

AFRICAN

Heartland News

An Africa Solution to Rhino Poaching

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Until recently, the African rhino had been a conservation success story: A species on the brink of extinction had experienced a remarkable recovery, growing from fewer than 10,000 individuals in the early 1990s to 25,000 by 2010. The population was still low in relation to historical numbers, so the story went, but the rhino was on the rebound.

The African rhino's recovery is now under threat, however, as growing demand for rhino horn has fueled poaching across the continent. More than 1,000 African rhinos have been poached in the past three years; demand for their horn is said to come largely from Vietnam and China.

Many of Africa's rhino range states have acted decisively in response. South Africa, for example, has reportedly spent US\$57 million per year on anti-poaching efforts since 2008, up from US\$20 million per year. Kenya increased its rhino ranger force by more than 25 percent in 2011, among other actions. While both nations, among others, are catching and arresting more poachers than ever before, high poaching levels have unfortunately persisted. In 2011, more than 448 rhinos were poached in South Africa alone, with another 210 poached between January and early May of this year.

"Wildlife authorities, private land rhino reserve owners, conservation organisations, and others have made valiant efforts to halt the rhino poaching crisis, but these disparate actions have sadly been no match for this epidemic that is plaguing Africa," observed Helen Gichohi, president of African Wildlife Foundation (AWF).

AWF therefore convened an emergency Rhino Summit to develop a coordinated, comprehensive response to the rhino poaching in Africa. The Summit, hosted with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), took place April 2 – 4, 2012, at AWF headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

Multi-pronged approach

Unlike previous rhino conservation meetings, this Summit brought together stakeholders from across the continent and across all sectors of African conservation. Attendees included representatives of wildlife authorities from Africa's key rhino range states, scientists, owners of private rhino reserves, rhino trade and security experts, and leading international conservation organisations. Summit attendees represented more than 25 organisations from Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, the United States, Zambia and Zimbabwe. ▶

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The Challenges of Conservation in Africa

Conservation was not a first-choice career path for most Africans when I was a student, and it still is not. When I was doing my Ph.D. research, people often asked why I had chosen to work in the bush with dangerous wildlife in what appeared to be a dead-end career. While there is growing awareness and concern about conservation and environmental management, many students on the continent still do not opt for this area of study. Finding individuals with the right training, skills, commitment and experience to drive our conservation science, land conservation, conservation enterprise and other work remains a great challenge.

develop individuals to staff our programmes in the future.

Meanwhile, we continue to develop capacity among community partner institutions by equipping schools linked to specific conservation programmes (see p. 10), working with communities to improve capacity for natural resources management (see pp. 4, 5, 9 and 11), and more. These skills are essential if the investments we make are to be sustained.

Finally AWF remains concerned about the poaching crisis that has resurged in Africa.



“Conservation was not a first-choice career path for Africans when I was a student. It still is not.”

AWF, in keeping with our history of capacity building, therefore recently launched its own Conservation Management Training Programme (CMTP). This rigorous 24-month programme, which starts this August with our first four trainees, immerses individuals in AWF's conservation vision, culture and tools. As we deepen our existing work and prepare to launch into new geographies such as Ethiopia (see p. 8), Sudan and the Guinean Forests of West Africa, the CMTP will help

Poaching is threatening to reverse the gains made in population numbers in the past two decades for two of Africa's most charismatic species, rhinos and elephants.

As our cover feature explains, AWF in partnership with Kenya Wildlife Service convened an emergency Rhino Summit to develop a comprehensive response to the rhino poaching crisis. The meeting, attended by key rhino range states, is just one of our many efforts to ensure the survival of Africa's species. My personal hope is that these efforts will lead to an environment in Africa where conservation is not questioned but understood, applauded and supported as the rightful course of action.



Helen Gichohi

Helen Gichohi
President

In Burkina Faso, Easing Wildlife's Water Woes

by Kurt Redenbo *Director, foundation and corporate relations*

Thanks to an unseasonably early stop in the 2011 rainy season—at least a month earlier than expected—Parc W management authorities were concerned that water points in the park would dry up quickly, placing wildlife under extreme stress. AWF secured emergency funding from the Lundin Foundation to install and replenish four water points in Parc W/Burkina Faso (the park also encompasses lands in Benin and Niger). The project has the potential for increasing wildlife numbers to levels that more closely align with this protected area's carrying capacity, thereby increasing the attractiveness of the park as a revenue-generating tourism destination.

