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News



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YOUR SUPPORT AT WORK ACROSS AFRICA'S LANDSCAPES



Our mission is to ensure wildlife and wild lands thrive in modern Africa.

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WHY AFRICA NEEDS MORE AFRICAN YOUTH IN CONSERVATION



Dear AWF Friends,

Over the last decade, Africa has intensified its use of natural resources in the service of agricultural expansion, urbanization, and extractive activities such as mining. Too much of Africa's biodiversity is being erased—primarily due to my generation's decisions.

Today's youth—by far the largest population cohort in Africa—cannot afford to sit idly by as various forces compromise resources critical to human well-being: clean air, healthy forests and oceans, bountiful wildlife.

To help African youth be effective conservation champions, AWF builds their knowledge, skills, and practices. We seek to inspire a critical mass of empowered youth as conservation warriors. Here, we are building on previous work such as our Classroom Africa program, whose schools today are improving the lives of over 2,000 students annually. We also helped launch Africa's first Wildlife Clubs, today a program with more than 3 million members in Eastern Africa alone.

We're also helping committed young leaders strengthen connections to national, pan-African, and economic development networks and push for conservation-centered policies. Governments must recognize African youth as conservation beneficiaries and strong partners for advancing a conservation agenda. They must build youth capacity while acknowledging the unique ambitions of African youth.

Meanwhile, youth must help redefine development and interrogate development plans. Development can no longer be seen as a zero-sum game in which we exchange wild lands for highways, but as a negotiation in which a pristine natural environment holds equal value to billions in economic growth. We must promote a vision of an Africa that retains its vast natural resources while ensuring its population is fed, industries running, and young people gainfully contributing to sustainable economies.

Africa's young generations are innovative, gifted, unafraid. Now is the time to bring their education, expertise, and energy to the table to shape Africa's future. That AWF is walking with them and providing critical support is in no small part due to your commitment and generosity. Thank you for being part of AWF's community and helping us realize a new conservation vision in Africa.

Sincerely,

Kaddu Sebunya
Chief Executive Officer

BABY CHIMP RESCUE

Campo Ma'an in Cameroon is a valuable landscape, both for the wildlife that occupies the forests and the community that lives beside the park. On one October patrol, rangers discovered a young female chimpanzee. The chimpanzee infant was rescued, given medical care, and transported to Limbe Wildlife Centre in southwestern Cameroon. We now feel confident in the survival of the chimp and look forward to checking up on her in the future.

In addition to supporting patrols, over the past three years AWF has developed a partnership between Cameroon's forestry and tourism ministries and a tour operator, African Travel Management, to promote ecotourism in the landscape. In late October, the parties signed a service agreement. This arrangement will foster the growth of a sustainable tourism industry in the region that incentivizes and contributes to conservation.



The other type of remote work

Sitting in a boat in the Maringa River, crossing from Boende to Lomako-Yokokala Faunal Reserve, Idriss Ayaya smiles gleefully at his companion, Fabrice Nseka. Beside them, the verdant tropical forest runs along the river's shore. Hidden behind the thick cover, bonobos and mangabey climb the trees, and forest elephants, porcupine, duiker, and sitatunga amble through the vegetation. The sapphire water of the Maringa River mirrors the forest and the light pink clouds of the sky.

In the beautiful setting, Ayaya reflects on what it is he likes most about his job and the remote location. "You benefit from a healthy environment," he said. "The air is clean without pollution. You are in nature, your food is 110% organic (produced locally with love), your presence contributes to the local economy, and you consume less."

Ayaya has been AWF's technical adviser, project management and partnership in the Lomako landscape of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for almost a year now. He works in the Lomako-Yokokala Faunal Reserve, Iyondji Community Bonobo Reserve, and with the Ilima school, which AWF built. Day-to-day, Ayaya is working with the Institut Congolais



pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) offering technical support in protected-area management, biomonitoring, data analysis, and adaptive management. He's also leading community development activities, ensuring AWF is adhering to our Policy and Standard of Rights-Based Conservation. And he's engaging stakeholders and managing project monitoring — handling evaluation and learning, reporting, and fundraising. It's quite a list of tasks.

