African Heartland News

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A NEWSLETTER FOR PARTNERS OF THE AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

IN THIS ISSUE

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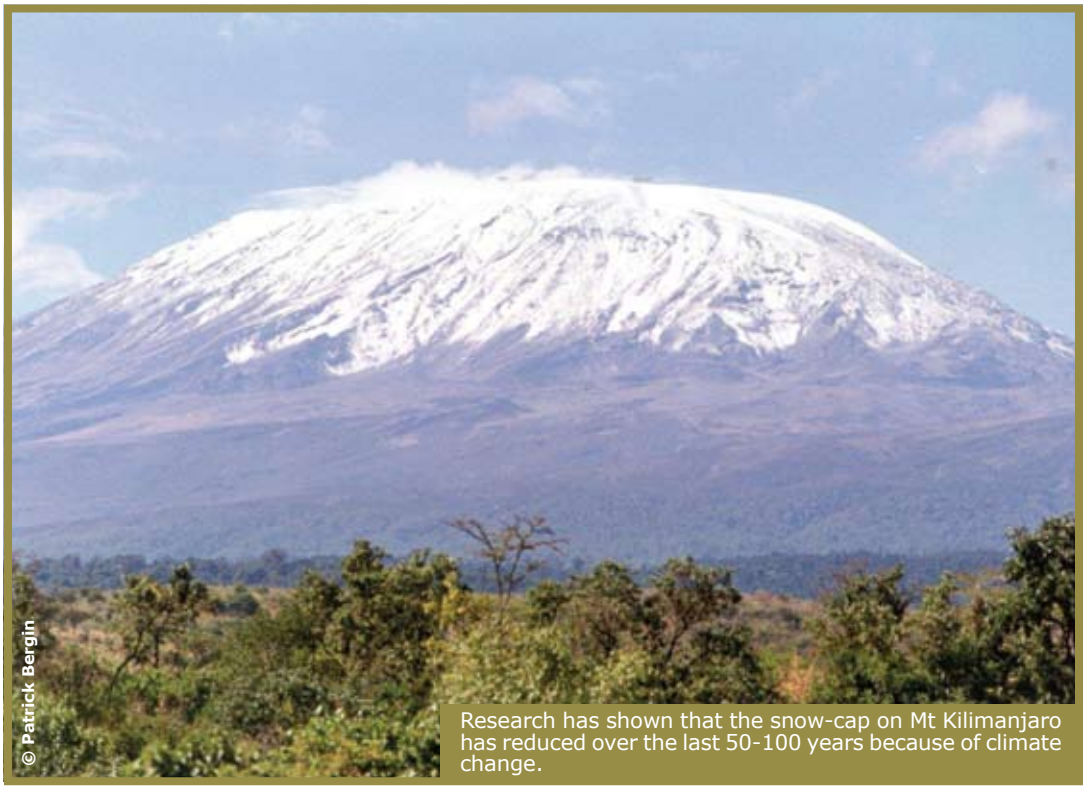
Combating Climate Change for the Benefit of Wildlife, Wild Lands, and the People of Africa in Heartlands



Research has shown that the snow-cap on Mt Kilimanjaro has reduced over the last 50-100 years because of climate change.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of the 21st Century. Its scale is global, its threat catastrophic for many, with the worst effects projected in Africa, where poverty is widespread and many people depend directly on natural resources for their livelihoods. These resources and related livelihoods are now being threatened by a combination of stresses, including the effects of climate change. Addressing the threat of climate change requires a unified and coordinated global response involving actors at all levels of society – individual, local, national, regional, and international. The December 2009 UN Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change confirmed that only a coordinated global response from all levels of society has the potential to successfully address the issue of catastrophic climate change.

The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) implements programs in nine priority landscapes – the African Heartlands - using a large-landscape conservation approach. According to predicted changes in local climatic conditions, patterns of food and water availability are expected to shift substantially over the coming decades, threatening human and wildlife populations alike. It is now widely believed that large landscapes offer the best scale at which to ensure that wildlife species and the ecological processes on which both human and wildlife populations depend can adapt.

In conserving its Heartland landscapes, AWF works to mitigate climate change by encouraging initiatives that sequester carbon within natural habitats. AWF believes that large-landscape conservation offers

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LETTER FROM HELEN

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Let me start by belatedly wishing our partners a Happy 2010. The year has started strongly for us, with the launching of new programs, relationships, and great expectations as AWF approaches its 50th Anniversary. 2009 was indeed a successful year; we advanced our conservation work with the help of our partners across all nine Heartlands. Notably, at our successful Board Meeting in Nairobi this past November, we unveiled the construction of our new Headquarters—a major milestone that will solidify our deep commitment to and long history in Africa.

At that time, we also added several new members to our Board of Trustees, among them Mr. Jimnah Mbaru, a prominent Kenyan business leader. As was the case for many of you, however, 2009 was not without its challenges for AWF; from these we continue to draw lessons and further improve our conservation work.

When it comes to global environmental issues, the year closed on a historically low note, despite the great hope and apprehension in the leadup to the Copenhagen Climate Change conference, with countries and continents preparing themselves for what was to be a hugely significant meeting. In the months leading up to Copenhagen, heads of states, ministers of environment, government negotiators, civil society groups, and lobby groups met to find ways to agree on strong measures to lower Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and keep global temperatures from rising to dangerous levels.

We all hoped to see agreement reached on programs and financing to support climate change mitigation, and particularly, to help developing countries and island states adapt to climate change impacts. To many observers and stakeholders, especially in Africa and progressive European countries, the outcomes of the meeting were very disappointing; indeed, key governments failed to make firm commitments on controlling GHG emissions and on the financing needed to tackle climate change. Politics clouded out strong climate and environmental reasoning and the leadership expected from some countries was sorely lacking.

