

# RESILIENT AFRICA



# RESILIENT PLANET



**AFRICAN WILDLIFE**  
FOUNDATION

Building a World Where People & Wildlife Thrive



## **Our Vision**

An Africa where sustainable development includes thriving wildlife and wild lands as a cultural and economic asset for Africa's future generations



## Our Values

### **BALANCE**

Recognizing the intrinsic value of wildlife existing in harmony with people and their needs

### **EMPOWERMENT**

Building the strength of others to accomplish what no one individual can do alone

### **INNOVATION**

Fostering new approaches to shape the future of modern Africa

### **LEADERSHIP**

Amplifying the unlimited potential of Africans to lead solutions for the continent and the world

### **INCLUSIVITY**

Inviting diversity into partnership as the only path to mission success





The resilience shown by African communities, the innovation of its youth, and the growing recognition of conservation as an economic driver give us hope. The world must rally behind Africa's vision for a sustainable future, recognizing that its success is a shared triumph for humanity and the planet.

**KADDU SEBUNYA**  
*AWF Chief Executive Officer*

## **THE AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION (AWF)**

is Africa's conservation NGO. Our African-led vision for conservation puts people at the center.

**WE UNITE...** a global perspective and presence with a steadfast commitment to elevating African leadership. That commitment sets us apart from other conservation organizations and informs everything we do.

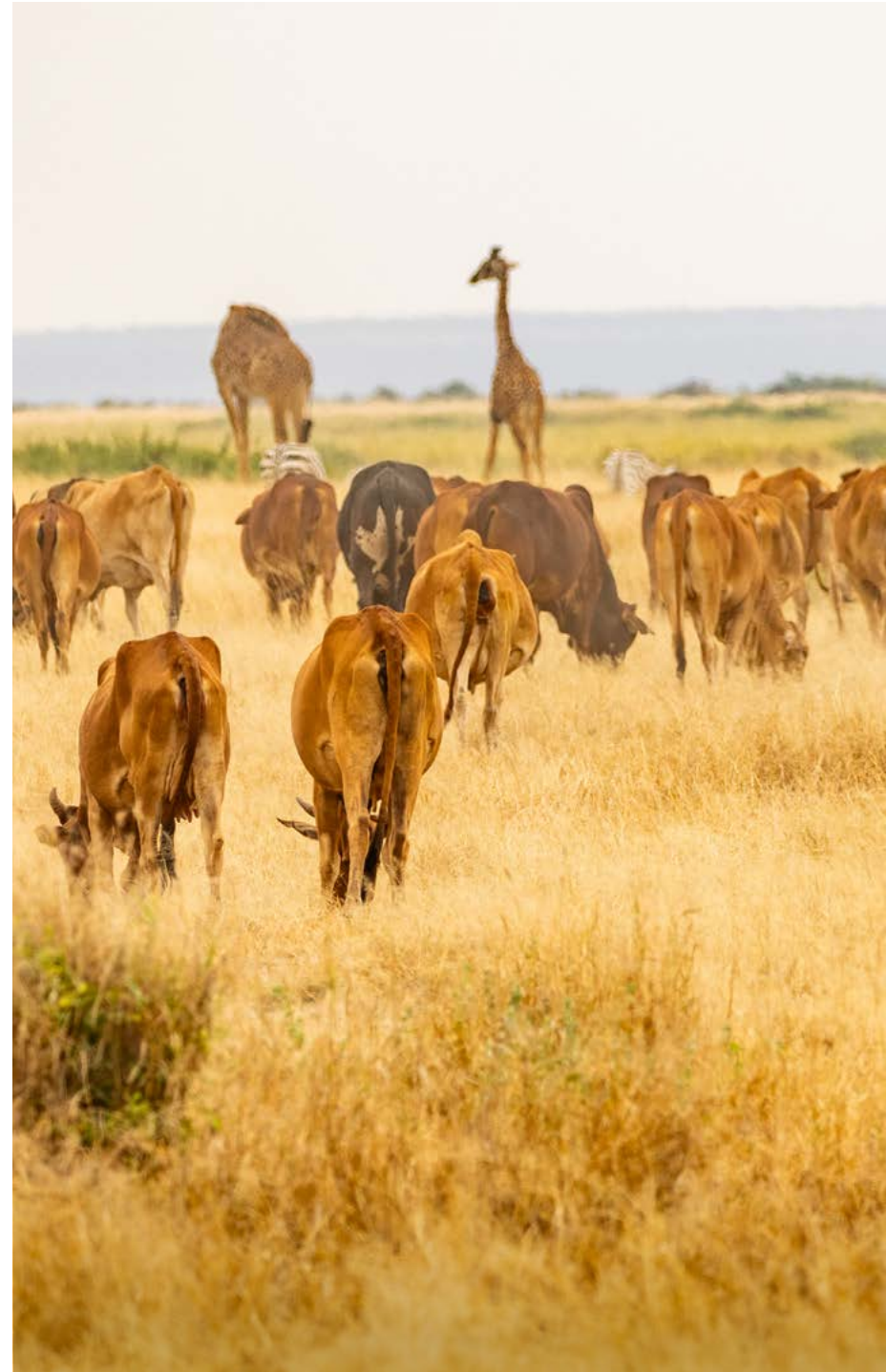
**WE BELIEVE...** that Africa's natural heritage is an invaluable and irreplaceable treasure. It is essential to our well-being, to our economic growth and prosperity, and to the health of the planet.

