

African Wildlife Foundation's AFRICAN LANDSCAPE

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A Cohesive Strategy to Conserve the Congo Basin

By Scott Berendt *Senior programme design officer*

Located in the Equateur Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Maringa–Lopori–Wamba (MLW) forest landscape encompasses 74,500 km² of lowland rain and swamp forest. The landscape is part of a critical carbon sink and biodiversity area within the Congo Basin forest ecosystem. This ecosystem is home to diverse, rare and endemic species, including the endangered bonobo, the vulnerable forest elephant, golden cat, giant pangolin, Congo peacock, and numerous other rare primates, amphibians, reptiles and birds. The region boasts more than 600 known tree species.

This part of DRC is also extremely remote. It is one of the poorest and least-developed regions in the country. Approximately 800,000 people reside here, and, because of a lack of sustainable income-generating opportunities, many rely on the landscape's natural resources to satisfy basic livelihood needs, including food, fuel, medicine, income and shelter.

Thus the primary threats to the ecosystem are driven by the area's pervasive poverty. These threats include illegal hunting/poaching for bushmeat consumption and trade, and habitat destruction and fragmentation brought about by deforestation, unsustainable agriculture

practices and an overdependence on timber and non-timber forest products.

Reducing biodiversity loss

Since 2003, the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) has led a consortium of organisations to reduce the rate of forest degradation and biodiversity loss across MLW. AWF's work has been implemented primarily with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), through its Central Africa Regional Programme for the Environment (CARPE).

At the start of its engagement in this ecosystem, AWF determined areas of ecological significance using its Landscape Conservation Process, a threat-based scientific analysis. It then conducted a participatory process with stakeholders that considered both ecological and socioeconomic factors and, using Marxan spatial modelling software, strategically selected macro-zones within the landscape. Data used in these decisions included forest cover, species habitat suitability, ecological integrity, population demographics, infrastructure, and current and projected land use. As a result of this process, three macro-zones were established: rural development zone, protected area and extractive resource zone. > continued on page 6

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Life and Conservation, Interconnected

People outside of conservation sometimes think that our work is a narrowly defined endeavour, quite apart from other functions in society. In reality, the management of natural resources is interconnected with other areas of life.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, poverty and a lack of sustainable livelihood opportunities in the Maringa–Lopori–Wamba landscape had created a situation in which people are illegally hunting for bushmeat and clearing forests for agriculture.

merce in natural resource management. The article can be found on pages 4 – 5.

Political risk

Despite these positive stories, our work is not without political risk. Many people do not make a connection between conservation, politics and development, but seemingly disparate events have the capacity to severely impact on conservation success. The Ugandan government's passing of an anti-homosexuality law in February—while AWF is working to promote tourism opportunities to this country—has the potential to impact



“The management of natural resources is interconnected with other areas of life”

Through our partnership with USAID, AWF has been able to work with communities in this part of the Congo for the past 10 years to develop participative land-use plans and engage residents in the active management of the forests in which they live, all while delivering livelihood improvements. Our cover story outlines AWF's successes in increasing conservation outcomes and household incomes, and discusses our plans to build upon those successes over the next five years.

In Ethiopia, the activities of impoverished communities around Simien Mountains National Park are putting pressure on this ecologically vital protected area, which is also a World Heritage site (see story, opposite). AWF is assisting the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority in developing this park in a way that will also increase income opportunities for local communities.

Meanwhile, AWF's African Wildlife Capital is supporting Africa's growing entrepreneurial community, with the understanding that there is a way to positively engage enterprise and com-

success in delivery of our work, for example. And in South Sudan, conflict that erupted in December disrupted the work of AWF's James Kahurananga, who was advising the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife Conservation on best practices in conservation policy implementation. It has also disrupted our forthcoming work supported by the Royal Netherlands Embassy around the Imatong Mountains.

It is a reality of conservation that AWF must work in many diverse contexts and countries. Each of these presents its own challenges and opportunities, although AWF proactively anticipates many of these—including political risks such as those that I mentioned—in our programme design. But as we work to accomplish our mission, AWF remains hopeful for progress in many areas of society—more than ever, our conservation success depends upon it.

Daudi Sumba

Daudi Sumba
Vice president for programme design
and government relations

In Ethiopia, Maximising Tourism to Minimise Threats

By **Kathleen Fitzgerald** *Vice president for conservation strategy*

Home to some of Ethiopia's most unique and threatened species, including the Walia ibex, Ethiopian wolf and Gelada monkey, Simien Mountains National Park is known for its spectacular views, sheer cliffs, steep escarpments and mountainous terrain. Approximately 16,000 people visit this World Heritage site annually.

Simien is vital ecologically. Less than 3 percent of Ethiopia's highlands are not under cultivation, and the park itself is surrounded by impoverished communities engaging in low-productivity agriculture, such as wheat and barley. Threats include ecosystem degradation and habitat loss due to encroachment from livestock, tree cutting and agriculture.

Comprehensive tourism plan

In 2011, the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), Ethiopia's protected area authority, requested AWF's assistance in the development and conservation of Simien.

AWF organised a team of tourism experts to travel with EWCA staff to Simien to assess the tourism potential and identify areas of need. Based on their recommendations—and input from EWCA, local communities and tour operators—AWF developed a comprehensive tourism plan that provides a strategic framework for tourism development and related investment in the park. The plan is designed to help address overcrowding and poorly regulated tourism development, disperse usage to underutilised areas and transform tourism into a viable source of revenue for the park and surrounding communities.

EWCA approved the plan in 2013, and we have since moved forward with implementation. An economic assessment was conducted to determine ways to help communities improve their lives, and AWF is in the process of rolling out these programmes. Through the generous support of donors and foundations, such as the Headley Trust, AWF recently trained more than 60 community guides. These activities are complemented by two African Wildlife Capital investments in wildlife-based tourism development in and around the park and by funding support provided by AWF to the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Project.

AWF and EWCA believe that Simien has the potential to be a model park for Ethiopia and together will work to translate this vision into reality. ■

AWF is assisting the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority in implementing a tourism plan for Simien Mountain National Park.