Countries must, however, charge on and look for ways to begin protecting their natural resources, including water, rangelands, and forests, irrespective of delays in countries agreeing on a global framework. They must begin to look at how to protect their citizens from the greater disease load expected in the coming decades while finding ways to improve food security and sustain economic development. We at AWF will continue to partner with African governments, local communities, development partners, and other stakeholders to integrate climate change work across our large landscape program. We agree with the emerging consensus that a landscape approach is key to helping species and ecosystems adapt as climate alters the distribution and abundance of key resources. We are piloting REDD (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation) preparedness work in Tanzania, undertaking carbon assessments to determine the readiness of communities to participate in voluntary carbon markets. Similarly, we are undertaking climate monitoring in the Virunga mountains to determine the potential impact on the range of the world's only remaining mountain gorillas.

Meanwhile, our full conservation program continues apace. For example, we have made good progress in new land conservation and associated community and conservation enterprise programs in Kazungula Heartland: besides completing some infrastructure projects in the Lower Zambezi National Park, we have initiated a community fisheries program to pilot the application of fisheries guidelines developed by an AWF-supported regional aquatic working group. We have also made significant progress in developing aquaculture to reduce overfishing and conserve spawning sites on the mid-Zambezi River.

I would also like to highlight our learning about the growing wild dog population in Kenya, including the factors that affect their population size and the potential impact on livestock as it begins to grow and as wild dogs recolonise selected areas.

We are working hard with partners to find ways to mitigate the impact of wild dogs on livestock to prevent the return of strong negative perceptions about these predators and their food needs. Finally, last year we focused our Charlotte Fellowships on emerging scholars in West Africa, the newest region on our program portfolio. Pleased by the quality of applications, we selected five scholars, among them Etotepe Sogbohossou, a female researcher who will focus on lion research in one of the protected areas within AWF's new Regional Parc W Heartland. She will be the second woman we have supported to study lions in Africa (the first being Shivani Bhalla of Kenya). We wish all the new Charlotte Fellows well in their postgraduate studies, and are delighted to see a new generation of African conservation scientists take up this important work.

Helen Gichohi

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important opportunities for reducing the future impacts of local climate change.

AWF has developed a Climate Change Response Strategy that aims to address the linkages between climate change, biodiversity conservation, and livelihoods; our aim is to help human and biological systems adapt to climate change and enable ecosystems to contribute to climate change mitigation.

Experienced Climate Change Advisor Isabella Masinde has been recruited to lead the implementation of AWF's Climate Change Response Strategy. Isabella is a member of the National Climate Change Advisory Committee within the Kenya Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources and a board member of the Kenya National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA). In addition, Isabella was one of the chief negotiators at global climate change talks in Copenhagen, where she led discussions on adaptation on behalf of the Kenya Government.

The AWF Climate Change Strategy Team, made up of senior officers from various departments, is developing and supporting an AWF program of climate change work. Components include:

- Improving the understanding and monitoring of climate change in AWF Heartlands;
- Focusing at a landscape scale to promote ecosystems-based adaptation;
- Mitigating terrestrial carbon emissions by encouraging landscape-scale conservation;
- Helping African countries gain access to clean and efficient technologies;
- Providing training and capacity to African countries dealing with climate change;
- Helping to secure funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation; and
- Influencing national and international policy and sharing lessons learned.

The effects of climate change are expected to rise due to unpredictable weather patterns, such as severe and recurrent droughts and flooding, as have been experienced in Africa over recent years, leading to loss of livelihoods, severe food insecurity, and climate-induced migrations. This will continue to increase the burden of poverty and disease on already vulnerable communities.

In terms of facilitating climate change adaptation, AWF has a wealth of experience in Africa at the local level, where drought and climatic instability have accelerated in recent decades. AWF's experience of monitoring wildlife movements, measuring changes in ecosystems, and researching targeted key species in each Heartland has generated invaluable local climatic knowledge.

Communities and their livelihood practices are central to the functioning of each ecosystem. AWF considers community-based coping strategies, innovations, knowledge, and practices when preparing adaptation interventions.

To address these impacts, AWF is undertaking several urgent and important steps, including:

1. encouraging and practicing sustainable water management such as rainwater harvesting;
2. promoting food security for rural communities through sound ecosystem management, improvement in the production and trade of livestock, and improved management of wetlands;
3. building the capacity of governments and local communities to deal with extreme weather events, and helping these agents prepare for potential climate change–related natural disasters;
4. disseminating information from climate change assessments and other studies;
5. informing the formulation and implementation of climate change-related policies.

In the Virunga Heartland in the Albertine Rift, as a founding coalition member of the International Gorilla Conservation Project (IGCP), AWF is implementing a climate change monitoring and adaptation initiative funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to assess the implications of climate change for the conservation of mountain gorillas and their habitat.

AWF also has a sizeable and growing program of REDD-related work in Kenya, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. REDD aims to pay developing countries or local conservators (including communities) for the carbon value of their forests and other sustainable land-use practices that conserve carbon in standing biomass. REDD is expected to be a sustainable source of income for the poor in developing countries, and will enable ecosystems to be rehabilitated or to regenerate and grow more resilient to the adverse effects of climate change. The AWF REDD work to date focuses on a landscape approach to support livelihoods, reduce poverty, and influence policies that can reduce threats to forests.

Increasingly, AWF will address REDD opportunities in nonforest systems, particularly rangelands and wetlands. In Tanzania, with funding from the Norwegian government, we have recently launched a pilot REDD project in the Kolo Hills Forest Reserve, covering 15 villages of Kondoa District, with a broad program of support for improved 'joint forest management' and a process to establish, verify, and trade community forest carbon credits.

In Kenya, with support from the Royal Netherlands Embassy of Kenya, a carbon easement pilot project is being developed in Imbirikani Group Ranch. Through this project, communities will be rewarded for sequestering forest carbon and reducing deforestation. AWF is also partnering with Camco Advisory Services Ltd as well as universities in Kenya and Tanzania that are providing technical support to these projects.

