Avenue SE
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20003
202.939.3333

www.awf.org

Advancing Elephant Conservation in Africa

Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) has nearly 60 years of experience working to ensure wildlife and wild lands thrive in a modern Africa. Since our founding, AWF has been committed to preserving the long-term survival of African elephant populations. Elephants are essential figures in the African landscape, as they both serve as global symbols of African wildlife and play a vital role in supporting other species.

AWF has achieved great successes in the conservation of this iconic species, through efforts and programs dedicated to preserving key elephant habitats and landscapes, supporting wildlife law enforcement and conservation-focused officials, mitigating human-wildlife conflict, and raising local and global awareness of elephant population decline and the ivory trade. Yet, despite these efforts, elephant lives continue to be sacrificed, as poaching has become increasingly criminalized and integrated into organized terrorist networks. Modern economic and population growth in Africa also may pose an imminent threat, as development projects will likely put Africa's elephants at risk if they are not designed with conservation of wildlife land and sustainability in mind.



Elephant species grant footprint map

Updated: January 2017

Though these threats are critical, AWF remains devoted to protecting elephant populations and establishing programs that aim to support lasting conservation and awareness of wildlife-minded development. In 2019, AWF narrowed its focus to support six key elephant sites in Mana Pools, Tsavo, Maasai Steppe, Bili Uele, Dja, and Campo Ma'an National Parks. This year, AWF has continued to support these sites, in addition to advancing projects in other key areas in target countries.

This year, COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on communities throughout the world. The African continent has been affected, with thousands of deaths and economic difficulty. With social distancing and other health safety protocols in place, conservation work has significantly reduced. AWF has hoped to continue elephant programs to the fullest extent possible, though some have experienced delays. AWF remains dedicated to doing everything within its power to continue to preserve and protect Africa's wildlife populations. As we fight through and emerge from this pandemic, a focus on conservation work is essential to minimize conservation losses that may have occurred during this vulnerable period and to take full advantage of this opportunity to advocate for the preservation of wildlife and wild lands.

AWF is grateful for the generous support of our donors over the past year and is pleased to provide this year's Elephant Conservation Progress Report, to demonstrate the advancement and achievements made possible with your support and to highlight future objectives as AWF continues to prioritize preserving African elephants.

Stop the Killing



Elephant populations across Africa face a variety of critical threats to survival from humans. These dangers include both poaching and killing by local community members that come into contact with elephants, which poses a worsening issue as more African land is developed, bringing humans and wildlife closer together. AWF, therefore, approaches elephant conservation with a diversity of programs and strategies, that include supporting anti-poaching mechanisms in elephant landscapes, providing nonlethal elephant deterrent technologies to nearby villages, and engaging with local authorities and organizations to facilitate conservation initiatives. This year, AWF has made progress in these realms, in order to mitigate threats to elephants and provide an optimistic and sustainable future for this species.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:



Tanzania: AWF has continued to progress in the Mkomazi landscape with programs to combat elephant killings, through anti-poaching operations and supporting human-wildlife conflict mitigation. Three motorbikes were purchased for KIVUMA scouts to be used in these missions. AWF supported the training of 1,158 farmers as first responders in human-wildlife conflict and provided 283 pressure horns, 218 torches, and 611 thunder flashes for scouts and farmers. Using these tools, the scouts countered crop raids by elephants with a 42.9% interception rate. AWF also worked closely with Village Game Scouts (VGS) in Toloha, Rombo, and Same to enhance anti-poaching operations and human-wildlife conflict mitigation, and a collective 38 scouts were trained on a Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) for data collection. In the Tsavo-Mkomazi cross-border landscape, AWF facilitated collaboration between the Kenyan and Tanzanian officials. Through the provision of food rations, fuel, and airtime, AWF coordinated KWS, Tanzania National Park Authority (TANAPA), and Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA) to conduct two joint/concurrent patrols along the international border from Tarakea to Uмба. Regular meetings were held between AWF and various stakeholders including TAWA and KWS to share information and to discuss challenges and possible strategies and solutions to confront them. 23 TAWA officers were trained and later refreshed on SMART, and 20 TANAPA officers were trained on data collection and reporting. Overall, no elephant poaching was recorded in Tsavo-Mkomazi, where AWF supported. In Manyara Ranch, over the course of two months, 158 patrols were conducted, covering over 3,251 kilometers and totaling 1,080 active patrol hours. During these patrols, 21 incidents were recorded, which included two road kills, one livestock predation, two livestock incursions, and one environmental destruction. There was no elephant poaching during this period. These numbers demonstrate significant progress in Manyara since 2013, when 25 elephants just that year were lost to rampant poaching.