IN BRIEF

- > In the Mau Forest Complex, AWF planted—and now monitors—more than 160,000 indigenous trees in 2013.
- > AWF provided funding to support a meeting to form the Wildlife Enforcement Network (WEN) of Southern Africa in the last quarter of 2013. The meeting was convened by the U.S. Department of State.
- > Through its partnership with Honeyguide Foundation, AWF is employing tracker dogs to monitor Manyara Ranch Conservancy in the Maasai Steppe landscape.
- > Two rhino calves have been born in Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park in Zambia since December. AWF has been supporting the park since 2006.
- > AWF has signed an MOU with the government of Cameroon, making AWF the only officially recognised partner working in the Dja Biosphere Reserve.
- > Through its Species Protection Grants programme, AWF is now supporting the protection of close to 20 distinct populations of elephants, rhinos, large carnivores and great apes across Africa.



ON THE RADAR

- > The Zambian government recently awarded a mining concession in Lower Zambezi National Park. AWF protests and urges Zambia to uphold its commitments to international biodiversity agreements. A court has granted a stay of execution for the time being.

A Record of Results With African Wildlife Capital



Using a debt and quasi-equity based financing model, African Wildlife Capital has found a new way of achieving conservation in Africa.

AWF first launched African Wildlife Capital (AWC) in 2011. In the nearly three years since, AWC has moved quickly and successfully to provide financing to a variety of small and midsize African companies—and, as a result, has been able to provide another way to ensure conservation results on the continent.

The rapidity with which AWC has been gaining initial results may be due in part to its financing model. Rather than operating as a grant provider on a grant-based financing model, where money is disbursed to projects with no expectation of repayment, AWC offers debt and quasi-equity based financing to viable businesses in Africa. Companies agree to repay loans over a period of up to 10 years, with interest or in return for revenue-based royalties.

9 deals and counting

Thus far, nine deals have been executed, for a total of US\$7 million in financing now under AWC management. They include investments from US\$250,000 to US\$2 million to companies in various parts of Africa, such as:

- Ol Pejeta Conservancy, a working ranch and conservancy in northern Kenya that partners

with local pastoralists to purchase and distribute their livestock and has traded cattle with 2,000 households in 10 different community conservancies;

- Bale Mountain Lodge, an Ethiopian company that built the country's first-ever high-end ecotourism facility;
- Village Ways, a successful social enterprise firm looking to build a network of traditional community guesthouses in Kenya, Uganda, and near Simien Mountain National Park in Ethiopia (for more on Ethiopia, see "In Ethiopia, Maximising Tourism to Minimise Threats" on page 3) for cultural, trekking and wildlife tourism; and
- COMACO (Community Markets for Conservation) Ltd., a community-based food processing and distribution business in Zambia working with local farmers.

Other projects are in the pipeline, with many featuring unique financing arrangements or business models—another hallmark of AWC's approach. AWC, in fact, has pioneered many innovative arrangements in the

course of its work, from launching the first-ever conservation-driven interest rebate scheme as part of an investment into Asilia Lodge to financing the development of the first ever conservation tourism concessions within Kenya's national forests under Kenya Forest Service.

Use of conservation covenants

According to AWC Investment Manager Giles Davies, "The AWC model applies the positive power of risk to generate financial and conservation performance."

AWC emphasises conservation performance through the institutionalised use of conservation covenants—conservation-oriented goals that companies are contractually obligated to meet. The covenants typically require action in such areas as wildlife and wild land management, conservation education and training, and conservation management planning.

The results have been impressive. In Namibia, for example, AWC provided a unique tourism development loan to a community-based conservancy in September 2012 to allow the conservancy to make structural improvements to its lodge. Less than a year later, Grootberg

Project to improve food security, conservation in southern Tanzania

By **Brenna Thompson** *Foundation and corporate relations officer*

AWF has launched a new programme in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania that models solutions for balancing improved agricultural production and food security with biodiversity protection. This three-year project, funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, builds on African Wildlife Capital's sustainable agriculture investments in the nearby Rungwe Avocado Co. and AWF's land-use planning expertise.

In 2012, AWF's subsidiary, African Wildlife Capital, provided financing to Rungwe to implement certain agricultural innovations and expand operations in exchange for commitments to conserve biodiversity. Rungwe is expanding its outgrower programme to up to 5,000 smallholder farmers, who receive technical advice and enjoy access to international markets in exchange for agreements to protect wildlife, not encroach in protected areas and implement sustainable agricultural practices and other measures that minimise the impact on biodiversity and ecological services.

These agreements, known as "conservation covenants," are central to African Wildlife Capital's strategy to advance enterprise in ways that sustain wildlife. AWF monitors adherence to the covenants and, through this new initiative in the Highlands, will gather information on how the Rungwe covenants are delivering measurable benefits to biodiversity, water quality, soil health and other dimensions of ecological health.

Replicate model

AWF will review specific agricultural practices and develop a framework for determining which covenants have the greatest conservation value while still being relatively easy and cost effective for farmers and companies to execute. This information will help AWF replicate the model with other companies in the region and enable others in the conservation and agriculture communities to adopt similar practices. Together we aim to demonstrate how, through careful planning and management, food security and wildlife conservation goals can be delivered concurrently in landscapes across sub-Saharan Africa—with an end result of a more stable, beneficial environment for people and wildlife alike. ■

A new project in southern Tanzania will build on work done with Rungwe Avocado Co.



Lodge was remodeled and is now on track to generate nearly US\$1 million in revenues for the fiscal year, its highest-grossing year ever. (AWC's engagement with Grootberg prompted the Namibian Development Bank to run a workshop to investigate the institutional role it, too, may play in further developing this sector.)

The lodge has also followed through on its covenants, which covered issues such as zonation, land management and good governance. Wildlife is increasing on the conservancy—where lion sightings would have been unheard of just a few years ago, for example, today, 10 to 15 roam on conservancy grounds. All game drives record the presence or absence of wildlife, and management is conducting additional training for staff in tourism and conservation. Finally, lodge revenues are posted in the conservancy management office for full transparency.

"AWC aims to revolutionise the development of conservation enterprise in Africa," Davies says. "We're rewarding commercial viability, promoting financial efficiency, and ensuring conservation impact." ■



> continued from page 1

The rationale for these macro-zones was to:

- 1) Protect critical habitat for target species, in particular, bonobo and forest elephant and their habitat, through large expanses of forests, swamps and rivers;
- 2) Ensure landscape-level connectivity among different areas of ecological significance, resulting in ecosystem resiliency, an integrated carbon sink and mitigation of climate change;
- 3) Provide a means of integrating conservation and development/livelihoods across the landscape and securing social acceptability of activities; and
- 4) Create areas in which to implement conservation interventions at a manageable scale that can help to deliver conservation impact and further landscape-level conservation.