Strategic new water points

Working with a local engineering firm, AWF coordinated the repair of malfunctioning bore-holes and pumping systems at two water points and the drilling of new bore-holes and pumping systems at two other water points.

New water points were chosen strategically. The first, called the Cabane des éléphants, is a natural water hole located in a ravine. The last water point in the park before the Niger border, it provides a significant wildlife viewing location. In the dry season, elephants dig into the bed of the ravine to reach the water that flows slowly below in the subsurface soil. Last season, several elephants perished in the mud of the rapidly evaporating, stagnant pool. A new bore-hole drilled in mid-March has resulted in a pond filled with adequate water to sustain the surrounding wildlife population.

Just south of Cabane des éléphants is the Tamalé water point. Located in a dry river that floods in the rainy season, Tamalé had been dry since February. A pumping system was installed in late April.

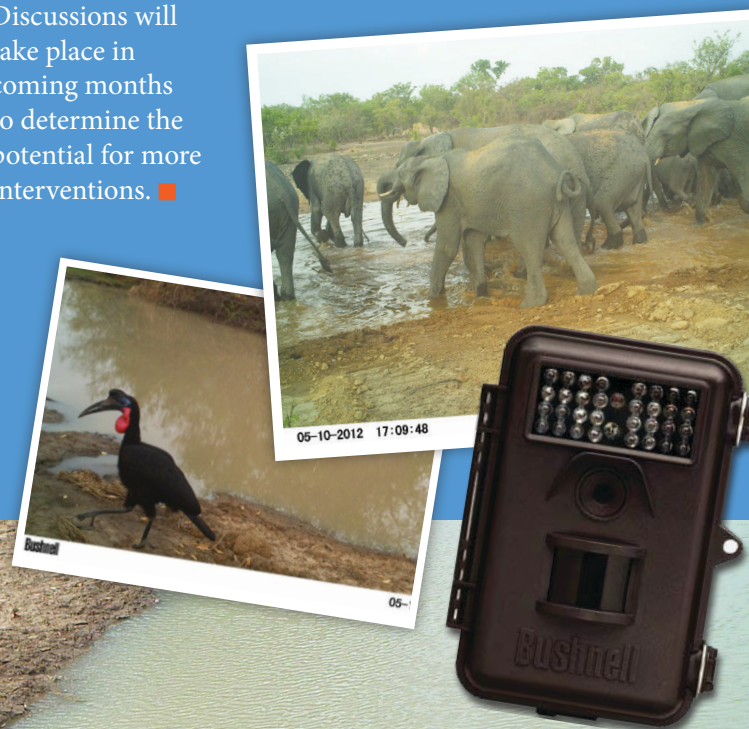
As part of this project, AWF also installed camera traps across six water points, the first time this technology is being used in Parc W. The camera traps help gather data on the array of species that use the water points and the frequency of use. It also helps AWF and park staff assess the impact of water points on wildlife and relations between species.

Thus far, the camera traps have captured 900 images of wildlife, with many of the same animals returning to the water points repeatedly. More than a dozen species—including elephant, buffalo, lion, warthog, roan antelope, hartebeest, jackal and baboons—drink regularly at these sites.

“The project has the potential for increasing wildlife numbers across the park

This was a pilot project to evaluate the potential for carrying out a larger, more comprehensive program to improve water resources and wildlife numbers across the entire transboundary Parc W Biosphere Reserve. Multiple issues will need to be addressed in greater detail should an expanded project commence, including further prioritisation of critical water points and assessing the most appropriate technologies for the pumping systems.

Discussions will take place in coming months to determine the potential for more interventions. ■



Camera traps have captured images of more than a dozen wildlife species taking advantage of the waterholes AWF has drilled in Parc W/Burkina Faso.



Nasson Tembo

At the launch of the transfrontier conservation area in Southern Africa, the treaty nations emphasised their support in attracting tourism to the region. Pictured here is Angola's minister of tourism.

KAZA Transfrontier Conservation Area Launches

by Nasson Tembo *Director, Kazungula Heartland*

The Kavango–Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA)—located in the Okavango and Zambezi River basin regions of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe—officially launched on 15 March 2012. AWF was among the development partners attending this milestone event. Also present were the Wildlife, Environment and Tourism ministers from the five countries; South African Development Community Secretary General Dr. Thomas Salamao; and several other governmental and NGO representatives.

Creation of the TFCA took several years, with a treaty finally being signed by the participating countries in August of last year. At 440,000 km², the TFCA is the size of Sweden and forms the largest conservation area in the world. It aims to promote sustainable transboundary natural resource management while uplifting community livelihoods.