LAND AND HABITAT CONSERVATION

Critical Wildlife Corridor Secured in the Sekute Chiefdom, Kazungula Heartland

AWF in late 2009 signed a landmark conservation agreement with the Sekute community, represented by the Sekute Development Trust, for the management and protection of an important conservation area in exchange for a suite of livelihood and community benefits. This extends the impact of a partnership that began in 2000.

The Sekute Chiefdom, which runs along the Zambezi River in southeastern Zambia, includes several scenic islands and is located close to forest reserves and national parks in Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. The Chiefdom contains critical corridors for the movement of wildlife. While the region has pristine habitat, its wildlife resources are scarce owing to lack of security. With more oversight and planning, the area could provide important habitat for the burgeoning elephant populations of Chobe National Park in Botswana.

In 2000, through a formal agreement, AWF and the Sekute Royal Establishment in Kazungula District agreed to collaborate on the conservation of natural resources within the Chiefdom for the benefit of the area's communities. The Chiefdom is endowed with abundant natural resources, but the community is poor, and benefits minimally from the area's natural assets. This lack of benefit had resulted in the unsustainable use of natural resources (e.g., the over-harvesting of timber) and land alienation from communal to private tenure, making land permanently inaccessible to the community. Land fragmentation--caused by settlements and agricultural development—is also widespread.

AWF facilitated the creation of the Sekute Community Development Trust (SCDT) to spearhead the conservation of natural resources by the community. SCDT successfully obtained customary land rights from the Chief for over 70,000 hectares of land for the creation of both two wildlife corridors (Mambova and Situwa) and the Sekute Conservation Area.

In order to safeguard the strategic conservation area, SCDT and AWF in 2009 signed a conservation agreement for the management and protection of the area in exchange for the following suite of economic and community benefits.

Improved wildlife security: AWF is working with the community to improve security for and the monitoring of wildlife in the conservation area. Twenty scouts competitively selected from community applicants were trained by the Zambia Wildlife Authority and provided with uniforms and other equipment.

In addition to improving security for area wildlife, the scouts are monitoring the conservation area to ensure compliance with the agreement. It is expected that with improved security both in the Sekute area and its key corridors, a variety of wildlife will steadily return to the area. This program is also generating local employment opportunities.

Provision of infrastructure for the Sekute Trust: AWF is improving the infrastructure in the community area. AWF has built and equipped an office for the SCDT that has become the centre for managing the community's conservation and development activities.

Launch of Easements for Education Program: To address a high-priority local need identified by SCDT—education and skills development--AWF is implementing an Easements for Education Program for area students. Through this program, AWF will initially provide US$45,000 in tuition fees over three years for communities that adhere to sound land conservation practices.

Because primary education is free in Zambia, tuition support provided through the Easements for Education program will go to students pursuing secondary and tertiary education. The beneficiaries were selected using the following criteria:

i. proximity to the conservation area especially those that have given up land for conservation;
ii. performance and effort; and
iii. financial need.

Based on these criteria, 93 students (42 female, 51 male) of an eligible 1,435 were selected to receive support. Two of the students are attending tertiary institutions.

The SCDT will monitor the performance of the students through school reports.

Renovation of local school: The primary school located closest to the Chiefdom lies within the Mambova corridor and is badly dilapidated. The school does not receive financial support from the government and lacks such resources as decent furniture, ablution facilities, and books as well as qualified teachers. As a result, current enrollment stands at only 84, compared with a potential 750 students. Other local students either walk long distances to attend better schools or stay with relatives in towns with higher quality education facilities. Therefore, AWF and the SCDT have agreed to build a new primary school for the Lupani village, which lies between the Mambova and Situwa corridors. The school's design is underway; construction is expected to commence in the coming months.

Lodge development: AWF will also help the community develop a small fishing lodge. A portion of the funds generated from the lodge will go back to the community in support of conservation efforts.

AWF is pleased to partner with the Sekute Chiefdom and the SCDT to protect these vital wildlife corridors and conservation areas in ways that directly benefit the local community.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

New staff house at Malilansolo

Infrastructure Improvement in Lower Zambezi National Park

In Zambezi Heartland, AWF has focused its land and habitat conservation efforts on strengthening the management of protected areas, including Lower Zambezi National Park in Zambia.

Lower Zambezi National Park (LZNP) covers 4,092 km2, and is one of Zambia's newest parks. It has high wilderness and wildlife value but is underdeveloped as a tourism and conservation landscape. AWF interventions in LZNP started with facilitating revisions to the General Management Plan (GMP). This involved building consensus and brokering an agreement between stakeholder groups that originally held vastly different visions for the park. The revised 10-year GMP lays out programs to guide park management and details specific zones for set land uses, such as tourism and park infrastructure, as well as providing for a transfrontier conservation management area linked to Mana Pools World Heritage Site in Zimbabwe, located across the Zambezi River to the east. In addition to supporting the GMP's revisions, AWF helped bring greater oversight to the park by working with ZAWA to designate a strategic location for park headquarters. Previously, the park's headquarters were located nsome 80 km away. Without offices for and the strategic presence of personnel in the park, effective management was challenging.

To address this problem, AWF and ZAWA selected Malilansolo Camp as the most strategic location to serve as Park headquarters. Malilansolo is located just outside LZNP and can be developed without negatively impacting the wilderness value of the protected area. It is also a strategic point for mobilising ZAWA staff for management operations needed in conservation areas located near LZNP, including game management areas where human-wildlife conflict occurs frequently.

In addition to constructing a three-bedroom house for the Park Warden responsible for managing the LZNP, AWF worked with ZAWA to construct an office block and a two-bedroom staff house nearby. These facilities are now being used by ZAWA staff. While more facilities are needed to accommodate a full staff of wildlife police officers, the infrastructure projects completed to date are an important step in improving the field presence and management of LZNP.

MLW in Democratic Republic of Congo Officially Recognized by Government

José Endundo, Minister of the Environment for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), this past August signed a decree designating Maringa-Lopori-Wamba (MLW) an officially recognized landscape for forest management. The decree also designated AWF as the lead agent to coordinate pilot planning and zoning activities within this landscape. Without strategic planning and zoning, AWF believes unregulated agriculture, settlement, and other uses inimical to conservation will continue to proliferate. By planning and zoning at both large and local scales, proper development and conservation can take place in a sustainable manner.