And it's not an easy job by any means. He's far from his family and dealing with the challenges of being in the field. He's dealing with obstacles that might not even exist in other landscapes, like lack of infrastructure.

"The landscape doesn't have a road," Ayaya said. "We use only motorcycles and [travel by] foot to reach some communities. We

"My favorite part of my job is when I reflect on what we are doing as an NGO and the results from the field and how to move forward"

used to travel 750 kilometers (466 miles) on a motorcycle, which can take three or four days."

It's a challenge, but it's worth doing. "My favorite part of my job is when I reflect on what we are doing as an NGO and the results from the field and how to move forward," Ayaya said.



BIG WINS FOR BIG CATS

As adored as Africa's big cats are, they are also under grave threat, their presence in the savannas, forests, and woodlands of Africa increasingly threatened. But AWF is at work across the continent, designing strategies and managing landscapes to help protect leopards, cheetahs, and lions.



Billy Dodson

Leopards

For the first time in 20 years, a leopard was spotted via a camera trap in a national park where we work in southern Cameroon. The pictures on AWF camera traps are an exciting development and a positive sign for our work in the landscape. As threats to the wildlife in the area continue—habitat degradation, prey species loss, bushmeat hunting—protection of leopards and other animals is imperative. Beyond placing camera traps to monitor species presence, abundance, and trends, AWF manages a variety of conservation initiatives. To support the Bagyeli communities of the landscape, AWF is helping create agroforests, planting rubber trees alongside and within plantain cropland. The practice maximizes efficiency of the land and reduces pressure on the forest and wildlife.



Billy Dodson

Cheetahs

AWF was awarded a grant by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for a joint project with the International Fund for Animal Welfare to tackle the illegal cheetah trade. Cooperation between governments in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula has been minimal, a key obstacle to efforts to disrupt the trade. This grant will enable AWF to develop an integrated approach, working with transnational criminal justice systems and fostering relationships among law enforcers in the two regions. It will also allow us to create a mechanism for dealing with the cheetahs seized. We plan to help create a system that will address investigator's evidentiary needs but also the cheetahs' needs for care and to be returned to the wild as soon as possible.



Kim Wolhuter

Lions

In the Mid-Zambezi Valley, Zimbabwe's National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks), recently placed five tracking collars on lions. It also partnered with Wild Cru to install more than 300 camera traps per park in four parks. With this new tracking capacity, ZimParks can better monitor lion movements to ensure the big cats stay away from communal areas. This change has resulted in a reduction in human-lion conflict, as ZimParks is able to learn of and react more quickly to the presence of lions. The collars and camera traps also enable researchers to study lion behavior and to check on their well-being.



U.S. LEGISLATION

In a victory for all big cats, including leopards, cheetahs, and lions, The Big Cat Public Safety Act was signed into law by President Biden with strong bipartisan support in the House and Senate. The new legislation limits who can own big cats, banning private ownership and requiring facilities to acquire a federal permit. AWF is proud to have supported the law and generated public interest through petitions signed by over 39,000 supporters like you.

LEGACY PROFILE

MICHAEL TEKEL

Leaving a legacy for wildlife

Seventy-three-year-old Michael Tekel describes himself as a quirky and energetic animal lover. He regularly volunteers at his local animal shelter, helping in any way he can; he even adopted his beloved cat and dog there. Michael is fond of scuba diving and photography. He said that making eye contact with fish while diving off of Long Island "made me eager to better understand the impact of overfishing and poaching on animal species."