**WE CREATE...** pathways for Africans to own and hold ourselves accountable for conservation on the continent, knowing that wildlife will flourish and people will prosper in the long run only if Africa leads.

AWF is committed to ensuring that wildlife and wild lands thrive in modern Africa. As the continent stands on the precipice of monumental change, we are appealing to allies like you around the globe to help us drive positive choices for Africa's iconic wildlife and wild lands.



**Please join us in investing in Africa's future.  
Together we can build a resilient Africa  
and a resilient planet—a world where  
people and wildlife thrive together.**





KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA

What happens when Africans  
are invested in conservation?

↓

## AWF'S THEORY OF CHANGE

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**If...** people own, benefit from,  
and value wildlife and wild lands

**Then...** people will make  
cultural, economic, and policy  
choices to sustain them

**Leading to...** improved  
resource planning, more  
informed investments, and  
increased technical capacity

**Enabling...** land use compatible  
with wildlife, effective protected  
area management, and improved  
enforcement of wildlife laws

**Resulting in...** thriving wildlife,  
secured habitats, and better  
long-term quality of life for  
people.



AWF's perspective as an African organization and its vision of nature as central to our identity and key to our economic growth resonates deeply in Africa. AWF is changing the way conservation is perceived on the continent.

**HARSEN NYAMBE**

*African Union Commission Director,  
Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy*





## Driving Positive Choices for Wildlife

Decisions made today will determine the fate of Africa's wildlife. The time is now to drive positive choices by linking conservation to the aspirations of the African people.

“

As Africa's conservation NGO we have a different level of access, a different level of trust. They put us at the table with African decision-makers in unique and powerful ways.

**LARRY GREEN**

*AWF Global Board Chair 2023-2027*



MAASAI MARA, KENYA

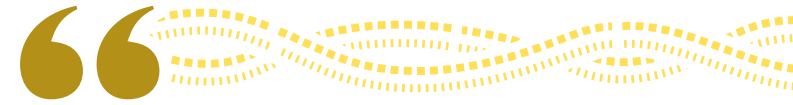
## AFRICA TODAY

Amid a seismic shift in the global political and economic landscapes, African leaders are prioritizing strategies to leverage the continent's tremendous potential.

Africa is experiencing exponential population growth, rapid urbanization and industrialization, and a burgeoning middle class. An innovative generation of private and public sector leaders are positioned to take advantage of a young workforce and abundant natural resources to drive growth and prosperity in the decades ahead.

But Africa faces enormous pressures, including climate change and escalating demands for fresh water and food production. Politically, people, especially young people, are demanding change: more agency and opportunities for themselves and more accountability from our leaders.

Without a clear understanding of choices and tradeoffs, today's leaders risk making false choices between development and conservation—choices that pit people against wildlife. These choices encourage ranking short-term socioeconomic and political gains above long-term resilience and prosperity.



**Conservation succeeds best when it advances an African vision for the continent's future. As nations chart a more self-reliant path, AWF stands out for its ability to unite policymakers, communities, and partners around the priorities set by Africa's leaders.**

**DUKO HOPMAN**

*Executive Director, Rob Walton Foundation*

## Biggest threats to wildlife in Africa:

Habitat loss & fragmentation due to human activity and the effects of climate change





The success or failure of Africa's ambitions for development this decade hinges on how well we steward our natural resources. AWF's strategy resonates because it is defining an African model where conservation is a driver of economic development.

