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Our vision and our plan: Saving Africa's iconic species



This proposal was prepared exclusively for African Wildlife Foundation's most valued supporters. To make your gift, please use the enclosed response card, call 202-939-3333, or visit us online at: awf.org/baobab.

You are Invited to Reshape the Future for Africa's Wildlife

The future is here. For decades, conservation scientists have been forecasting conditions and calamities that could result in the extinction of much of Africa's wildlife. We've seen too many of these predictions come to pass. Many of Africa's most treasured species will disappear in our lifetimes unless we act decisively and with expertise. African Wildlife Foundation, which commemorates its 60th anniversary this year, is best positioned to innovate, implement, and operate the programs with the best chance of saving elephants, big cats, great apes, giraffes, and more – especially if visionary, engaged partners like you join us.

At AWF, we're building on our success by expanding the initiatives that have the greatest likelihood of impact. Our most forward-thinking initiatives include fostering a pipeline of young conservation leaders through our work with universities, fellowships, awards, and with our Classroom Africa programs. These efforts will help us secure our successes and meet the challenges of the coming decades. But there are also interventions that will have a more immediate impact, and you are invited to help us grow these programs. Each of the four initiatives described here improves the survival probability of a particular iconic species.

Saving Four Species with Innovative Conservation

Forest elephants, giraffes, big cats, and great apes are all threatened by poaching, climate change, habitat loss, and human-wildlife conflict. But a deep understanding of how these dangers affect the respective species and their habitats tells us which approaches are most likely to work. This proposal introduces you to four initiatives that are already underway and require additional funds to be scaled up.

Your Participation

You are invited to grow your investment in Africa's wildlife with a gift that advances four priority initiatives. Please make your contribution with urgency. Africa's elephants, big cats, great apes, and giraffes need your partnership to thrive.



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Saving the Habitat of the Forest Elephant



Key Threat:

Africa lost approximately 3.9 million hectares of forest area per year between 2010 and 2020

Target Area:

Central Africa

Future-facing Approach:

Sustainable agriculture that protects remaining forests while improving the incomes of farmers.

The news we received in 2021 about forest elephants was a devastating blow. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (the IUCN) downgraded the Red List status of this elusive species from vulnerable to critically endangered. Their dramatic decline is due in large part to habitat loss. Africa's forests are disappearing at a faster rate than anywhere in the world. Unplanned farming is often cited as a cause of habitat loss, but the notion that a choice must be made between agriculture and conservation is misleading. We have proven that increased agricultural yields reduce the need to cut down forests for more arable land. Demand for these land-saving practices is growing.



A Closer Look: AWF is training farmers to ...

- Effectively seed and reduce water use to improve yields by as much as 35 percent and find alternatives to cutting down trees for charcoal.
- Use sustainable techniques such as intercropping, rainwater harvesting, and crop rotation paired with techniques to improve crop products to fetch better prices.
- Start tree nurseries. AWF's reforestation efforts have restored wildlife corridors and water sources that were degraded as a result of human activities. In the past three years, one community planted 600,000 trees and restored 2,765 hectares of farmland.

Key Success Metric:

Communities near and within critical wildlife areas must benefit from the conservation of wildlife. Sustainable agriculture improves prosperity and minimizes habitat encroachment. This directly benefits forest elephants who require large tracts of dense forests to survive.

Protecting Giraffes from Poaching



Key Threat:

Since 1990, giraffe populations have shrunk by 40 percent. There may be fewer than 80,000 remaining in all of Africa.

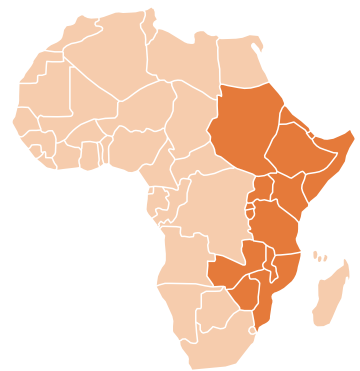
Target Area:

East Africa

Future-facing Approach:

To reduce growing demand for giraffe parts and bushmeat hunting, AWF is using a mix of anti-poaching programs.

The African giraffe has multiple subspecies and varieties, but all are in decline. The Kordofan and Nubian giraffes are just one stage from extinction in the wild. This has not stopped bushmeat hunters or wildlife traffickers who can sell giraffe body parts on the black market. To save giraffes, we need vast transboundary programs that recognize that giraffes wander through established wildlife corridors irrespective of protective borders. We're aiming to expand our anti-poaching work along the Tsavo-Mkomazi landscape and buffer areas in Tanzania and Kenya. Our advocacy on behalf of giraffes has already made one critical difference: at the CITES conference in August of 2019, member states voted to restrict the sale of giraffe parts.