Kenya: AWF worked to preserve the Tsavo landscape – which is home to nearly 12,000 elephants – through an adaptive approach that includes collaboration with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and local authorities, training scouts from local villages, coordinating patrols, and providing education and tools to mitigate human-wildlife conflict in Tsavo communities. This year, AWF trained 254 farmers on human-wildlife conflict mitigation and provided 100 torches, 103 pressure horns, and 540 thunder flashes to deter elephants. Water has been one of the driving forces in this landscape for wildlife and human movements, and AWF desilted nine water pans and converted one diesel-pump to solar in Karamba Ndea Village, to mitigate



Equipment handover to community member in Tsavo



Community scouts armed with SMART technology

human-wildlife conflict and increase accessibility to water for wildlife. AWF has also lent its support by hosting cross border wildlife security meetings, joint, and concurrent patrols, to facilitate coordination in the Tsavo-Mkomazi region. Between the two countries, AWF has trained nearly 3,000 farmers in human-wildlife mitigation techniques, in addition to providing tools and equipment. In the past two years, with AWF's dedication, illegal grazing and poaching incidents in the LUMO Community Wildlife Sanctuary have decreased by 95 percent. This year, AWF supported 13 scouts from LUMO that underwent wildlife paramilitary training at Amboseli Conservation Academy and 21 scouts that were trained on SMART for data collection. AWF also signed an

agreement with Cottar's Safari Group to unite conservation efforts in the Olderkesi Group Ranch, in addition to prioritizing projects in the Maasai Mara landscape. The Olderkesi Group Ranch serves as a corridor for elephants in the region, and this partnership will support its sustainable development, which will engage the local community and encourage donors who visit the landscape.



Zimbabwe: In Mana Pools, basic training, specialized programs for capacity building, and the provision of anti-poaching equipment have led to a marked improvement in incident responsiveness. In the past year, AWF has supported the provision of two land cruisers for anti-poaching activities, digital radio systems for anti-poaching real-time data collection and reporting, and cyber trackers and laptops for data collection, analysis, and reporting. As of February 2020, a total of 105 ranger patrol deployments were carried out, covering 17,000 km, and 50 vehicle patrols were carried out, over 7,000 km. Two television sets were purchased for the rangers' entertainment center and the operations room for monitoring rangers in the field. Patrol and camping equipment was purchased, which included 52 pairs of boots, 40 cooking pots, 40 raincoats, 40 mosquito nets, 10 water bottles, 15 patrol bags, and 40 patrol uniforms.



Newly acquired truck and ranger accommodations

Through our Technical Advisor, Simon Muchatabaya, AWF participated in the drafting of the Mana Pools 5-year anti-poaching strategy plan for 2019-2023. AWF also facilitated and coordinated cross-border joint operations between Zimbabwe and Zambia, involving all law enforcement agencies from both countries. Working together with Zimparks, AWF supported the establishment of the River Patrol Rapid Response Unit, and an anti-poaching boat and trailer were purchased to strengthen the river anti-poaching patrols. Construction was completed of an anti-poaching operations office block, which comprised of two offices, a radio communication room, a briefing and debriefing room, and two restrooms at the River Patrol Rapid Response Unit. A record of zero elephant poaching incidents along the Zambezi river was set. A total of 15 accused people were intercepted and arrested in the Zambezi River, ten of whom were sentenced to three months in prison and five of whom were warned and cautioned. Through coordination with the National Prosecution Authorities in Zimbabwe and Zambia and the Wildlife Crime Prevention and Conservation Lower Zambezi, 26 law enforcement rangers and officers from Zambia and Zimbabwe attended a prosecution cross border workshop and were trained in crime scene evidence gathering and preservation, and in evidence presentation in court.



AWF Technical Advisor, Simon Muchatabaya



Uganda: Since 2013, AWF has supported red chili pepper farming in the Murchison Falls National Park area of Uganda to mitigate human-wildlife conflict with elephants and to provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for communities. Between March 2018 and February 2020, with AWF support, farmers produced 18,200 kilograms of chilis, and the project area experienced a 30% increase in acreage per year. Two collection centers in Juma and Diima



Harvested chili peppers

were established, and farmers were linked to a bulk buyer company, to facilitate market access. The recent results from this program indicate how chili farming can be effective in reducing human-wildlife conflict and generating income for local communities living near wildlife. AWF has also supported the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) in modernizing anti-poaching surveillance and patrol equipment. This effort was made possible by institutionalizing the SMART monitoring and reporting tool for strategic development and providing equipment to field rangers in the national parks where elephants exist. AWF is also supporting communities north of Murchison Falls

National Park with the establishment of a conservancy, in order to secure a buffer area for the dispersal of elephants and other species from the park.