**SHINGAI MUTASA**

*Founder and Group CEO, Masawara and AWF Trustee*

## OUR APPROACH

The most powerful solutions for sustainable growth bring conservation and development together. This is the intersection where AWF works.

As leaders decide where to site dams, build roads, and grow food, we must mainstream the idea that rivers, forests, and wildlife are not obstacles to development but cultural and economic assets that drive prosperity. Our models and strategies prove to communities and governments that conserving nature is part of smart, scalable growth.

For more than sixty years, AWF's approach has demonstrated to Africa how conservation contributes to sustainability, connectivity, and resiliency by integrating scalable strategies for leading for, living with, and caring for wildlife.

## Africa's Natural Assets

Africa is home to  
**25%** of the world's biodiversity



The Congo Basin rainforest in central Africa absorbs more carbon than the Amazon

Africa holds **33%** of the critical minerals necessary for modern technologies



**1/3** of the planet's fresh water is in Africa

## The Changing Needs of Africa's People

The average age in Africa is

**19**

More than **3/4** of the population is under age

**35**

By **2050**, the continent will account for a **quarter** of the world's population



**80%** of growth will be in cities



Africa includes **11** of the world's **20** fastest growing economies

At this critical moment, when Africa's economies and societies are driving change at unprecedented speed and scope, AWF is uniquely positioned to influence that change through an African-led movement that:

.....  
Strengthens  
decision-making  
for conservation

.....  
Supports pathways  
for people to coexist  
with wildlife

.....  
Links conservation  
to economic growth  
and opportunity

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**With your support, we are catalyzing positive change for wildlife and people across the continent by connecting conservation to the aspirations of African people.**



What sets the African Wildlife Foundation apart is its truly African-led approach to conservation. AWF does not import ready-made solutions but co-creates them with African communities, governments, and enterprises—ensuring biodiversity protection goes hand in hand with people’s aspirations for development. By convening networks like APAD, AWF unites diverse actors around a shared vision. This collaboration has not only expanded my own perspective but also anchors our collective efforts in a pan-African movement that is building lasting impact for both people and nature.

**OMER NTOUGOU NDOUTOUME**

*African Protected Area Directors Executive Secretary;  
National Agency of National Parks, Gabon*



# Strengthening Decision-making for Conservation



Before receiving support from AWF and [Wildlife Clubs of Kenya], our school had no wildlife club... despite the many environmental challenges around us... Their support enabled us to establish a thriving club with now 72 active members. Looking ahead, I hope to see more young people engaged in conservation, helping their communities recognize the importance of protecting and valuing nature.

**MERCY MANGI**

*Wildlife Club Patron and Teacher, Kirumbi Junior and Primary School, Kwale County, Kenya*

**People who are well-informed about the values and benefits of wildlife and wild lands—and who understand the impacts of their decisions—make choices in the long-term interests of both wildlife and people.**

AWF knows that to drive lasting change, we must infuse conservation into institutional and societal decision-making at every level—from village chiefs balancing competing needs of wildlife, livestock, and people to elected officials pursuing regional and national strategies for sustainable economic growth. From African media creating content that shapes the public's understanding to school children bringing conservation values learned in school into their homes and lives.

We lead for wildlife by developing strategies for better conservation decision-making within government and civil society, nurturing and championing stakeholder networks and communities of practice. And we seed systemic change by providing frameworks for accountable and transparent governance. Whatever the need, we equip leaders with the insights, resources, tools, and analysis to make and implement conservation-smart, data-driven decisions.

To scale the influence of conservation decision-making, for example, in 2020 we helped establish the Africa Protected Area Directors network (APAD), representing leadership of parks and conserved areas covering 14% of the continent's landmass. Today, APAD has evolved into a powerful community of practice shaping a common agenda in response to urgent conservation challenges.

Our long-standing commitment to African leadership dates to AWF's early years. In the 1960s and 1970s we helped establish two of Africa's first wildlife colleges, which have educated more than 10,000 scientists, park authorities, and conservation professionals in government and civil society—many now in seats of power. That legacy has earned us a significant level of trust that gives us unique and influential access to policymakers and institutions across the continent and around the world. It informs our current investments in conservation education as well as in fellowship and training programs designed to continue to build an African conservation movement from the grassroots up.



**Your support allows us to invest in leaders and institutions shaping smart conservation policies and in young people taking positive action across the continent.**



We appreciate AWF's partnership with county government in bringing the many voices in conservation and the community together to define a common vision for economic development that serves the entire ecosystem—people and wildlife alike.