MLW is one of the 12 landscapes within the Congo Basin funded by USAID's Central African Regional Program for Environment (CARPE). It covers 74,000 km2 and is located in the Èquateur province in northern DRC.

The decree sets the stage for AWF's landscape approach to be recognized nationally and regionally. The official handover of the decree by the Minister of the Environment to the Director of AWF's MLW program, Jef Dupain, took place in Kinshasa on 26 August 2009.

SPECIES CONSERVATION

African Wild Dog Applied Research and Conservation Project

The African wild dog (Lycaon pictus) is one of the world's most endangered carnivore species. Once widespread throughout sub-Saharan Africa, the historic range of the African wild dog, has shrunk by as much as 90%. An estimated 6,000 individual wild dogs now remain in the wild. The greatest threats to wild dogs include retaliatory killing for livestock predation, habitat loss, the depletion of prey populations, and diseases, especially those transmitted by domestic dogs. These threats are increasingly widespread, and wild dogs survive only in areas where human density is relatively low. The need to develop and implement strategies to reduce human impacts on wild dog populations while conserving viable populations is urgent across the continent. The goal of AWF's support to wild dog conservation in Samburu Heartland is to foster recovery of wild dog populations to conserve an ecologically functional, viable population and promote their coexistence with humans. This project works in collaboration with the Samburu-Laikipia Wild Dog project (SLWDP) directed by Dr. Rosie Woodroffe and the local communities in the wild dog range. The project is working to achieve the following key objectives:

Wild dog on Mpala Ranch Samburu Heartland:

- Document the wild dog population and its use of range by characterizing movement patterns;
- Develop sustainable local methods to reduce predation of livestock by wild dogs;
- Develop sustainable methods to protect wild dogs from infectious diseases; and
- Work with local communities to monitor and conserve wild dog populations and their habitats.

Key Interventions

■ Identify critical habitat and landscape connections

In collaboration with SLWDP, we have trapped and fitted GPS collars on wild dogs, to investigate their movement patterns through frequent, systematic data collection. GPS collar data are already available from several individual animals inhabiting privately owned commercial ranches and community-owned lands in Samburu. This has allowed AWF to analyze wild dog movements within the landscape, compare its ranging patterns to those of competitors and other threatened species, and helped to identify key habitats. AWF is using these data to direct conservation planning efforts, including persuading communities to set up conservation areas, such as Nalare and Nkoteyia (Kirimun) community conservancies in Isiolo and Samburu Districts, respectively.

■ Develop sustainable methods to reduce wild dog depredation on livestock

The AWF research team in collaboration both with SLWDP and the community game scouts continues to monitor human-carnivore conflicts in order to understand and better manage such conflicts. The research shows that as packs continue to colonise new areas, conflicts have periodically escalated. As a matter of practice, the team confirms and gathers data on wild dog predation, including the type of habitat in which the attack occurred, the number of herders looking after the herd that came under attack, and presence of domestic herd dogs. Staff typically share the results with people living in the areas affected by wild dog depredation, and through workshops, seminars, and public "barazas" advise them on how best to prevent such attacks.

We have also constructed predator-proof bomas to safeguard livestock. Based on our research, these bomas have reduced predation by almost 100% in the areas where they are used.

■ Develop sustainable methods to protect wild dogs from infectious disease

Through the tracking of radio-collared dogs and opportunistic collection and analysis of wild dog carcasses, AWF supports partner efforts to assess the threat of disease to wild dogs. We also support annual efforts to vaccinate domestic dogs against rabies in areas shared by wild dog and domestic dogs.

■ Work with local communities and other partners

The study area contains a mosaic of land-use types, including pastoral areas, commercial livestock ranches, wildlife-based tourism areas, and to a lesser degree, protected areas. Because it is difficult for a small research team to effectively monitor the wide-ranging dogs, in partnerships with several local communities, we have formed a network of field scouts across the study area. Community game scouts collect most of the data, including data on wild dog sightings, wild dog distribution, and their population status. They assist in locating dens, tracking radio-collared dogs; monitoring human-wild dog conflicts, mortality, and disease; and vaccinating domestic dogs. The scouts are involved in conducting

transect work to monitor other wildlife species (potentially wild dog prey species) to determine their population status and distribution. They also track radio-collared dogs on foot or by bicycle using radio-telemetry techniques.

We have enhanced management and conservation in community conservation areas and other protected areas that support wild dog populations. We have provided radio communications to scouts and communities which have improved patrols, wildlife monitoring and general security in areas prone to cattle rustling.

Despite these achievements, important challenges remain, including the need for more scouts to monitor the wide-ranging species and greater funding to conduct research over the species range.