DRC: In the Bili-Uele landscape, AWF has continued to support and resupply 40 eco-guards in their duties. Amongst new training capabilities is how to utilize SMART Conservation Software to improve their operational capacity in the field. This year the recruitment of 40 more eco-guards is ongoing. Anti-poaching patrols in the core zone of the concession continued, with the addition of drones and other tracking aids to better increase awareness of what is actively happening in the zone. The planned addition of a surveillance airplane and more vehicles and motorbikes will increase mobility in the zone. Regular patrols of the eco-guards with the DRC military are now making the core zone more secure from armed groups that have been operating in the area, carrying out illegal poaching and wildlife trafficking. A new intelligence-based network system of the region also has assisted in identifying key participants in wildlife trafficking and poaching, through working alongside other partners in the region.

NEXT STEPS

- In line with AWF's species-specific goals for prioritizing elephant programs that reduce killings in FY20-21, AWF's first objective is to undertake gap assessment of species action and recovery plans in the priority countries of Cameroon, Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Secondly, AWF will continue to actively participate in the Species Action Plan development process, which is currently underway with the Kenya Elephant Action Plan. Lastly, AWF aims to keep providing financial and technical support to various elephant site projects, in Cameroon, DRC, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Uganda.

Stop the Trafficking



Wildlife trafficking is one of the largest illegal trafficking networks in the world and is instrumental in the decimation of wildlife populations in Africa. It also facilitates criminal activity and takes away from real economic gains in target countries. Elephant parts – including ivory and bushmeat – are key products in this trade. AWF's Canines for Conservation Program provides professionally trained sniffer dog and handler teams to key entry and exit points across Africa to detect these types of wildlife products.

Since its establishment in 2014, Canines for Conservation is now fully operational in five countries and is expanding to two more. In order to stop traffickers that have been apprehended from continuing their heinous acts, AWF also operates a Wildlife Law Enforcement Program to support local officials and legal teams to prosecute offenders. This year alone, 262 law enforcers were trained, and 237 wildlife crime cases were tracked. Together, AWF's Canines for Conservation and Wildlife Law Enforcement programs are crucial to stopping wildlife trafficking in the long run, as these initiatives serve to both apprehend traffickers and to persecute them effectively, to minimize trafficking in the future and protect elephant populations.

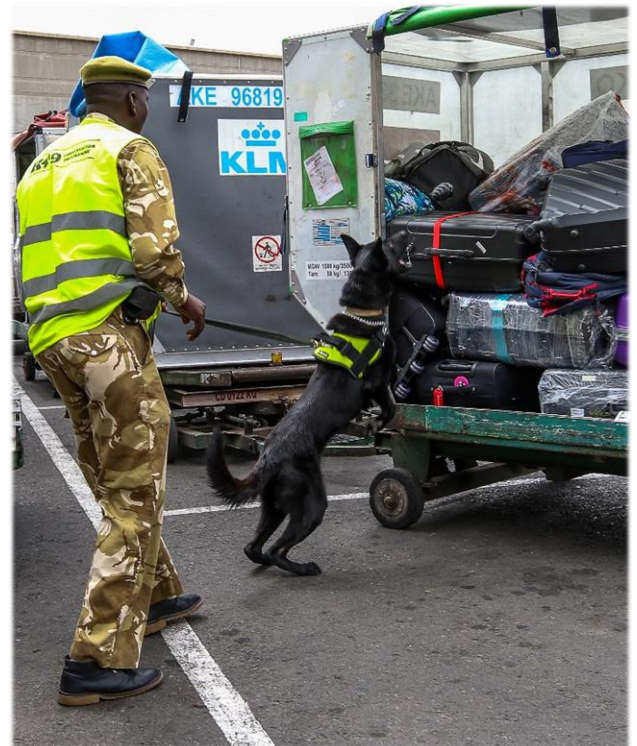
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Uganda: In collaboration with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), canine teams in Uganda continued with operations at Entebbe International Airport and additionally expanded to Murchison Falls National Park, together with targeted missions in parks and landscapes throughout the country. Uganda experienced the most activity with trafficking finds out of the five AWF locations this year. Between October 2019 and March 2020, 15 finds were made, 26 people were arrested, and 201.82 kilograms of raw ivory were recovered. In January, ten UWA rangers underwent training to become professional canine handlers and are now awaiting deployment to the Karuma Wildlife Reserve. Construction is nearing completion at a new canine facility at Karuma, to consist of 6 kennels, an office, a store, and two handler houses.



Tanzania: Standard operations continued at Julius Nyerere International Airport (JNIA), in addition to other intelligence-led searches. Between October 2019 and March 2020, 1,700 flights and 159,989 luggage items were searched at JNIA, which resulted in one find from a routine search and seven finds from intelligence-led searches. 18 suspects were arrested with now ongoing cases, and in February 2020, two suspects from a previous case were sentenced to 20 years in prison for unlawful possession of 20 elephant tusks. In Fall 2019, AWF trained and graduated eight Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA) officers in a professional dog handler course at the AWF canine facility at Usa River. The handlers will mainly be deployed in Northern Tanzania at border posts in Namanga and Holili, at Kilimanjaro International Airport, and for intelligence-led operations in inland areas. AWF also purchased furniture for the TAWA office at JNIA and training and grooming equipment for the canine training school. In January 2020, AWF CEO Kaddu Sebunya visited the training school at Usa River, where he met the dogs and handlers in training and the program staff.