**HIS EXCELLENCY JOSEPH OLE LENKU**  
*Governor, Kajiado County, Kenya*



# Championing Local Leadership

## KAJIADO COUNTY TAKES ON MANAGEMENT OF AMBOSELI NATIONAL PARK, KENYA

AWF has long recognized that developing local leadership is crucial for long-term conservation success. In July 2025, iconic Amboseli National Park at the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro became the first national park in Kenya to be managed by local government. The county population is predominantly Maasai, a vibrant Indigenous people who have traditionally been cattle and goat herders.

The transfer of overall park management from the Kenya Wildlife Service to Kajiado County signals a growing acknowledgement that protected areas are part of the communities surrounding them—and that those communities are best placed to make decisions about how to manage their natural resources.

AWF has worked in and around Amboseli National Park for more than fifty years. We pioneered

the concept of community conservancies in the region (there are currently 23 in operation), securing the rights of local Maasai communities and others to manage natural resources for both conservation and their own benefit through practices like sustainable grazing and ecotourism. Our work connecting community conservation and economic opportunity here has had a durable impact on the landscape, contributing to the political and economic conditions that enabled the transition of the park to county management.

Building on that legacy, in 2024 the governor of the county invited AWF to officially assist his office in creating an economic development blueprint for the county, synthesizing stakeholder feedback and existing data to define a long-term, strategic and inclusive plan that is good for Amboseli's elephants and Kajiado's people.

**Help us provide local leaders with the resources and insights they need to balance the needs of wildlife and people.**



**\$26M USD**

Annual Value of Ecotourism  
in Amboseli landscape

**\$55M USD**

Annual Value of  
Ecotourism, Livestock,  
and Ecosystem Services



**225** fellows from **33** countries (through 2025)

## Harnessing the Multiplier Effect

### AWF-WALL POLICY FELLOW, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Gervais Mudherwa, a 2022 AWF-Wall Policy Fellow, is positive proof of the far-reaching impact of leadership training.

As a member of the fellowship's inaugural cohort, the young Congolese professional joined the AWF delegation to the 2022 United Nations Biodiversity Conference, where he was part of ensuring Africa brought one voice to global negotiations on biodiversity conservation. AWF's policy work is instrumental in shaping how Africa advocates for nature in continental and global forums, resulting in stronger positions for Africa's protected and conserved areas and for funding that reaches local organizations on the ground.

Inspired to pay his experience forward, Mudherwa went on to found the Congolese Academy of

Young Negotiators. His aim is to see Congolese youth be part of shaping African priorities in global policy through representation on the steering committees of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

In March 2025, the academy's first class of 15 fellows completed their training at a workshop in Kinshasa attended by representatives from the United Nations conventions on desertification and biodiversity.

Mudherwa is but one example of how AWF's fellowships inspire promising young professionals, help them take action, and inspire them to scale their influence.

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**Help us provide young leaders  
with pathways to drive  
positive change for wildlife.**



**This is the time for Africa. The world stage is ready, and the youngest continent is ready to be heard. Now we need to give Africa's youth opportunities to lead. Make no mistake, an investment in these young leaders is an investment in the world's future.**

**CHARLES R. WALL**  
*Funder, AWF-Wall Fellows Program*

# Supporting Data-Driven Decisions

Good decisions require good data. AWF helps put data into the hands of Africa's decision-makers—whether they are mapping wildlife corridors and places more suited to development; scenario planning with stakeholders to help them imagine the consequences of choices made today; or identifying pressures on conservation areas.

Take the wildlife authorities responsible for monitoring vast swaths of remote and sparsely populated protected and conserved areas. Recently AWF and GIS software company Esri launched a collaboration with African Protected Area Directors members in Cameroon, Ethiopia, and Rwanda to pilot a new GIS-based tool. Known as TRACTS Sites, it integrates data from camera traps, satellite imagery, and ranger patrol observations, giving managers a comprehensive and near real-time view of their parks and



DJA LANDSCAPE, CAMEROON

allowing them to make faster, more informed decisions to care for wildlife and respond to threats.