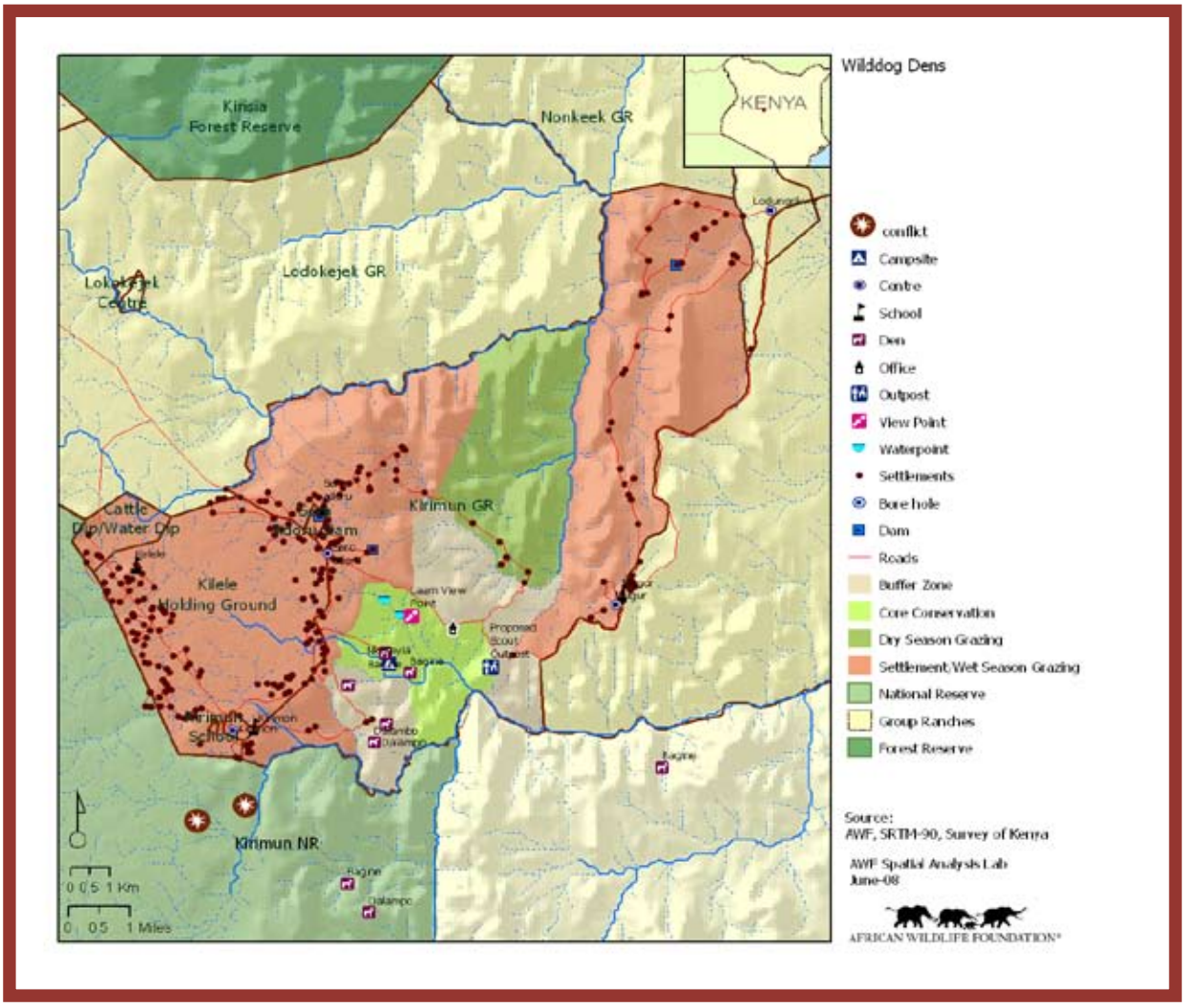
Lessons learnt:

First, Community involvement in wild dog conservation is vital to attitude and perception change among pastoralists who are frequently in conflict with the wild dogs.

Human–wild dog conflict is higher in areas with low prey densities.

The use of simple and in-expensive warning systems to alert livestock farmers when wild dogs are present is effective in reducing conflicts.

Research suggests that the population of wild dogs is growing in the Samburu Heartland, with an estimated 300 individuals in 25-30 established packs now populating the area. Several packs were reported to have denned during 2009, indicating a potential further population increase. A pack of seven wild dogs has also been documented frequenting Samburu National Reserve and the neighbouring West Gate Community Conservancy. The fact that wild dogs are now resident in the reserves is particularly good news-- wild dogs were absent from the reserves for a long period. AWF is learning lessons from Samburu Heartland to improve our carnivore conservation initiatives in other landscapes.



CONSERVATION ENTERPRISE

Restructuring LUMO Lodge

LUMO Tented lodge is a rustic 24-bed tented lodge located in one of Kenya's most biologically rich areas adjacent to Tsavo West National Park in Taveta District of southwestern Kenya.

It lies within a 40,000 hectare community-owned wildlife sanctuary. This community set this land aside because farming and livestock production are limited by high incidences of wildlife damage and livestock disease. The sanctuary and the lodge were established to support community livelihood improvement through wildlife tourism in the early 2000s, with support from donors such as USAID and the European Union. LUMO is a partnership between three community ranches and has been formalized through a registered trust.

In 2004, LUMO trust entered a partnership with a private sector operator for the development and management of the lodge. Unfortunately, the lodge did not perform well, either in addressing conservation threats or delivering significant benefits to the constituent communities, due to the following challenges:

- Distorted equity and management structures created conflicts between the community and the private sector operator;
- Failure of leadership and governance structures to account and take responsibility for community businesses coupled with the culture of trusting leadership without question;
- A skewed partnership structure between the private sector and the communities, which led to lack of transparency; and
- Lack of sufficient benefits and poor benefit sharing and management.

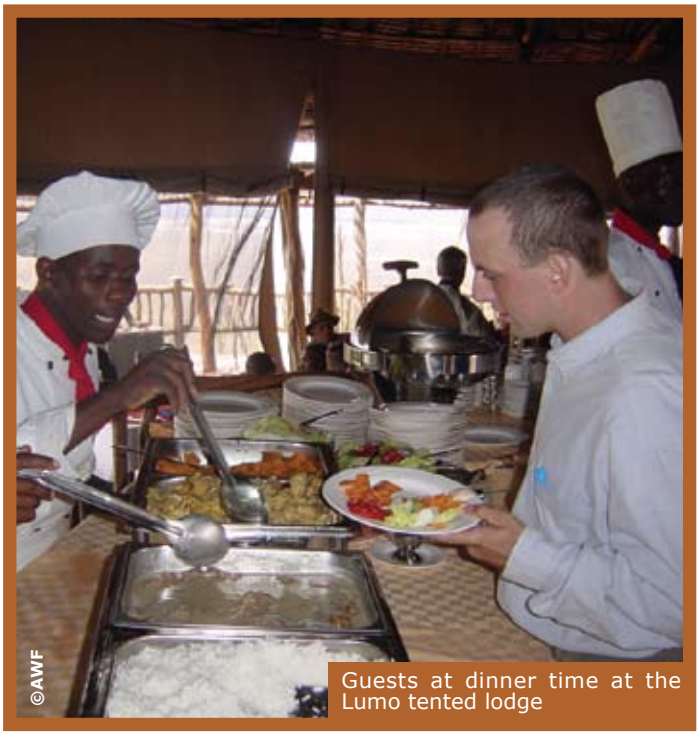
To address these challenges, with support from the Ford Foundation and the Royal Netherlands Embassy, Kenya, AWF over eight months worked to restructure the ownership and operations of the LUMO Lodge. Our approach focused on providing capacity-building support to the community to improve governance and accountability; restructuring the equity in the partnership; recruiting a new investor; and facilitating new agreement with the community trust. Our work resulted in:

- Elections that led to a new Board of Trustees with a broader mandate and more balanced representation. A new sanctuary manager was also recruited. The Board members and manager have been trained in governance, leadership, business, and financial management practices;
- Amendment of the LUMO Trust Deed and development of a strategic plan to guide future management;
- Fund raising of Ksh 4 million from the EU-Community Development Trust Fund for improving the management of the community sanctuary through ranger training, vehicle maintenance, de-silting dams, and rehabilitation of the road network;
- Competitive selection of a private investor who financed the equity buy-out of the former investor and will renovate and expand the lodge as well as improve its marketing for sustained profitability; the investor will also manage the lodge over a 25-year period; and
- The first Annual General Meeting of LUMO, attended by 95 representatives from the community.

The meeting endorsed the changes in lodge equity, confirmed the tenure of the new board, approved the loan to buy out the former investor's equity, and discussed and amended the terms of the lease with the new investor.

On 26 June 2009, key agreements to formalize the restructured deal were approved and signed by the community, the former investor, and the incoming investor. Anchored by payments to the former investor and the community, these agreements transferred ownership of the lodge to the community, restructured the equity, and created new operating mechanisms for the community and the private sector partner. The signing ceremony was witnessed by 95 shareholders of LUMO as well as the political and administrative leadership of the area. These agreements marked a new beginning for LUMO, because the community and the former partner effectively handed over the lodge to the new private sector partner. This restructured deal will potentially earn the LUMO community $120,000 per annum alongside other social benefits. In return, the LUMO community will implement a sustainable strategic plan guiding conservation, community development, investment, and operations over the next five years.

A pioneering example of community enterprise restructuring in Kenya, the LUMO project could inform wider community enterprise development work across East Africa. AWF is now working with the Shompole Community in Kenya to restructure a similar enterprise.



Guests at dinner time at the Lumo tented lodge

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Fish Farming Enterprise Being Developed in Kazungula Heartland

AWF in partnership with the Inyambo Community Development Trust (ICDT) is developing a fish farming enterprise in Inyambo Chiefdom, Mwandi District, southwestern Zambia, with technical inputs from fisheries experts from the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO). This enterprise is funded by a grant from the European Commission through the "Livelihoods Improvements through Fish Enterprises" (LIFE) project. The main objective is to pilot fish farming, processing, and marketing to improve food security and livelihoods opportunities for the Inyambo Chiefdom and to reduce the unsustainable harvesting of fish in the Zambezi River.

The fish farm is being constructed on a plot of 4.0 hectares acquired from traditional authorities. Along with the construction of 20 ponds, work on a hatchery, fisheries workshop, poultry unit, water reticulation facilities, and the electricity supply is well underway. Infrastructure should be completed in April 2010. In preparation for the operation of the fish farm, the project has already trained 20 farmers in top fish farming techniques.

A marketing survey for fish farm products (fish, fingerlings, ducks, chickens, and mushrooms) has been conducted. The survey covered towns close to the fish farm within and outside of Zambia. Preliminary indications are that the tourist lodges along the Zambezi River within Zambia and in neighbouring countries (Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana) are a potential market for the aquaculture products because of their close proximity to the fish farm. Business plan projections indicate that once operational, the farm could generate a gross annual income of $92,300 from an estimated production of about 5 tonnes of fish and other products.

This income is much higher than what farmers earn from subsistence farming (an average of $565 per household p.a.). Although data are scarce, anecdotal evidence suggests that aquaculture may be more lucrative than artisanal fishing given the declining catches. It is evident from the comparison of incomes that the fish farm has the potential to improve food security in the area because the income could be used to supplement the food supply, especially during periods of drought, a common feature in the area. Also, the fish farm offers an alternative to artisanal fishing, where years of heavy fishing pressure has resulted into declines in fish catches. Hopefully, the community will gradually develop its own fish ponds, thereby easing pressure on the Zambezi fishery and allowing stocks to recover.

©Jimmiel Mandima

Ngwena Commercial Fishing Group, Zambezi Heartland

CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

West African Charlotte Fellows for 2009

Etotepe A. Sogbohossou: Etotepe is pursuing her Ph.D. in Conservation Biology at the University of Leiden jointly with the University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin. She is conducting the first long-term study in West Africa on lion ecology, behaviour, and human wildlife conflict around the Pendjari Biosphere Reserve in Benin. Results from her research have already been used to design two conflict-mitigation projects around the Reserve. They will also be used as a basis for the Benin Lion Conservation Action Plan being developed.

Etotepe, 31, is a native of Benin. She holds a diploma in General Agronomy; a Bachelor's degree focusing on Water, Wildlife and Forestry; and a Master's degree in Natural Resources Management, all from the University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin. Currently she lectures at the University but also works for the Research Center for Management of Biodiversity and Lands (CERGET), where she specializes in the conservation of carnivores and medicinal plants, public education around protected areas, wildlife surveys in protected areas, and rangeland management. She has a lot of experience in lion research gained from research work in Benin, South Africa, Cameroon and Kenya. She is the founder of the Network on Western and Central Africa Lions and a member of both IUCN's Cat Specialist Group and its Conservation Breeding Specialist Group; a member of the World Commission for Protected Areas; and a member of the Society for Conservation Biology and Beninese Association of Pastoralists.