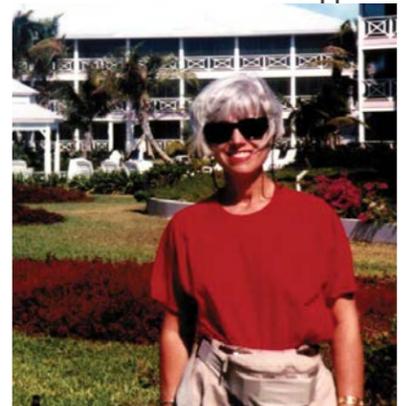
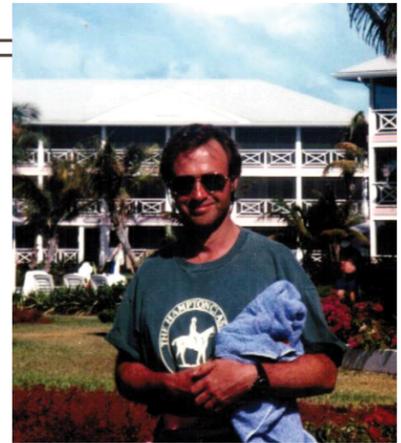
After his wife Janet passed away last year, he knew he wanted to continue supporting causes they were both passionate about. A legacy gift to AWF was a way for him to continue their shared vision, and it was a meaningful tribute to his wife's memory.

To support AWF's work, he established two charitable gift annuities (CGAs). The CGAs provide Michael with an immediate tax

deduction and partially tax-free payments for the rest of his life. What remains after his lifetime will support AWF. The ease of our annuity process was appealing to him, but he is most enthusiastic about the impact he will make on Africa's wildlife, generations from now. "While I can't personally do anything physically to help out," Michael said, "at least I know that I can make a difference right here from home."

A CGA is an excellent solution for someone passionate about supporting wildlife conservation. For Michael, it was the perfect way to help secure the future both for himself and for Africa's irreplaceable wildlife and wild lands.

To learn more about how you can establish a charitable gift annuity, please contact awf's legacy giving team at 202-939-3322 or legacygifts@awf.org.



Wildlife Watch: VERVET

In the trees, the vervets scamper along the branches, their long tails trailing behind them, helping them balance on their narrow beams. Meanwhile on the ground, the juveniles chase after one another and launch into play-wrestling matches. They grab and gently bite at the shaggy peppered-taupe fur that covers the necks and backs of their companions.

The vervet monkey is a medium-sized primate found in East Africa in woodlands and the edges of forests near water. During the day, vervets forage for food. Living in troops of up to 40, they have a variable, omnivorous diet, though they prefer fruit and flowers. At night the vervets retreat to the trees, climbing to the ends of highest branches to stay safe from predators.

Vervets are hunted by many larger animals. To prevent predation, vervets give alarm calls that warn others in their group of specific threats. Members of the group can distinguish the call and respond accordingly, hopping into trees to avoid leopards, scanning the sky at a raptor call, and watching the ground when warned of a snake.



Billy Dodson

Vervets are categorized as a species of "Least Concern" by the IUCN Red List, but their population numbers are decreasing. They often live in smaller disconnected populations, making them more susceptible to local extinctions.

To help vervets and other species thrive, AWF supports local communities in sustainable agriculture and leads tree-planting days. Efforts like these promote the growth of the woodland habitats animals like vervets rely on.

FINDING WATER, FINDING HOPE AT MANYARA RANCH

Between Tarangire and Lake Manyara National Parks in northern Tanzania is Manyara Ranch, a 45,000-acre corridor connecting the two vital habitats. It's not just a farmhouse for livestock or an intermediary space for wildlife though, it's an invaluable conservation area and ecosystem itself. Elephants, giraffe, eland, zebra, and other species move freely through and reside within the ranch, using it both as a seasonal migratory route and dispersal area. The corridor hosts more than 50 species of wild mammals, along with livestock. AWF took over ranch management in 2013, transforming it through improved land-use management, community outreach, and anti-poaching and security patrols.

Before AWF took over, the ranch had a rampant poaching crisis. But with enhanced security and more frequent patrols, there is no more poaching. Wildlife can pass freely and safely through the corridor. And the community can use the site too, benefiting from AWF's commercial livestock program, grazing pasture and water in the dry season, and livestock vaccination program.