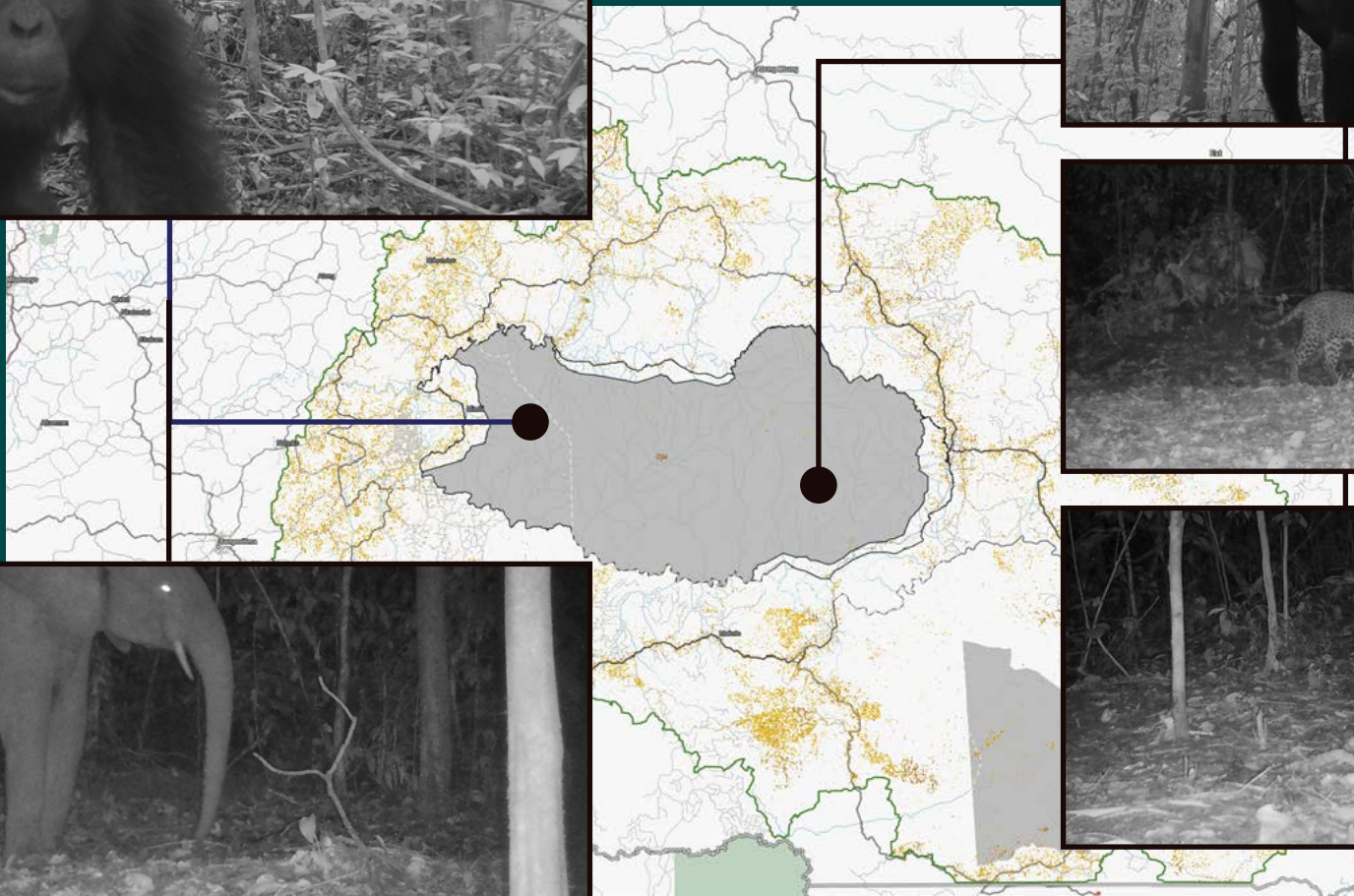
Just outside Cameroon's remote Dja Faunal Reserve, for example, TRACTS Sites helped flag road development related to logging interests. Authorities were able to quickly send rangers to verify the situation on the ground. This rapid response prevented encroachment into the reserve and deterred potential illegal logging activities. Better data, better decisions.

12 km<sup>2</sup>

Pilot area covered by TRACTS Sites tool

Help us deliver training and tools to enable better decisions for conservation.

.....  
**TRACT SITES DATA FROM  
DJA LANDSCAPE, CAMEROON**







Watching AWF cut through the noise at the UN General Assembly—standing shoulder to shoulder with African heads of state and driving real commitments for conservation—was profoundly inspiring. It made me deeply proud to serve on AWF’s global board.