Understanding that the local communities often bear huge opportunity costs associated with biodiversity conservation (such as human–wildlife conflict that results in food insecurity), the partner countries emphasised their determination to accelerate tourism to the region. KAZA TFCA aligns nicely with AWF's mission, particularly its emphasis on effective community participation in natural resource management. ■

Long-Time AWF Presence Becomes VP for Programme Operations

After nearly 20 years at AWF, where he has done everything from programme implementation to overseeing multiple Heartlands as a Regional Director, Daudi Sumba recently stepped into the role of Vice President for Programme Operations for AWF. Here he talks about organisational initiatives, challenges facing AWF and more.

Q As vice president for programme operations, what does your job entail?

Really, my job is to ensure the speedy and effective implementation of our conservation programmes—that the money we get from donors, we spend on time to produce quality work. To do that, information is critical. Real-time financial and up-to-date field information is necessary because we want to keep one eye on the financials and one on the deliverables.

Q What are your main initiatives for this coming year?

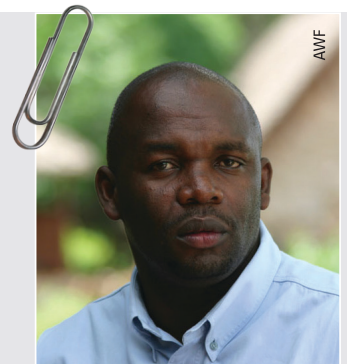
We are in the process of standardizing and documenting AWF's processes, systems and tools so our conservation programmes are easy to roll out. We don't have to start fresh and duplicate effort.

We must also have proper, clearly defined work plans that set out priorities to be implemented in that year—as well as specific management routines and disciplines. We have put these processes in place to produce predictable, positive outcomes—but we also want to be agile. So how do you maintain operational agility? Our efforts will help with this.

Q What would you say are AWF's biggest challenges, and how is AWF equipped to deal with them?

Funding, and maintaining steady flows of funding, is always a challenge for us. We must intensify fundraising through our own mechanisms but also create more partnerships to access new funding streams. Our integrated programme work helps us to tap into new funding and partners.

There is also the low priority that governments attach to conservation—decision-makers don't place a lot of importance on this kind of work. So, it's about advocacy. ► *continued on page 12*



AWF

Seeing REDD to Achieve Food Security, Resilience in Tanzania

by John Salehe *Director, Maasai Steppe Heartland*



In Central Tanzania, achieving conservation in the long term requires balancing the often-competing demands of wildlife, pastoralism, agriculture, energy use and forest protection. With the effects of climate change predicted to impact Africa more than any other continent, it is necessary to address these factors sooner rather than later.

One initiative involves the Kolo Hills Forests in Kondoa district, where AWF is implementing a Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) pilot project, with support from the Norwegian Embassy. The project will generate important lessons on climate change mitigation by reducing emissions from land use change and strengthening farmers' resilience to changes in climate. Given that these forests are the origin of the Tarangire River, the project will also secure the water sources for the Tarangire–Manyara–Natron ecosystem.

Eightfold harvest increase

AWF is working with small farmers from 21 villages in the district to protect and manage 42,000 hectares of semi-arid forest, primarily by implementing village land-use planning to ensure sustainable longer-term development and by improving agricultural productivity. The project aims to save an estimated 12,500 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) annually from avoided deforestation and forest degradation caused mostly by clearance for agriculture and charcoal production.

AWF provided more than 170 farmers with improved seed varieties and fertiliser, and trained farmers in profitable conservation farming techniques that enable greater resilience to changing weather patterns. As a result, farmers are producing more food and income without having to expand the area under cultivation. An assessment of 60 acres in 2011 showed maize productivity increased eightfold, from about 300 kg to 2,400 kg per acre.

One resident benefiting from this project is Hawa Ibrahim Chora, who planted $\frac{3}{4}$ acre of an improved variety of maize last year. Chora harvested 12 sacks, selling 5 to purchase 26 metal roofing sheets. The remainder provided sufficient food for the entire year. In 2012, she continued to plant improved maize—without requiring AWF assistance.

Land-use planning

Meanwhile, 10 villages have completed land-use planning. These plans will form the basis for securing land tenure and allow development in the long term while helping to ensure the permanent protection of forests.