Guided by this strategic conservation approach, AWF achieved tremendous success under the first two phases of CARPE. During the 10-year timeframe, for example, AWF:

- Designed a land-use plan covering approximately 70 percent—5.2 million hectares—of the landscape;
- Developed a macro-zone land-use plan—which incorporated spatial modelling, community and public participation and a formal recognition process—that was officially recognised by the

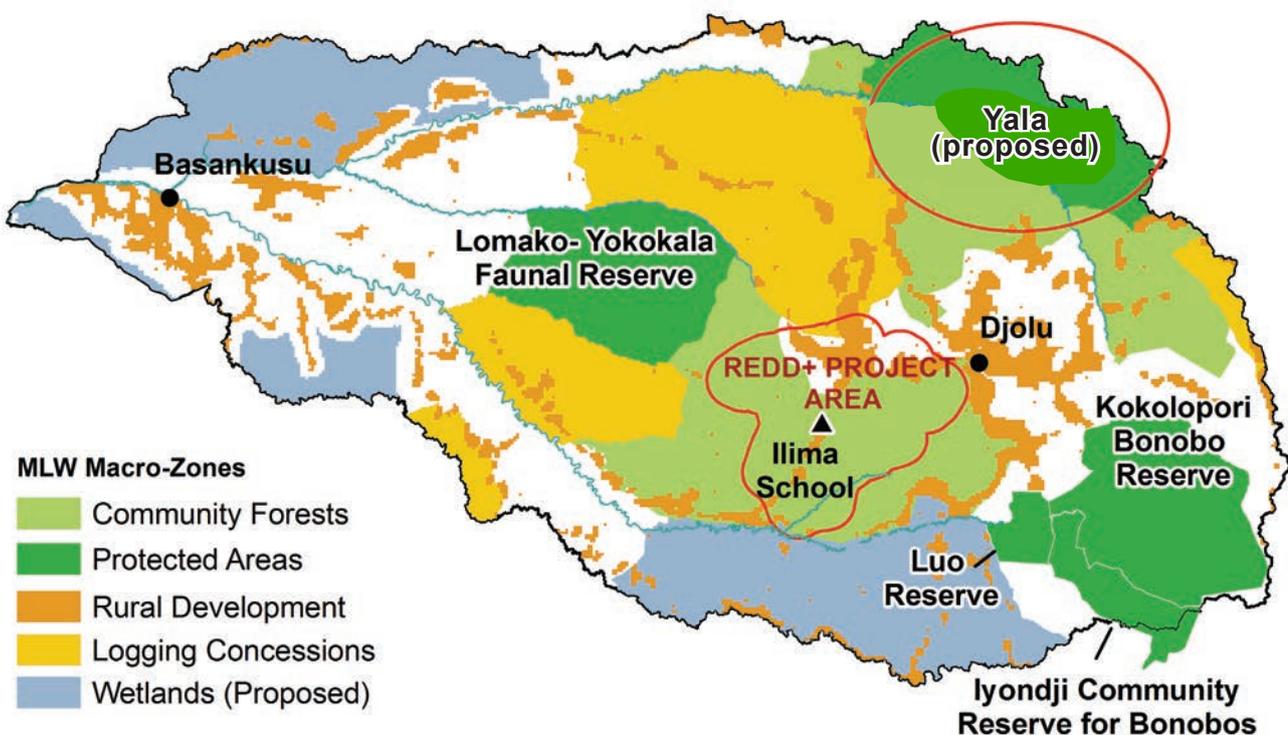
Congolese government as the model to guide national land-use planning efforts;

- Facilitated the collaboration between community members and local authorities to execute fine-scale participatory mapping and land-use planning, which led to the designation and respective management of 243,010 hectares as permanent forest and almost 1.5 million hectares as non-permanent forest;
- Created two protected areas with high concentrations of target species—the 362,500-hectare Lomako–Yokokala Faunal Reserve and the 110,000-hectare Iyondji Community Bonobo Reserve—and developed performance-based management plans for each;
- Helped increase productivity of select agricultural crops in agriculture zones through the promotion of appropriate crop management practices, which contributed to the fallow period being extended from two years to four years and helped reduce community dependence on forest-based livelihoods; and
- Expanded down-stream market access for products produced in agriculture zones by facilitating the river transport of 150 tons in 2010, 230 tons in 2011, and 400 tons in 2012, thereby diversifying economic opportunities for nearly 70 communities.

“During the 10-year timeframe, AWF designed a land-use plan covering approximately 70 percent of the landscape”

Throughout this time, AWF's programme have featured broad-based community engagement and have included

MLW Landscape, Democratic Republic of Congo





Jef Dupain

AWF has worked with communities to provide sustainable income alternatives to the bushmeat trade, which threatens wildlife populations. Under one project, women are being trained in tailoring, diverting them from the bushmeat business. The result this far has been a marked decrease in the bushmeat trade in the Basankusu, market, one of the largest in the landscape.



Scott Berendt

AWF's participative land-use planning process has been recognised by the Congolese government as a model for the country. The result has been a land-use plan that covers 5.2 million hectares and saves 243,000 hectares of forest from deforestation.



Charly Facheux

Training in sustainable agriculture has increased the fallow period of plots from two to four years. AWF also supplied a barge to transport agricultural products to down-stream markets, previously a limitation that had prevented locals from maximising their income opportunities.

women and youth in its participatory process. In addition, AWF follows internationally recognised Free Prior Informed Consent processes.

Plans under Phase III

As a result of AWF's programmes under the first two phases of CARPE, communities in the MLW landscape made measurable economic and environmental conservation improvements. "In Djolu, for example, we increased household revenues by 15 percent," said Congo Landscape Director Charly Facheux. "Even better, the communities are now actively working to protect the forest."