**LAURA KOHLER**

*Chief Sustainable Living Officer, Kohler Co.  
and AWF Trustee*

# Supporting Pathways for Coexistence



OUMMA DJAUDI, TANGO LEADER  
IN FARO LANDSCAPE, CAMEROON

**Rural Africans, equipped with the right tools and support, can harness conservation as a strategy for security, resilience, and equity.**

For the millions of people across the African continent whose well-being is directly tied to the natural world, living with wildlife can be a formidable burden. In their efforts to meet basic needs for water, food, shelter, and fuel, Indigenous peoples and local communities often find themselves in competition with wildlife, with sometimes deadly consequences.

These communities need practical solutions that help them attain water and food security, pursue sustainable livelihoods, and secure their families, homes, crops, and livestock from harm. Yet they have traditionally been left out of important conservation and development decisions and often denied basic human rights.

We believe local ownership of conservation is essential for long-term success. AWF advances a rights-based approach that builds a foundation of

trust and creates a shared sense of responsibility by respecting Indigenous and local knowledge and bringing Indigenous Peoples and local communities to the table as rights holders and decision-makers. We support wildlife authorities in creating institutional accountability regarding community rights while strengthening their ability to effectively deter wildlife crime and care for wildlife and wildlife habitat.

As conveners, AWF brings government institutions, communities, and other stakeholders together to codesign conservation solutions that reflect all parties' needs, values, and aspirations. For example, with our technical assistance, communities in Kenya's Tsavo landscape established beehive fences to deter elephants from raiding crops. Elephants are safe from retaliation and farmers have an additional source of income from honey harvests. Nearby, solar panels for village homes are curbing deforestation, protecting a vital water source for wildlife while freeing students to pursue their studies in the evening by electric light instead of kerosene or firelight.



**Your support helps us ensure rural communities are active and equal partners in making conservation decisions, so that they own lasting solutions that meet the needs of both people and wildlife.**



ALO MPOAL FRANK

## Balancing Farming & Forests

### DJA LANDSCAPE, CAMEROON

The Dja Faunal Reserve in southeastern Cameroon is home to chimpanzees, forest elephants, and western lowland gorillas. The reserve, part of the Congo Basin rainforest, faces a number of threats, including bushmeat hunting and poaching to supply the illegal wildlife trade. In recent years, AWF has helped to ensure that the population of endangered gorillas in the park has remained stable at approximately 2,000 individuals.

To counter negative pressure on wildlife, AWF convened wildlife authorities and local communities to design solutions that align both parties' needs. AWF is now working with authorities to strengthen enforcement of antipoaching measures and with communities to understand the reserve's boundaries and restrictions. Most important, AWF is helping local people pursue viable alternatives to illegal hunting. Sustainable livelihoods such as agroforestry

and fish farming reduce their reliance on bushmeat and improve nutrition and food security.

Alo Mpoal Frank, 28, practices agroforestry, cultivating cocoa under a canopy of native trees adjacent to the reserve. A former poacher, he received training and his first set of cocoa seedlings from AWF in 2020. Frank is now an established farmer for whom a seasonal harvest can yield up to USD \$10,000—about five times the country's per capita income. "I realized the forest couldn't provide the livelihood I needed," Frank says. "Now I have two farms, which provide for my family."

As demand in Europe for deforestation-free products grows, the ability of Dja cocoa farmers like Frank to demonstrate how they protect and restore forests offers a pathway for connecting their crops to global supply chains.



**Help us partner with farmers on sustainable agricultural practices that protect forests.**



ELIUD MWASINGO KIMORI



**Restoring the forest isn't just about trees. It's about securing water, preserving wildlife, and ensuring future generations inherit a thriving ecosystem.**

**ELIUD MWASINGO KIMORI**

*Deputy Secretary, Chawia Forest Association (the Chawia forest is part of a critical water catchment for wildlife conservancies and Tsavo National Park in southeastern Kenya)*



We're inspired by how AWF is tackling these issues on the ground, institutionally, and in policy circles. I really have big hopes for the future, because we're not just collaborators, we're becoming allies—helping show others across Africa and beyond the huge potential in connecting conservation and peace.