THE DROUGHT

As climate change wreaks havoc across the globe, Africa is being hit especially hard. Despite contributing less than 5% of the world's global greenhouse gas emissions, Africa is suffering disproportionately. In East Africa the crisis is manifesting in increased temperatures and decreased rainfall.

For the second year here, the rains have failed. For a second year the people and wildlife face threats of food and water insecurity. In neighboring country Kenya, mortality data from conservation areas collected by the Wildlife Research and Training Institute gives a grim picture. Between February and October 2022 over 200 elephants died because of the drought. An additional 512 wildebeest, 381 common zebra, and 51 buffalo were found dead from drought-related causes.

In Manyara Ranch the landscape is dry. The lower vegetation, mostly bare of shoots or leaves, is trampled and fading in sun-bleached shades of tan into the dirt. The wildlife, desperate for water, is leaving the ranch and entering nearby villages. Venturing into these



Brian McBrearty

communities has not only increased incidents of human-wildlife conflict but also of well trappings. Desperate for water, the animals fall into village wells and can't get themselves out again.

FINDING HOPE

As bleak as the situation is, AWF has been working to minimize the impact. When informed of animals falling into wells, Manyara Ranch rangers jump into action to rescue the animals. Between September and November 2022, rangers rescued three buffaloes, a zebra, wildebeest, baby eland, and baby elephant.

Knowing a more sustainable solution was needed, the Manyara Ranch team cut the pipeline that provides water to the wildlife and livestock, rerouting the water to another watering hole nearer to the



well's borehole. By moving the watering site closer to the solar-operated well, they have made filling the trough easier. Rangers are hopeful that with more water available, the wildlife won't wander into villages as often.

Our work in the landscape doesn't stop there. To make lasting changes in a landscape, AWF engages local communities. Each week a conservation lesson is taught at the nearby Classroom Africa School AWF relocated and upgraded in 2015. The children learn about and are able to pass on wisdom about the value of the ecosystem they live in.

Between October and November, AWF led trainings on village savings and loan associations for 80 community members from four villages along the Kwa Kuchinja wildlife corridor. Such trainings enable



community members to access additional sources of income, which will permit them to engage in sustainable livelihoods and decrease the unsustainable resource use in the Manyara Ranch corridor.

At the beginning of December, AWF presented its 10-year General Management Plan for Manyara Ranch to the Monduli District Council, seeking endorsement. The plan, developed with community input, calls for the establishment of management goals. These goals will help achieve the desired sustainable conditions on the ranch through livestock businesses, new opportunities for tourism-business partnerships, and, importantly, pastoral community involvement in development planning. These measures are designed to decrease human-wildlife conflict and support the surrounding communities while decreasing their reliance on the landscape's limited resources.



The ranch is a success, both for the community and the wildlife. A study published in 2020, "Long-term persistence of wildlife populations in a pastoral area," analyzed the results of a wildlife population monitoring program in Manyara Ranch from 2003-2008 and 2011-2019. It found wildlife populations were at densities similar to or even greater than adjacent national parks. Wildlife populations remained constant or increased, and livestock populations also remained constant over the timeframes.

A striking sign of the success of Manyara Ranch is the number of animals there today, particularly babies, despite the drought and abiding dryness. We hope that AWF's continued work in this landscape—which depends on the support of readers like you—will only improve the animals' and communities' well-being.