In 2013, AWF was awarded a five-year grant from USAID, which includes funding from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), to continue its efforts in the MLW landscape. This current phase of the CARPE project, Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation (CAFEC), will continue through September 2018. Under CAFEC, AWF will build on these past successes to scale up its field-tested, proven development models for the long-

term sustainability of the MLW landscape, particularly with regard to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

AWF's goals under CAFEC are ambitious. While working to improve management of Lomako and Iyondji Reserves,

for example, AWF will move forward on establishing a third protected area, Yala, located in northern MLW—essentially creating a critical triangle of protected areas anchoring the landscape (See map on page 6).

As part of the climate change mitigation and

adaptation efforts, AWF will implement a Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) project covering more than 216,000 hectares (See story on right). To further maintain the rich biodiversity of the area, AWF plans to implement collaboratively designed, improved zoning and management plans in community-based natural resource areas and timber concessions. It will also strengthen wildlife protection mechanisms directed at reducing poaching and bushmeat consumption of targeted species (both

“Three macro-zones were established: rural development zone; protected area; and extractive resource zone”

AWF created two community reserves in the Congo landscape, both of which are protected by the Congolese wildlife authority. A third reserve is being planned.



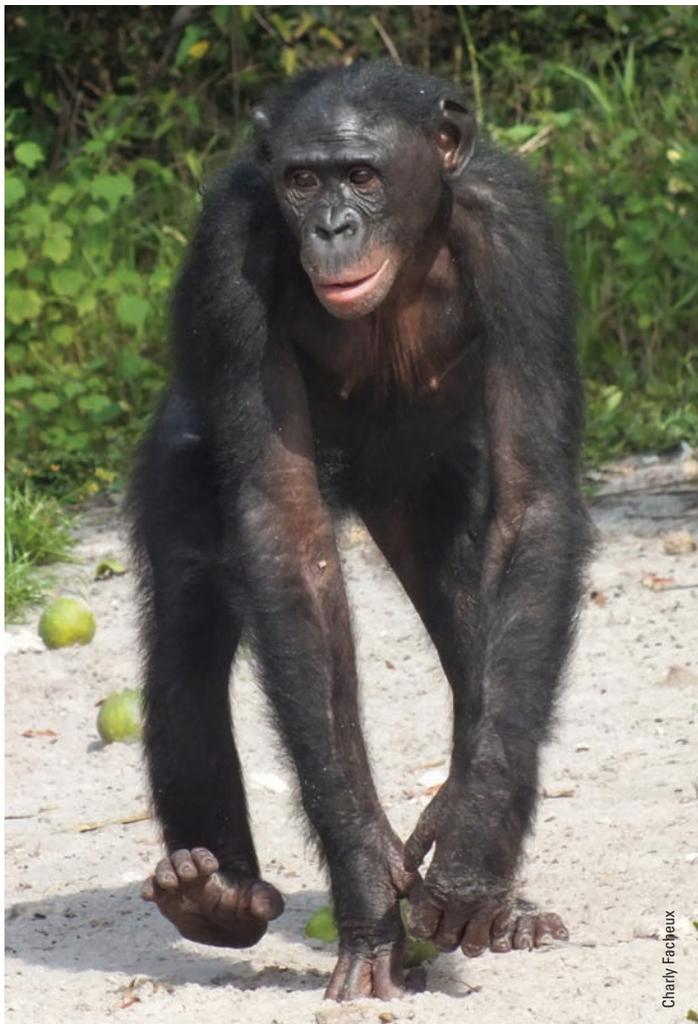
field-based law enforcement and judicial improvements). Efforts will also be made to institutionalise wildlife and forest protection and conservation policies, in collaboration with Congolese officials.

Other planned activities include solidifying sustainable conservation-linked alternative livelihoods and economic incentives, including carbon revenue and agriculture in appropriate zones. AWF also wants to conduct skills training and strengthening organisational capacity of local, provincial and national DRC community-based organisations, as well as government agencies and institutions.

At the conclusion of the CAFEC project, the MLW landscape will benefit from strengthened local, regional and national capacity for sustainable land and biodiversity management and monitoring and the provision of widespread, significant and well-managed economic incentives that catalyse stakeholders to adopt forest conservation best practices. Further, threats to biodiversity will be mitigated and greenhouse gas emissions from forest degradation and deforestation will be reduced.

Combined, these efforts—from AWF's first 10 years in the landscape through to our planned activities in the coming five years—will address the socioeconomic factors underscoring the conservation threats to this ecosystem and, ultimately, solidify the ecological integrity of the Congo Basin. ■

Bonobos have been habituated in the community reserves. There are signs that other wildlife presence is increasing as well.