Tanzanian canine handler at work



Mozambique: AWF trained teams at Maputo International Airport have achieved great success and may now serve as prime examples of how canine detection units can serve as deterrents to wildlife trafficking. Before the teams were deployed, finds were extremely common at “downstream” airports such as Maputo. The canine units were deployed to the international passenger terminal, where they publicly search the luggage of departing passengers. Teams searched the luggage of over 180,000 people, with only one find. Intel suggests that Maputo is no longer considered a secure route for trafficking wildlife products, and this program indicates how detection dog teams can serve to generate a strong deterrent effect.



Newly upgraded kennel facility at Maputo Airport

NEXT STEPS

- AWF aims to strengthen existing canine units and to expand programs to new key areas. These planned activities for the coming year include establishing a canine detection unit in Ethiopia, deploying additional units in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, and progressing with the development of an operational canine program in Cameroon. AWF will also continue to support existing teams, in particular, through holding Wildlife Judicial and Prosecutorial Trainings (WJPAT) to enhance the capacity of handlers.
- AWF will also prioritize ensuring the long-run sustainability of its canine programs. Integrating canine programs into national wildlife law enforcement agencies and securing ownership of these programs in each country are essential for ensuring the survival of these canine units. AWF has worked with wildlife authorities in Uganda, Tanzania, and Botswana to develop strategic plans and aims to finalize these plans this year.

Stop the Demand



Ivory products have long carried a high monetary value and been viewed as symbols of wealth in many cultures around the world. The demand for these items is a driving factor in the decimation of African elephant populations. Ivory is particularly popular in numerous Asian countries, which generate some of the largest ivory markets in the world. Many people are unaware of the poaching and violence that threaten vulnerable elephants in order to create these objects. Thus, educating and raising awareness on elephant poaching are essential for the long-term survival of this species. Education and public advocacy initiatives are key aspects of AWF's approach to elephant conservation, in order to end the ivory trade and generate a greater appreciation of African elephants.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



China: AWF entered into the third year of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Beijing Zoo with a special exhibition entitled "Building a Shared Future for You and Me: Safeguarding Africa's Threatened Diversity". AWF continues to assist the Zoo with updated informational signage for more than 50 African animals on exhibit. To date, 20 display panels have been completed with the remaining signs to be completed in 2021. In October of 2019, AWF hosted several Zoo team members in Nairobi as part of a conservation leadership exchange. Site visits to Tsavo West National Park, Lumo Conservancy and Ngulia Rhino Sanctuary were conducted to see AWF's species protection work first hand. AWF is pleased to continue this essential partnership to educate Beijing Zoo visitors on the importance of conservation.

In September 2019, AWF launched a two-month exhibition at the Shanghai Zoo themed “Saving Africa’s Endangered Species,” to build off of AWF’s successful exhibit at the Beijing Zoo in 2018. This exhibition provided information on the state of African elephants and other species and urged Chinese citizens to stop the use of their animal products, which are mostly illegally obtained. AWF board and team members attended the launch and met with Shanghai Zoo management to discuss future potential initiatives with AWF. While in Shanghai, the AWF team additionally engaged with both local youths and conservation experts and officials. Four secondary schools were visited, where more than 1,000 students were shown a presentation on the



AWF exhibit at the Shanghai Zoo

poaching crisis and a short film and were educated on how they can take part in conservation in Africa. On September 26th, AWF delegates held a productive meeting with a team from the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China.

NEXT STEPS

- In light of COVID-19 and in line with our principal objectives, AWF will continue to advocate for the preservation of wildlife and wild lands and to promote sustainable government policy and development. The pandemic crisis poses a unique opportunity to raise greater awareness for mitigating human-wildlife contact, in order to prevent zoonotic disease transmission and to protect wildlife habitats and populations. AWF’s COVID-19 Crisis Response aims to raise awareness of zoonosis in communities and support standards, guidelines, and emergency preparedness and response policies for current and future pandemics.

The Value of Your Support

Thanks to your commitment and generosity AWF has made significant progress over the past year in our fight to protect African elephants and ensure their long-term survival. Our elephant programs wouldn’t be possible without your support and with you by our side, AWF can continue to build upon these successes and ensure that Africa’s historic wild lands and treasured wildlife are protected.

Thank you for making a difference. Your impact is evident in every success. We are honored to have you as a member of our extended family.