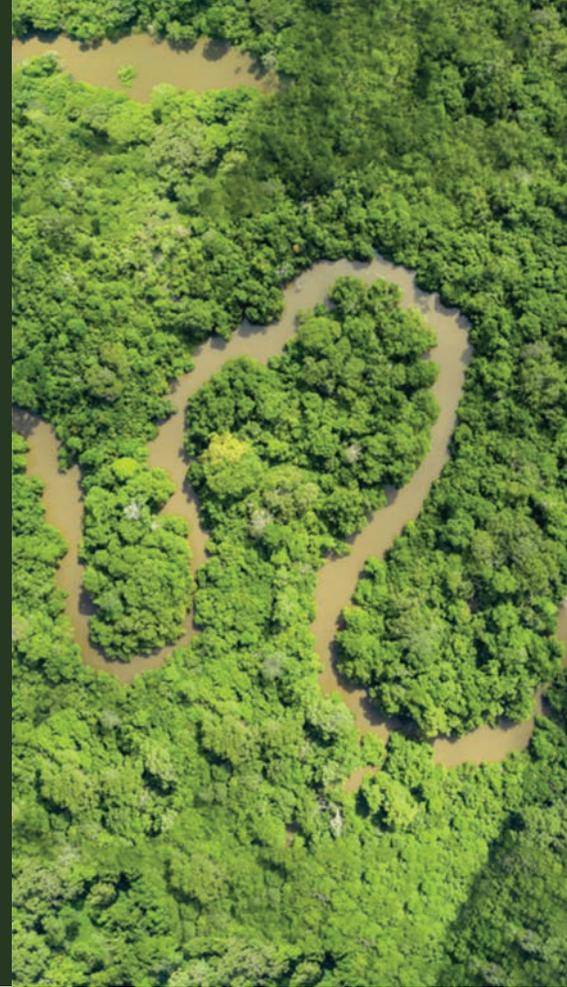
Make the pledge:

Africa has solutions for the world

The Congo Basin rainforest spans 500 million acres across six African nations. Known as the second lung of the planet, it absorbs nearly 1.5 billion tons of carbon dioxide per year, making it as important in regulating global climate change as the Amazon. It is also home to more than 130 million people and more than 400 mammal species, some of which are found nowhere else in the world.

For conservation to succeed, the communities of the Congo Basin must be strong and resilient. AWF works in partnership with communities to safeguard nature while investing in sustainable livelihoods. Communities' ability to thrive at a local scale underpins human well-being at a global scale.

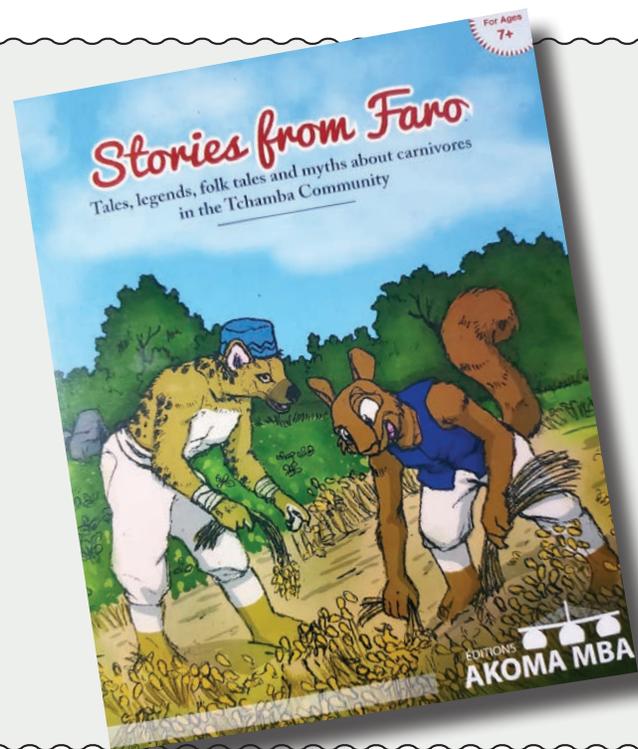
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Stories from Faro

Six legends, folk tales, and myths about carnivores in Cameroon's Tchamba community—tales long told by the people—make up AWF's recently published storybook, *Stories from Faro*.

The stories will be shared with youth in Faro during environmental education campaigns in schools and the communities, imparting wisdom that we hope will lead and shape the conservation story in Faro.



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