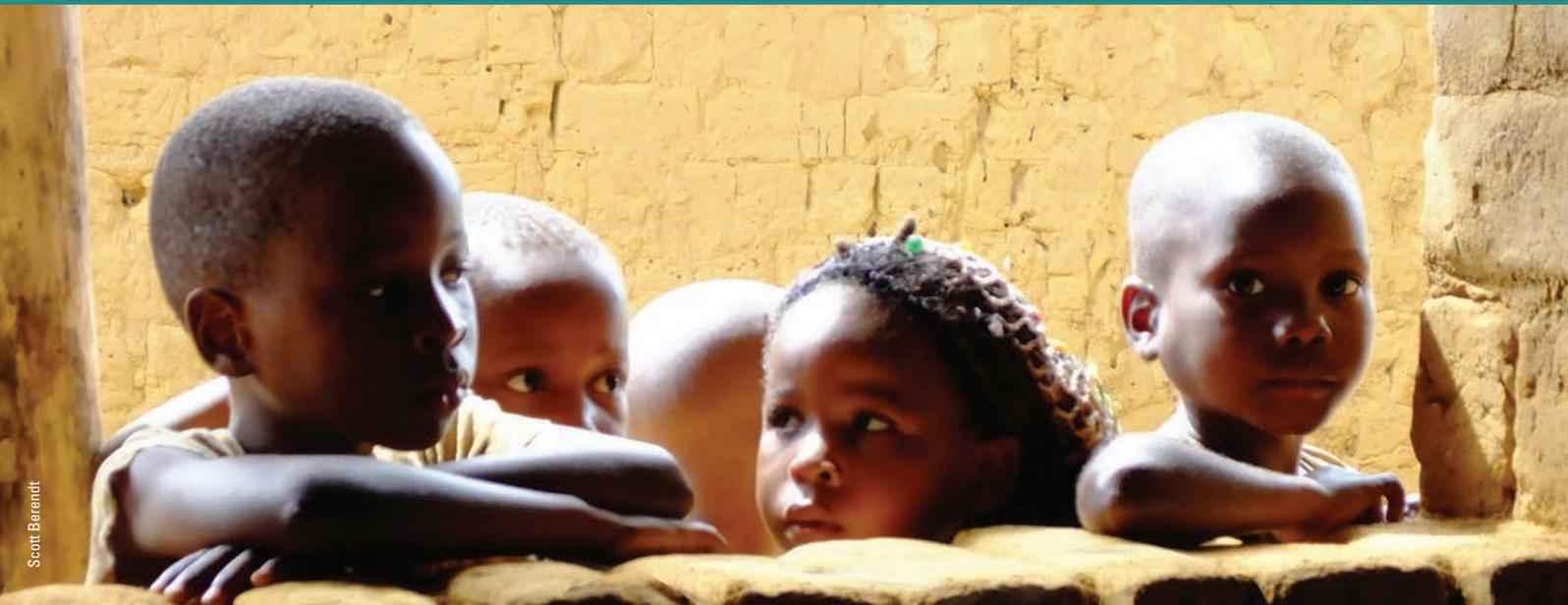
Jef Dupain

Charly Facieux

REDD+project kicks off

AWF has already kicked off the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) portion of its work under the U.S. Agency for International Development's Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation programme. In February, AWF's Congo landscape team and Climate Change Director Dave Loubser met with partners, including Wildlife Works, Wildlife Research Institute, Institute of Tropical Agriculture and University of Maryland, to review the proposed REDD+ project area and determine next steps. "All the partners were impressed with the landscape and the team and are excited about building on the work that AWF has already done to ensure a successful REDD+ programme," related Loubser.

Martin Harvey



Scott Berendt

Momentum Gathering With AWF Conservation Schools

Implementation of the AWF Conservation Schools (ACS) programme continues to gather momentum, with a variety of projects and partnership initiatives underway.

In 2013, AWF determined it will build a new school in the Ilima community of the Democratic Republic of Congo, within the Maringa–Lopori–Wamba landscape. AWF chose this location in particular because of the community's proactivity in adopting, and adhering to, a land-use plan and other conservation actions that protect habitat for the endangered bonobo. After thorough assessments of the construction site options, as well as interviews with parents, students, teachers and other relevant community members by AWF's architectural partner, MASS Design Group, plans were drawn up for a sustainable school that is appropriate from both an environmental and climatic standpoint.

Construction began in January of this school, which will span tropical forest and agricultural areas. The building itself will feature brick walls that go up two thirds of the way to the ceiling to allow for unrestricted airflow. The bricks will be sourced locally. The roof shingles will be made from a local hardwood, additionally minimising the cost of having to ship materials into the remote landscape. Local community members are being employed in the construction of the school; their involvement will ensure that maintenance and upkeep in the future could be performed locally rather than having to hire outside contractors to travel into the area.

As the walls at Ilima School continue to grow, excitement continues to increase in the community. The school will likely be finished by October. When completed, Ilima School will boast six classrooms, six teacher houses plus

an office for teachers, a reading room/library, latrine block, play area, water access, gardens, nature paths and outdoor education space. All classrooms will look out into the forest, further reinforcing the connection between the school and conservation.

Other schools

While construction at Ilima School continues, AWF has begun planning for expansion to Lupani Conservation Primary School in the Kazungula landscape and upgrades to the Manyara Ranch Conservancy (MRC) School in the Maasai Steppe landscape. A new kitchen, technology lab and other features will be added to Lupani's campus; foundation, floor and roof upgrades will be performed at the MRC School, along with landscaping to prevent erosion.

Meanwhile, to keep pushing AWF's mission of developing quality education in rural, high-conservation-value landscapes forward, staff have conducted scoping for two new conservation schools specially designed for Afromontane climates, in Ethiopia outside of Simien Mountains National Park and in Rwanda by Volcanoes National Park. Based on a team scoping trip to Simien in March, AWF has determined it will rebuild a school in Adisge for the Ethiopia portion of the programme.

If all goes well during the due diligence and planning phases, AWF will begin construction or school improvement for some of these schools by the end of the calendar year.

Beyond infrastructure

As AWF has implemented more pieces of its ACS programme, a key consideration has been the idea that primary school education often involves more than just providing a physical structure. To that end, AWF has been working with AAR Beckmann Trust's Trees for Health

“Supporting primary school education often involves more than just providing a physical structure”

project since November 2013. This project combines the health of the environment with children's health. AWF and AAR Beckmann Trust held two deworming events at MRC School—in March, the most recent event, more than 940 students at Manyara Ranch School were given deworming pills and benefitted from health talks on hygiene, sexuality and HIV/AIDS. This health initiative is expected to take place quarterly.

While it will not be practical for all of its conservation schools to boast high-end technology, AWF is nevertheless looking into how best to meet potential technology needs at various ACS sites. One viable option: e-readers to serve as a library and to enhance literacy. These Android tablets will come pre-loaded with a suite of educational apps that are supportive of and consistent with the country's curriculum. Zambia's Ministry of Education has already endorsed a tablet, which comes preloaded with eight languages and 12,000 programmes for use in schools, so AWF will be fitting in nicely with these trends.

Finally, AWF is researching various teacher training options as the ACS programme evolves to encompass a whole-school model. ■

About the AWF Conservation Schools programme

AWF launched the AWF Conservation Schools (ACS) programme in 2013 as another way to work with communities to encourage conservation. In exchange for a target community agreeing to take certain conservation actions, AWF would build and support a primary school.

The ACS programme includes up to four components:

- School and campus construction;
- Teacher training and support;
- Conservation curriculum; and
- Technology.



View the latest Ilima construction photos on the following pages

AWF and a partner has conducted deworming clinics for more than 900 students at Manyara Ranch School in Tanzania (below). Outside Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda (bottom), AWF is considering supplementing our mountain gorilla work with a new conservation school. A new school in the Simien Mountains of Ethiopia will help with the conservation of the Ethiopian wolf.