Issa Nassourou: Issa is pursuing his Ph.D. studies in Geography at the Abdou Moumouni University in Niamey, Niger. His research focuses on the management and rehabilitation of tourism sites and perspectives for development of ecotourism in Niger. The study will propose how tourism sites should be managed to preserve both natural systems and local cultural traditions while contributing to the area's economic development.

Issa, 37, is a native of Niger. He holds a Bachelor's and Master' s in Geography from the Abdou Moumouni University in Niamey. He currently works for the university, although he has previously worked for the Niger Government.

Boubacar Boureima: Boubacar will study for a Master's in Natural Resource Management at the Abdou Moumouni University in Niamey, Niger. His research focus is the biology of and protection needs of the manatees of the Niger River. Manatees face serious threats mostly from human activities on the banks of Niger River, and as such they have been classified as vulnerable by IUCN and listed in CITES' Appendix II.

Etotepe Soghoubossou, PhD student from Benin studying lions in Pendjari National Park, Benin.

Boubacar, 37, is a native of Niger. He currently works as the Head of the Management and Classification Unit, National Directorate of National Parks and Reserves in the Ministry of Environment and Drought Control. Through his position, he has worked on various activities in Parc W/Niger, including management planning, creation of transhumance corridors for pastoralists, and environmental education. He holds a Bachelor's in Management of Wildlife and Protected Areas from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. In the past, he worked for the World Wildlife Fund as a Communications Officer for the Freshwater Program for Western Africa.

Mohamadou Habibou Gabou: Mohamadou will study for a Master's in Natural Resource Management at the Abdou Moumouni University in Niamey, Niger. His research will focus on the contribution of protected areas to the development of riverine populations in Parc W. His study aims to identify ways to better involve the communities around Parc W in the management of the park; how to increase sustainable economic benefits from wildlife resources; and the ecological impact of the use of natural resources by communities.

Mohamadou, 39, is a native of Niger. He holds a Bachelor's in Forestry, Wildlife, and Range Management from the University of Agriculture, Makurudi, Nigeria. He currently works for the Ministry of Environment and Drought Control, as Head of Management Support to Communities Division. He formerly worked as an Assistant Forestry Manager in Parc W.

Isidore Ogoudje Amahowe. Isidore will study for a Master's in Analysis of Wildlife Populations at the Rural Development Institute, Bobo-Dioulasso University Polytechnic, where he will focus his research on the impact of elephants on the vegetation in Djona Hunting Area of Benin. The study will identify and characterize the types of vegetation that attracts elephants; identify species damaged by elephants; and assess the degree of elephant-related damage to habitat.

This study should help conservation managers better understand the interaction between elephants and their habitats and improve conservation efforts for both the species and area ecosystems.

Isidore, 30, is a native of Benin. He holds a Bachelor's in Planning and Environmental Protection from the University of Abomey-Calavi. Previously, he worked as a consultant evaluating protected area projects and conducted wildlife inventories of forests and served as the Head of the Conservation Department of Parc W National Park in Benin.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Human–Wildlife Conflict Mitigation: New Toolkit Launched

Reinforcing AWF capacity to mitigate human–wildlife conflict in Zambezi Heartland, three program staff members participated in an intensive three-day 'training of trainers' course offered by the Bio-Hub consortium in Harare in mid-December 2009. The training culminated in the launch of a 'custom developed toolkit' and provided a platform for exchange of experiences among participants from Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Zambia.

The Bio-Hub toolkit, developed with input from partner institutions and already tested in the field, highlights the use of chili pepper 'Mhiripiri' and other methods to keep elephants from raiding farmers' crops. The toolkit emphasizes that conflict situations must be approached systematically in order to choose the most appropriate intervention from a broad spectrum of possible mitigation measures. It also offers a user-friendly guide for determining which intervention is most relevant to a conflict in a particular setting.

The staff will use the skills gained in on-going human-wildlife conflict intervention activities in the Heartland, supported by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), focusing on two areas, where AWF is piloting conservation farming techniques among 500 farmers. Use of the toolkit should help reduce conflict between people and wildlife and improve crop yields in the pilot area. Conservation farming techniques combine crop varieties that add nutrients to soil, reduce land degradation, and suit low-rainfall regimes in the landscape. The protection of such farms using chilli-pepper-based techniques helps to reduce crop damage and improve local food security.

NEW PROJECT NEWS

U.S. Ambassador Visits AWF and Other Partners in Arusha as AWF Launches Two New Programs to Scale Up Activities in Northern Tanzania

The new U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania, Mr. Alfonso E. Lenhardt, visited the Arusha region in January 2010 for the first time since arriving in the country in late 2009. His aim was to see some of the important activities supported by the American people through AWF and other implementing partners, as well as to preserve and strengthen the close relationship between the United States and Tanzania.

US Ambassador to Tanzania discussing with Arusha National Park staff during his visit

Besides meeting AWF Maasai Steppe Heartland Director Steven Kiruswa, Ambassador Lenhardt paid courtesy visits to Regional Commissioner Isidore Shirima in Arusha and Regional Commissioner Monica Mbega for Kilimanjaro as well as the leadership of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and East African Community. He addressed university students and former participants of American educational exchange programs, and visited development and local community projects funded by the American people. He met with American citizens residing in the region and toured Arusha National Park to learn about the work of the Tanzanian National Park Authority (TANAPA).

Ambassador Lenhardt was impressed to learn about the strong relationship AWF has with TANAPA and the work AWF has accomplished in the region. Ambassador Lenhardt discussed with AWF staff the support that the US Government has provided through AWF to reduce poverty and advance conservation in Tanzania. He praised AWF for its efficient use of support from the American people to preserve ecosystems in the Tarangire-Lake Manyara area, and congratulated AWF for securing additional funding to expand activities to Tanzania's other critical ecosystems.