**HELOISE HEYER**

*Conflict Sensitivity Lead and International Partnerships Manager, PeaceNexus Foundation*

**DODO MOKE, AWF SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS OFFICER WITH RESIDENTS OF BILI VILLAGE**

## Building Trust

### BILI-UÉLÉ LANDSCAPE, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

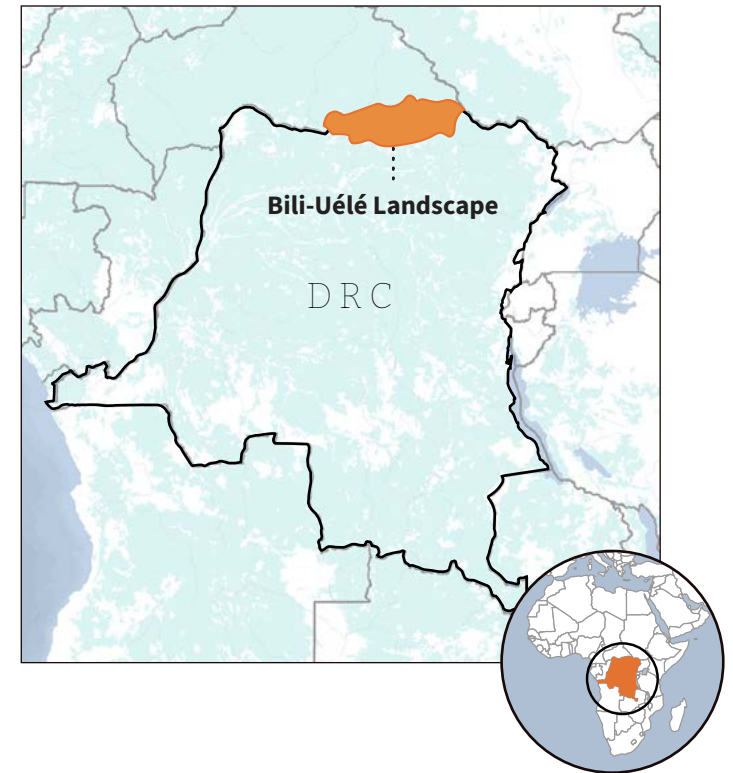
Bordering dangerous conflict zones, the biodiversity-rich Bili-Uélé landscape in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is plagued by armed groups and poachers. To local people the government's eco-guards can seem like just another threat.

To change this dynamic, AWF trains authorities on upholding the rights of Indigenous and local communities and secures buy-in on a protocol to ensure accountability. AWF staffer Dodo Moke facilitates a community-designed protocol, which allows local people to safely report illegal activity, lodge concerns about eco-guards without fear of reprisal, and seek redress for rights violations.

“We bring communities into decision-making about their resources and help everyone in the landscape understand people’s fundamental rights—that every single person has the right to be treated with dignity, says Moke. “When we partner with authorities and communities on land-use plans, create incomes, and respect rights, together we change everything.”

The holistic approach is improving security for both wildlife and people. Communities are now reporting suspicious activities—like an unknown man with a rifle large enough to fell an elephant—that they once would have kept to themselves.

**Help us create accountability through a rights-based approach that includes wildlife authorities and Indigenous peoples and local communities.**



“

**Before, the eco-guards were like lords. They thought they were untouchable. But since the [community protocol] was set up, they have been afraid. Today, if they did something wrong, seeing us pass, discipline takes hold immediately.**

**NAHAS ANGULA**

*AWF Community Grievance Monitor in Bili-Uélé, DRC*

# Linking Conservation to Economic Growth and Opportunity



We place our trust in AWF to offer a profound and nuanced perspective on harmonizing conservation with development. They have demonstrated themselves to be the quintessential partner in designing and executing a comprehensive vision for sustainable green growth in the vicinity of Volcanoes National Park.

**EUGENE MUTANGANA**

*Interim Managing Director, Conservation Company, Rwanda Development Board*

VIRUNGAS LANDSCAPE, RWANDA

**Conservation can be a powerful engine for alleviating poverty and driving sustainable development.**

Nature's role in Africa's fast-growing economies takes many forms: clean water and healthy soil for agriculture, forests and fisheries, grazing lands and, of course, the Big Five—buffalo, elephants, leopards, lions, and rhinos—that drive the continent's ecotourism sector.

AWF helps governments, communities, businesses, and entrepreneurs unlock the value of wildlife and wild lands and deliberately plan for sustainable growth.

We assist countries in tapping into conservation's potential to diversify their economies and contribute to their GDPs. Recently, for example, we supported a valuation of Zimbabwe's biodiversity economy at more than US\$2 billion annually and

demonstrated how nature could fuel economic growth through ecotourism, sustainable fisheries and forestry, and other sectors.