John Salehe



AWF



Martin Harvey

In DRC, a new school grows

AWF's newest conservation school is the Ilima School in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The school will reinforce some of the conservation actions already taken by this community while also helping to open up new opportunities for residents, through access to better education and, in the near term, through jobs and training during the construction phase of the school. When finished, the school will be a beautiful and environmentally appropriate example of how infrastructure can enhance conservation efforts.



View a video about the construction of Ilima School, at awf.org/beyondilima



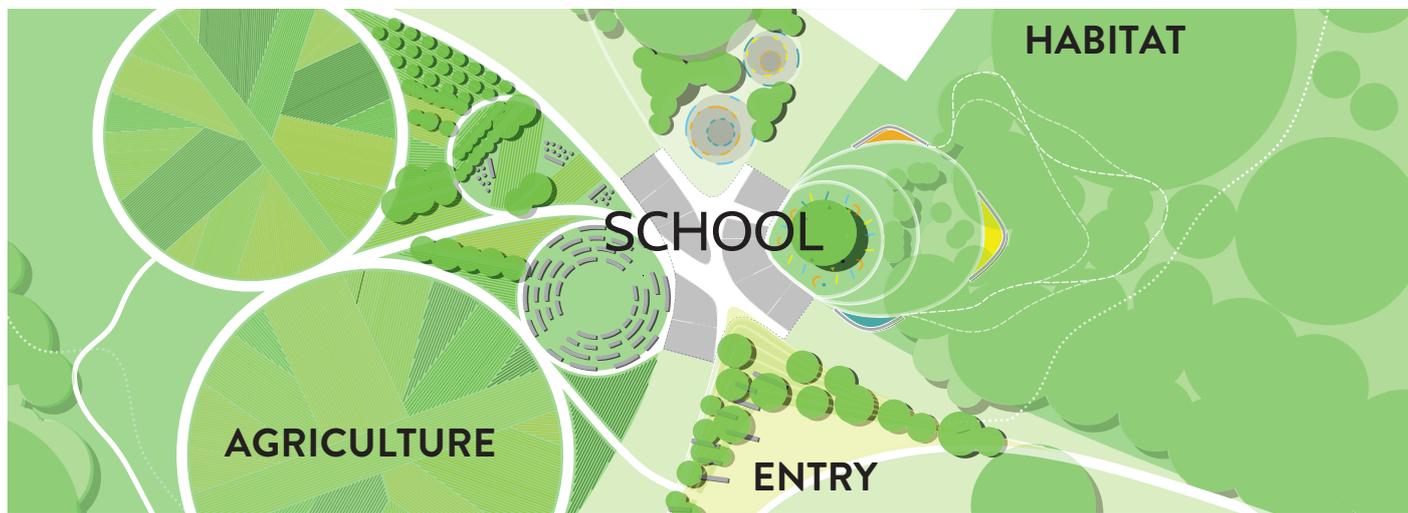
Craig R. Sholley

The old Ilima school, before construction began, was not conducive to learning.



AWF/Mass Design Group

AWF and its architectural partner, MASS Design Group, carefully planned for a sustainable school that is appropriate to both the area geography and the regional climate.



Mass Design Group (4)

The school is sited in a location that bridges both tropical forest and agricultural areas, reinforcing the importance of the land and natural resources.



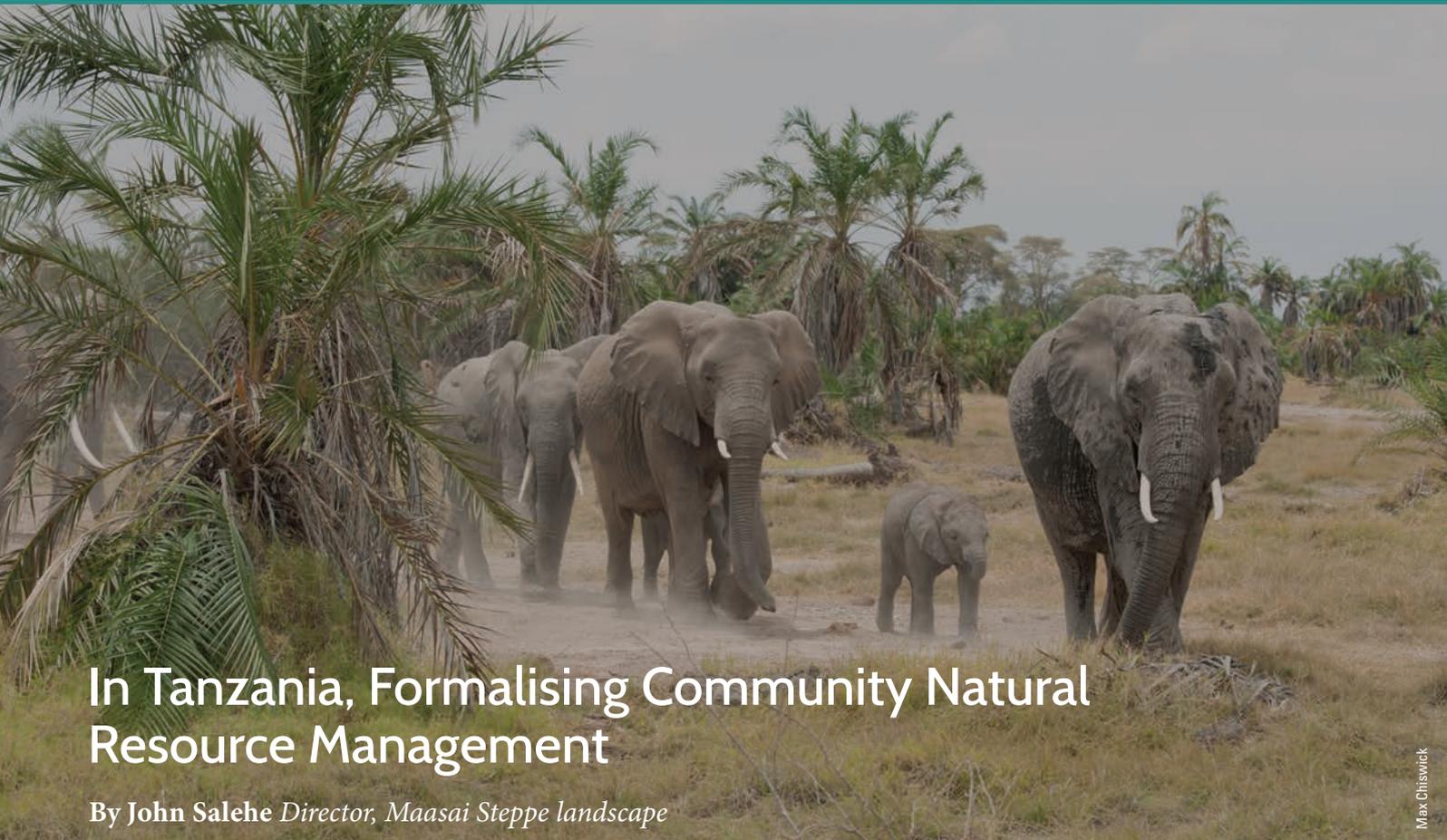
Workers are gaining new construction knowledge, which has the dual benefit of increasing sustainable livelihood opportunities for them and ensuring their ability to maintain the building structures, rather than outside contractors trekking to this remote area.