A Closer Look: AWF is ...

- Coordinating patrols, sharing intelligence, and fostering cooperation among wildlife authorities. AWF is also creating a giraffe database to help monitor and report on poaching and other causes of giraffe mortality.
- Working with wildlife authorities to train and equip rangers in data collection, GPS use, and CyberTracking technology. This helps deter not just poachers, but also bushmeat hunters who leave deadly snares to trap and catch giraffes.
- Training sniffer dogs to detect giraffe contraband. The dogs are already expert in identifying elephant ivory, rhino horn, lion bone, and pangolin scales and are responsible for hundreds of busts across east Africa.

Key Success Metric:

These anti-poaching programs have already proved effective. In the last 12 months, not a single elephant was poached in Tanzania. By expanding these strategies, we're looking for the same result for giraffes.

The Great Ape Imperative: Community Buy-in



Key Threat:

Habitat loss has reduced populations of bonobos to 15,000 to 20,000 and mountain gorillas to just over 1,000. Chimpanzees face the added threat of being hunted for bushmeat.

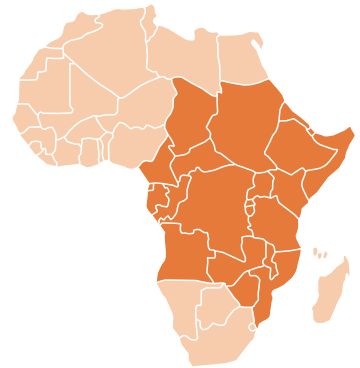
Target Area:

East and Central Africa

Future-facing Approach:

Ensuring that communities within and near great ape habitats directly benefit from conservation efforts and biodiversity protection so that they become fully invested stakeholders in our initiatives.

The IUCN has red-listed every great ape species as endangered or critically endangered, primarily due to habitat loss and poaching. Mountain gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos require a densely forested habitat to survive and they must stay safe from hunters. The best way to achieve this goal is to ensure that all stakeholders benefit from conservation efforts. AWF founded the African CSO Biodiversity Alliance to address biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources by communities and indigenous groups throughout Africa. In addition to this visionary work, we're ensuring that communities directly benefit from their involvement in conserving critical ecosystems like forests.



A Closer Look: AWF is ...

- Assisting communities in developing economically lucrative, wildlife-friendly enterprises such as eco-lodges in exchange for their commitment to adopt sustainable land-use practices.
- Training communities adjacent to protected areas to add value to non-timber forest products such as bush mango that can be turned into oils and creams sold in urban areas. And when times are lean, AWF runs cash-for-work programs to reduce bushmeat hunting and provides food rations and additional stipends to rangers.
- Operating a revolutionary land-lease program that provides annual payments to landowners to keep land open for wildlife.

Key Success Metric:

We look to replicate successes like the first luxury community-owned lodge in Rwanda, the Sabinyo Silverback Lodge. It has generated millions of dollars for the local economy, resulting in livelihood improvements and empowering the community to engage in conservation.

Big Cats Need Big Areas and Big Thinking



Key Threat:

Habitat loss and fragmentation has dramatically reduced hunting ranges. Lion populations have decreased 43% in 21 years; there are fewer than 7,000 cheetahs left; and even the adaptable leopard is struggling to find prey.

Target Area:

All of Africa

Future-facing Approach:

Positioning Africa's protected areas as a key feature of economic development and community wellbeing.

Apex predators like lions, leopards, and cheetahs pay no attention to park boundaries and borders – they need a massive range for hunting. Providing them with adequate rangeland benefits all of Africa's wildlife, from the tiny bush baby to the great savanna elephant. It also benefits Africa's people. As an African organization founded in Kenya 60 years ago, AWF has a special understanding of this and is leading the effort to make conservation of protected areas a priority in the development of a modern, future-facing Africa. Partnering with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), AWF is co-convening Africa's leaders, citizens, and interest groups to support the role of protected areas in safeguarding wildlife, delivering vital life-supporting ecosystems, and promoting sustainable development.



A Closer Look: the Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) will ...

- Give voice to the priorities and projects of Africans in their determination to create a sustainable future for Africa, its people, and its wildlife.
- Generate pathways that build and empower the current and next generation of leaders to realize an African future where wildlife and wild lands are valued as an asset that contributes to development.
- Recognize the importance of protected areas, not just to wildlife, but also for their role in helping Africa rebuild from COVID-19 and reducing risks of future pandemics.

Key Success Metric

The first APAC congress will convene in March of 2022. It will provide a forum for Africans to take the lead in protecting their natural heritage and launch cross-boundary projects that conserve the wild lands required by wildlife like big cats.