As part of our signature approach, we produce regional investment blueprints outlining opportunities for governments to engage business partners and leverage private finance to drive green growth. And we work with communities to diversify incomes, reduce the unsustainable consumption of natural resources, and build long-term resilience.

We incubate nature-based micro enterprises and give grants to small businesses and entrepreneurs transitioning to nature-based economies. And we support smallholder farmers to improve yields and access the sustainable value chains and global markets that can drive business development at scale.



**Your support allows us to align conservation goals with economic growth and opportunity, so people and wildlife win.**



**4,000** new biodiversity  
economy jobs projected by  
2030 as part of master plan

# Spurring Green Growth

## VIRUNGAS LANDSCAPE, RWANDA

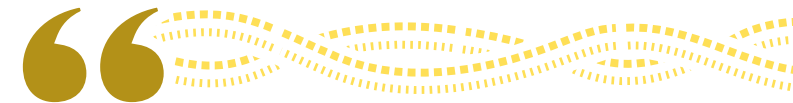
The recovery of the mountain gorilla population in Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park over the past four decades is one of the world's great conservation success stories. But today the gorilla population is outgrowing the park, leading to conflict with people in surrounding communities. In 2022 the Rwandan government turned to AWF to develop a master plan for the region that integrates climate resilience and economic growth with the long-term welfare of wildlife in the park.

As a proof of concept for this master plan, AWF is implementing a pilot project designed to increase gorilla habitat while supporting free, prior and informed consent for local villages affected by park restoration and expansion. In addition, we are supporting local communities in transitioning to nature-based enterprises.

One example of that support is a year-long business incubation program for villagers near the park. In January 2025, more than 100 entrepreneurs—over half women—graduated from the program, which included workshops on financial literacy, marketing, operations, and human resources. Participation also included personalized mentorships, networking opportunities, and visits that fostered peer-to-peer learning and partnerships. To ensure their long-term success, graduates receive ongoing support, including technical resources and access to start-up capital through connections with microfinance institutions and impact investors.

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**Help us empower rural entrepreneurs to develop nature-based businesses.**



**With the Volcanoes Community Resilience Project, I see hope for the future—not just in expanding my shop, but in building a better life for my family. This is not just about business; it's about dignity, opportunity, and progress for our community.**

**MUKARWEGO AGNES**

*Farmer and single mother of two,  
Nyakigina village, Rwanda*



I have been a cotton farmer for seven years. Through the [AWF] project, I am learning sustainable practices [that] have improved my yields and enhanced soil health. I encourage young people to consider organic cotton farming as a dignified and sustainable livelihood.

**VICTOR BARI**  
*Cotton Farmer, Lodwari Village, Kidepo, Uganda*

**VICTOR BARI, KIDEPO LANDSCAPE, UGANDA**

# Developing a Sustainable Value Chain

## KIDEPO LANDSCAPE, UGANDA

In northern Uganda's Kidepo landscape, an AWF project supported by the Regenerative Fund for Nature, established by Conservation International, the global luxury group Kering, and Inditex, is working with local partners to transform sustainable cotton farming into a driver for rural development—while making space for wildlife.

The three-year project is engaging more than 2,000 cotton farmers—including roughly 1,000 women—to boost both yields and biodiversity through regenerative farming practices. Partners will help farmers improve their financial literacy so they can better deliver high-quality cotton. The project is also restoring degraded land in wildlife corridors surrounding cotton farms. Wildlife corridor mapping and strategies for

reducing human-wildlife conflict are being implemented in collaboration with the Uganda Wildlife Authority and local communities.

Ultimately, the goal is to build a sustainable, inclusive, and biodiversity-compatible cotton value chain linking farmers to commercial markets while promoting positive coexistence between people and wildlife.



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**Help us bring farmers into global supply chains through farming practices that improve crop yields and minimize human-wildlife conflict.**



HELEN NAKWANG, KIDEPO LANDSCAPE, UGANDA



In Kidepo, regenerative cotton farming practices are benefitting not just the area's biodiverse landscape, but the people whose livelihoods depend on harvesting it. It's yet another example of how intertwined we as humans are with our environment and the other species who call these landscapes home. The cotton grown in Kidepo through the Regenerative Fund for Nature program helps weave together a stronger future for both people and nature in northern Uganda.

**JIM FITZPATRICK**

*Director, Regenerative Fund of Nature*



Join us in ensuring wildlife and wild lands thrive in modern Africa.









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