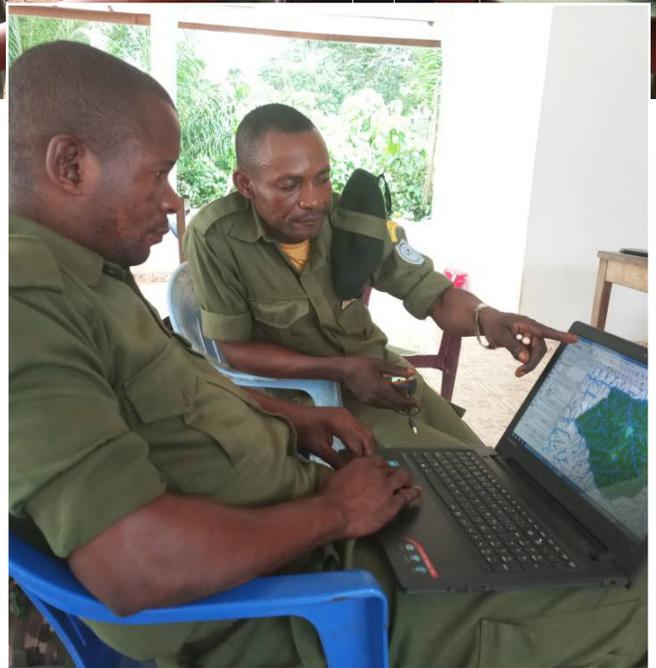




FIGHTING POACHING AND TRAFFICKING TO SAFEGUARD CONGOLESE WILDLIFE



In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) provides technical and financial support to the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) to aid the fight against poaching and, more specifically, ensure that endemic species in the **Bili-Uele** and **Maringa-Lopori-Wamba** landscapes are protected from extinction.

Organized poaching and wildlife trafficking by armed units seriously threaten the survival of some of the DRC's most iconic and endangered species, including the endangered bonobo. These peaceful great apes could lose more than half their numbers by 2078 due to organized poaching and illegal bushmeat hunting as well as habitat fragmentation.

Eastern chimpanzees and more than 1,000 forest elephants are extremely threatened for the same reasons.

AWF supports ICCN anti-poaching operations in the Bili-Uele and Maringa-Lopori-Wamba landscapes, with the support of the **Arcus Foundation**, the **European Union** under the ECOFAC6 program, the USAID Community-Based Counter Wildlife Trafficking program, and the **International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement Office (INL)**, through the interventions below.



SUPPORTING RANGER PATROLS

AWF financial and technical support to ICCN allows for the regular deployment of field patrols and close monitoring of wildlife species. We cover the cost of rations, provide gear for protection against bad weather, and supply materials for the collection of biomonitoring data. To expand the areas covered by patrols, AWF assists ICCN in the recruitment and training of new eco-guardians.

We also provide patrol vehicles such as motorcycles, outboard dugout canoes, land cruiser vehicles, and camel trucks.

UPGRADING SKILLS AND EQUIPMENT

AWF equips the eco-guardians with camera traps, which they place at strategic locations in the forest to confirm the presence of species such as bonobos, elephants, chimpanzees, and pangolins.

To adapt patrol interventions to the landscape context, AWF provides eco-guardians with Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) devices for ecological monitoring and trains them in their use. The eco-guardians are now skilled in data collection and the use of processing tools, which allows them to properly document wildlife indices and to know where to focus conservation efforts. Data collected on patrols and in wildlife censuses informs conservation planning and strategies.

SENSITIZING COMMUNITIES

To help curb trafficking of illegal wildlife products, AWF conducts bushmeat market surveys, which enable us to identify the active markets and species most commonly caught and shape our awareness-raising accordingly.

AWF accompanies ICCN in sensitizing local communities in both MLW and Bili-Uele to issues related to nature conservation, protected species, and hunting regulations. This sensitization reaches those at the highest level (political, administrative, and customary authorities) as well as people in communities such as hunters, students, and traders.

These sensitizations result in the observance of hunting regulations, especially regarding closing periods and permits. This success has coincided with population increases of target species such as bonobos and forest elephants.

Finally, we regularly observe and analyze the marketing of bushmeat to assess the effectiveness of anti-poaching and awareness-raising activities.



*Building a Future for Africa Where
People and Wildlife Thrive*

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