The roof shingles are made from a local hardwood, minimizing the cost of having to ship non-native materials into the remote landscape.



The building will feature brick walls that go up two thirds of the way to the ceiling to allow for unrestricted airflow in this tropical climate.



In Tanzania, Formalising Community Natural Resource Management

By John Salehe *Director, Maasai Steppe landscape*

Max Chiswick

AWF has facilitated a process that has established five Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in five districts in northern Tanzania. WMAs are established as a means of ensuring direct tangible community benefits from wildlife revenues and good conservation plans and wildlife protection efforts are in place. Key partners to this process have been the community leadership, government wildlife division, other local conservation organisations and district officials, with AWF acting as facilitator.

WMAs have two key purposes: to protect Tanzania's wild-life and ecology, and to bring benefits to local communities. Through AWF's work, we have assisted (or, in some cases, are currently assisting) communities in establishing Burunge, Enduimet, Makame, Randilen and Natron WMAs. These WMAs help protect areas around Lake Natron and Kilimanjaro, Tarangire and Lake Manyara National Parks. Village game scouts ensure that the dedicated areas are safe from encroachment, grazing (where applicable), poaching and other destructive incidences such as fires.

Key challenges

WMAs do face key challenges. These include:

- The ability to manage expectations from communities;
- Managing poaching;
- Getting existing investors to comply with WMA requirements;
- The capacity to deliver on investors' interests;
- Balancing trust between key players with regard to management of funds;
- Revenue management or distribution;
- Making WMAs financially self-sustainable; and
- Unclear long-term financial growth.

Some resident investors also see WMAs as an additional cost rather than a helping hand.

It's true that forming a WMA can cost a substantial amount of money, often between US\$100,000 to US\$200,000. Despite the costs and the time to set up—it can take three years or more to establish—many communities still proceed with the process because there are many advantages to



In wildlife management areas such as Enduimet, village game scouts patrol protected areas to make sure no grazing or poaching is taking place.

AWF

becoming a WMA.

For example, Burunge—which consists of nine villages—has been able to proceed with several development projects. These have included construction of buildings for a health clinic, classrooms, teacher houses, and village and ward offices; contributions for families that are hunger stricken; road construction; and construction of shallow wells, toilets and water projects.

Expected benefits

In northern Tanzania, each WMA is at different maturing stages, but Burunge and Enduimet are more advanced. Even so, many of the WMAs have already met some of the expected benefits, including:

- Bringing communities to the center of wild-life conservation;
- Better rapport between conservation groups and community leadership;
- Increased area under protection beyond the central government's protected areas;
- Contribution of additional funds for conser-

“Many of the WMAs have already met some of the expected benefits, including a more stable wildlife habitat that provides for increased wildlife populations and better biodiversity”

vation from the private sector;

- A more stable wildlife habitat that provides for increased wildlife populations and better biodiversity conservation for local, national and global benefits; and
- Provision of good community conservation demonstration areas for replication in Tanzania and beyond.

There are still a number of challenges with WMAs, but AWF aims to use the lessons learned from its five pilot programmes to help ensure the process becomes more efficient and more revenue is directed to communities and conservation. ■

AWF has developed a practical handbook for setting up WMAs in Tanzania. To download, visit awf.org/WMAhandbook

AWF Finds Ways for Humans, Giraffes to Coexist in Niger

By **Theo Way Nana** *Conservation management trainee, Regional Parc W*

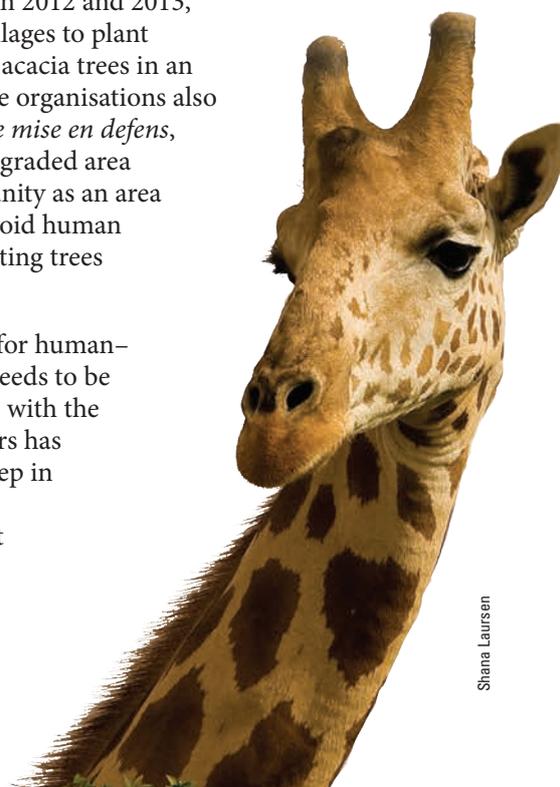
The West African giraffe has an estimated total population of only 403 individuals. This endangered giraffe subspecies is solely found in Niger, in an area of approximately 84,000 hectares.

The West African giraffe lives outside of protected areas, mainly on community lands and farms. This coexistence with humans is not without consequence for the giraffes—given that communities are primarily engaged in agriculture, extensive livestock herding and charcoal burning, giraffe habitat is being degraded and reduced. In addition, the area is dry and suffers from the effects of climate change and land-use change. The giraffes therefore frequently feed on farmers' crops for survival, leading to human–giraffe conflict.