After the visit, AWF signed an agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for a new project, where USAID is granting the AWF program in Tanzania $8.2 million over four years to improve biodiversity conservation and local people's livelihoods in the Tarangire-Manyara and the Kilimanjaro-Natron ecosystems. The project, "Scaling up Conservation and Livelihoods Efforts in Northern Tanzania" (SCALE-TZ), was launched in Arusha on 29 January 2010. The launch was attended by participants from the Government of Tanzania, Tanzania National Parks, communities, District Authorities, NGOs, research institutions, and the private sector. The launch, which was well covered by the media, also served as an inception meeting for the project. Staff presented to the participants the objectives of the project, scope of work, the focal areas, implementation mechanisms, and a work plan for the first year. This helped to inform the participants of the goals of the project and facilitated buy-in, which is critical for successful implementation.

Stakeholder participants at the SCALE inception workshop in Arusha Tanzania

AWF recently launched a three-year pilot project funded by The Royal Norwegian

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Sustainable Opportunities for Improving Livelihoods (SOIL) Project launched in Congo Landscape

AWF's work in the Congo Basin continues to grow rapidly. In early September 2009, AWF launched the Sustainable Opportunities for Improving Livelihoods (SOIL) project in Djolu, Democratic Republic of the Congo, in the heart of the Maringa-Lopori-Wamba landscape. The primary objective of the project is to increase the well-being of local people through the provision of alternative livelihoods that should result in reducing the negative impacts on the forest. The project will run for 30 months and will focus activities in five community areas. Covering a total area of about 2,000 km², the objective is to reach a total of 4,200 community members. The project is co-financed by USAID's Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE).

At the launch workshop, AWF, its field partners, representatives of various communities, and the local authorities discussed the implementation methodology to be adopted, and determined the role of each partner in project implementation. The major needs to be addressed were identified as follows: access to markets for farm produce, how to reach all 4,200 households, priority identification of zones, and the definition of forest zoning. This project is expected to improve the livelihoods of forest edge and forest dwelling communities in order to advance forest conservation in the Congo Basin.

Congo forest that the SOIL project will work to conserve

NEW PROJECT NEWS

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Embassy of Dar-es-Salaam in collaboration with the Government of Tanzania Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA) on Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) in Kondoa district in the southern part of the Maasai Steppe Heartland. The US$2.1 million project contributes to Tanzania's preparedness for a new international climate change protocol involving the sequestering of forest carbon. This second new AWF project entitled, "Advancing REDD in Kolo Hills Forests" (ARKFor), aims to prepare local communities in Kondoa district for the voluntary and official carbon markets by enabling the implementation of joint forest management and the assessment and implementation of forest carbon sequestration strategies. In a brief grant signing ceremony in which the Norwegian government also awarded four other NGOs funds to pursue similar interventions in Tanzania, the Norwegian Ambassador in Tanzania, Mr. Jon Lomoy said, "These projects form an important

contribution towards the partnership on forest and climate change between our two countries and will go a long way towards linking local action with the global discourse."

"AWF anticipates that this project will help secure a key watershed providing water to communities who neighbor the forest, their livestock and for irrigation of agricultural plots, and the wildlife of Tarangire National Park which is nationally important for tourism," added AWF President Dr. Helen Gichohi.

AWF partners for implementation of ARKFor include Camco (a private sector carbon company), the Selian Agricultural Research Institute, the University of Dar es Salaam, and Kondoa District Council.

AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION®

The African Wildlife Foundation's African Heartland Program

Our approach to achieving conservation impact in Africa is to encourage our partners to join us in focusing on a limited number of high-priority, large conservation landscapes that have the potential to conserve viable populations of African wildlife as well as key habitats and ecological systems well into the future. We use an applied science-based planning process to determine conservation objectives and to make these areas both ecologically and economically successful. Recognizing Africa's wildlife cannot be conserved everywhere, the great majority of AWF's resources and efforts are invested in these Heartlands.

What is a Heartland?

Heartlands are comprised of land units under different management and ownership regimes—national parks, private land, and community land—in a single ecosystem ranging in size from 7,000 km2 to 95,000 km2. Some Heartlands fall within a single country; many extend across international borders of two or more countries. AWF's initial planning horizon and commitment to work in a Heartland is 15 years.

Heartland program interventions include: support for improved protected area management; resource monitoring; participatory land-use planning; wildlife-based tourism enterprise development; securing local livelihoods and community-owned businesses; capacity building with local institutions; and enabling local leadership of wildlife and natural resource management.

Selecting and Establishing Heartlands

When selecting Heartlands, AWF works carefully to identify landscapes that have the most potential for effective and sustainable long-term conservation. Initially, AWF considers both regional and global biodiversity conservation priorities. Then, once a potential landscape is identified, AWF conducts a detailed analysis that looks at the biological, ecological, social and economic opportunities within the region. AWF develops a detailed profile that includes the biological, socioeconomic, and institutional attributes of the area, and identifies both key threats to conservation targets and potential conservation strategies to address these threats. An area is officially declared a

Heartland once the resources needed to implement an effective program are secured.

Working in AWF's Heartlands

In each of its Heartlands AWF works closely with a wide range of partners and stakeholders (including national and local governments, communities, research organizations, other non-governmental organizations, and the private sector) to develop priority interventions specific to the area. While each Heartland's strategy is unique, each Heartland focuses its work in the following strategic areas: land and habitat conservation; species conservation and applied research; conservation enterprise; capacity building and leadership development; andpolicy.

AFRICAN HEARTLAND	COUNTRIES	AREA
Kazungula	Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe	86,476Km²
Kilimanjaro	Kenya and Tanzania	24,663 km²
Limpopo	Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe	95,624 km²
Maasai Steppe	Tanzania	35,000 km²
Maringa-Lopori Wamba Landscape	Democractic Republic of Congo	81,748 km²
Samburu	Kenya	26,134 km²
Virunga	Democractic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda	7,655 km²
Zambezi	Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe	47,721 km²
Regional Parc W	Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger	46,890 Km²

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