To address this issue, AWF, together with its government and non-governmental partners—namely *Direction de la Faune et de la Chasse* (or DFC), *Association pour la Valorisation de l'Ecotourisme au Niger* (or AVN) and *l'Association pour la Sauvegarde des Girafes du Niger* (or ASGN)—began working with affected communities in 2012. The partners have implemented a number of activities to mitigate human–giraffe conflict, including sensitisation meetings at each of the eight local villages, where AWF provided technical information on how to avoid conflict with giraffes; the identification and mapping of conflict areas; and the formation of conflict-resolution committees, which include representatives from the communities and the local administration.

Based on these actions, the need to secure and conserve giraffe habitat was confirmed as one of the key strategies to ensure effective reduction of conflict. AWF and its partners therefore led a giraffe habitat restoration exercise in 2012 and 2013, working with two villages to plant approximately 5,300 acacia trees in an 11-hectare space. The organisations also established a *Zone de mise en defens*, a 20-hectare, non-degraded area identified by community as an area where they would avoid human activities such as cutting trees and growing crops.

The mitigation plan for human–giraffe conflict still needs to be completed, but AWF with the support of its partners has taken a significant step in the protection and conservation of West African giraffe. ■



African Wildlife Foundation is grateful for the support of all our funding partners, including:



AWF to Expand Antipoaching Work Into Northern Cameroon

AWF has identified northern Cameroon as a priority landscape for future conservation efforts. The area of focus includes three core protected areas—Faro National Park, where AWF is supporting anti-poaching efforts; Bénoué National Park; and Bouba N'Djida National Park—and their extensions into neighbouring Nigeria and Chad. In response to the alarming elephant poaching that occurred in Bouba N'Djida in 2012, when more than 400 elephants were poached in less than one month, AWF is partnering with GIZ to increase antipoaching efforts and better secure

“This landscape is an important stronghold for wildlife in West Africa”

the protected areas in this region.

This landscape is an important stronghold for wildlife in West Africa. The area is remote, with limited tourism, making it vulnerable to poaching. Working together, AWF and GIZ will enhance the protection of wildlife, by developing an effective system for the identification of and communications on wildlife hotspots and threats, establishing and training anti-poaching teams, and building the capacity of national and local protected area authorities in various antipoaching efforts. ■

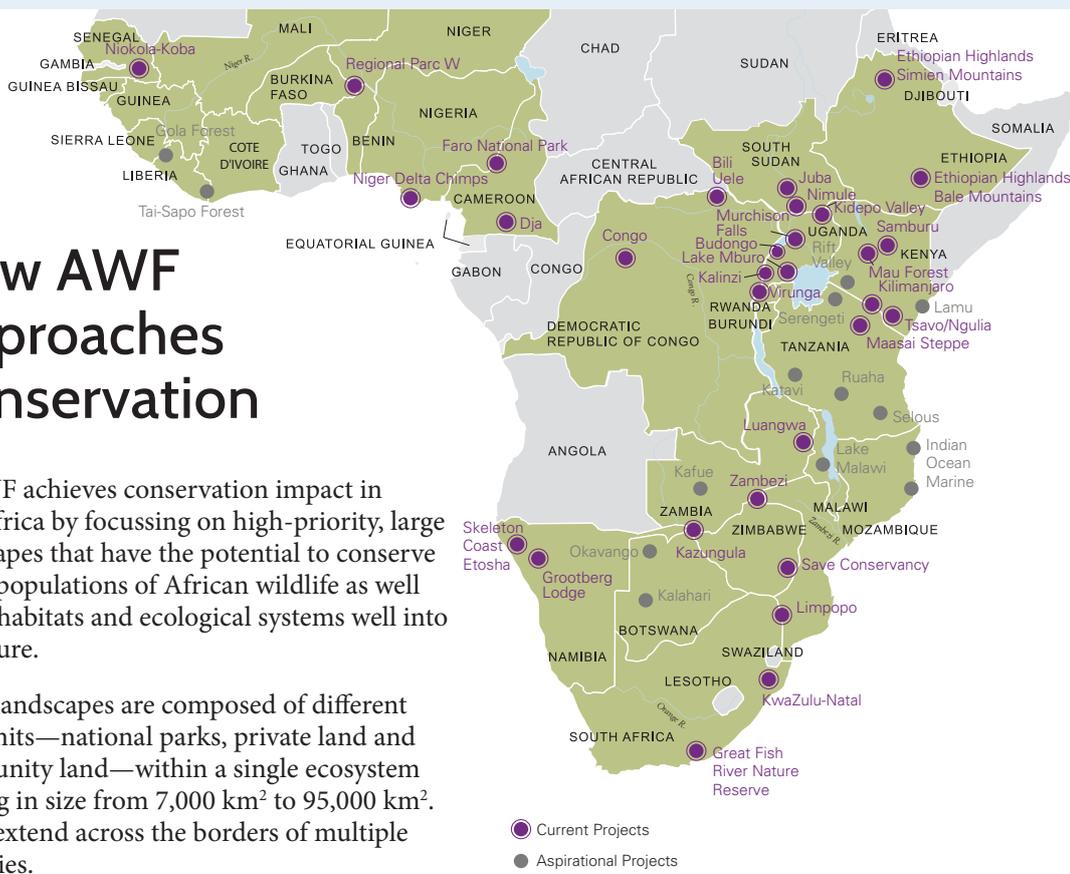
How AWF Approaches Conservation

AWF achieves conservation impact in Africa by focussing on high-priority, large landscapes that have the potential to conserve viable populations of African wildlife as well as key habitats and ecological systems well into the future.

These landscapes are composed of different land units—national parks, private land and community land—within a single ecosystem ranging in size from 7,000 km² to 95,000 km². Many extend across the borders of multiple countries.

Target landscapes are selected based on a detailed analysis that examines the region's biological, ecological, social and economic opportunities. In each landscape, AWF works closely with partners and stakeholders—including national and local governments, communities, research organisations, other NGOs and the private sector—to develop

priority conservation actions specific to the area. AWF works in the following strategic areas: land conservation, species protection, conservation enterprise, education and capacity building, and climate change. Policy is a cross-cutting theme that underscores all of AWF's programmes. ■



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