Thanks to this project, villages are reporting a stronger understanding of the need to protect forests for ecosystem services. The project, which was to run from January 2011 through December 2012, recently was extended to December 2013. ■



Africa's Forests

AWF President Helen Gichohi put Africa's forests on the world stage last December, when she gave the keynote speech during COP 17's Forest Day. "The forests are linked to the plains of Africa, and the wildlife of those plains depends on the integrity of the forests systems," she said, urging countries to conserve forest resources. To view the speech, visit awf.org/climatechange ■

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► “All of us have expertise in specific areas related to rhino protection and conservation, as well as our unique institutional perspectives,” explained AWF CEO Patrick Bergin. “The Summit allowed these stakeholders to gather in one location and share new information and ideas, and begin cross-country collaboration, which is imperative if we’re going to save the rhino.”

Despite 98 percent of Africa’s rhino population existing in just four countries—South Africa, Namibia, Kenya and Zimbabwe—attendees agreed the only way to resolve the current poaching crisis was by acting together at the continent level. Thus participants stressed the need for coordination and information-sharing between the rhino range states. While some potential longer-term solutions to African rhino poaching—including the legalisation of the rhino horn trade—do require additional discussion, Summit stakeholders also agreed upon a plan of action for rhino range states to take in order to immediately reduce poaching (see “How to Combat Rhino Poaching,” at right).

Supply & demand

“As is often the case with exploitation of natural resources, rhino poaching carries incentives driven by the financial value of horn,” commented Sam Ferreira, large mammal ecologist at South African National Parks and a Summit participant. “It comes down to the laws of supply and demand—the larger the difference between demand and supply, the higher the price of the commodity and the more attractive it is for exploitation both legally and illegally.”



The solutions proposed at AWF’s Rhino Summit attracted substantial media interest. Here, AWF President Helen Gichohi (right) answers a question during the press conference. Also pictured is Julius Kipng’etich, director of Kenya Wildlife Service.

The Summit action plan therefore recommends activities that will work to suppress the supply of rhino horn, through various anti-poaching engagements, while also decreasing demand through public awareness efforts in Asia. Several other tactics were discussed, including securing remaining rhino populations by cataloguing their DNA, treating rhino poaching as an organised crime, and increasing diplomatic engagement between range states and consuming countries.

But most important is taking immediate, strategic action. “The current rate of poaching is not sustainable in the longer term,” said Julius Kipng’etich, KWS director. “If not checked and reduced, this poaching can eventually wipe out an entire population or reduce a population to levels they will never recover from to inhabit their former ranges.” ■



The Rhino Summit fostered healthy discussion amongst the attendees, which included wildlife trade experts, private reserve owners and government authorities, and resulted in a comprehensive action plan to combat rhino poaching.

1



Support Boots on the Ground

Due to limited resources, rangers are often put into the field with little to no follow-up support. But case studies of Asian rhino protection have shown that an increase in trained, properly equipped anti-poaching staff in the field leads to a reduction in poaching. Specific suggestions include:

- Share knowledge on paramilitary training
- Use technology (horn implants, night-vision goggles, fence alarms, surveillance cameras)
- Catalogue DNA of remaining rhinos

2

Increase Security and Law Enforcement

Given the potential for high reward and low risk—rhino horn is said to command more than US\$50,000 per kg on the black market, while laws related to wildlife offences are still quite lenient in many African countries—rhino poaching and the illegal trafficking of rhino horn has become particularly attractive to organised crime syndicates. To combat this, the action plan suggests:



- Prosecuting rhino poaching and trafficking as organised crime, as South Africa is doing (such as with the “Groenewald gang” case)
- Maintaining comprehensive records of rhino horn stockpiles

3

Curb Demand

While suppressing the supply of illegal rhino horn is necessary (through the anti-poaching engagements discussed), Summit attendees noted that the other side of the supply–demand equation must be addressed.

AWF recently partnered with WildAid to jointly develop and conduct a multimedia public awareness campaign in China, one of the countries with the largest demand for rhino horn. The campaign will educate people on how horn is procured illegally by killing rhinos. The high-impact public service announcements, to be conducted via traditional broadcast and social media, will feature leading Asian figures in sports, entertainment or business to generate social pressure against rhino horn consumption.

- Studies should additionally be commissioned to better understand the drivers of the illegal horn trade



How to Combat Rhino Poaching

At the Rhino Summit convened by AWF and Kenya Wildlife Service, attendees agreed that strong political will and coordination between countries, such as intelligence sharing, is necessary to reduce poaching and prevent the illegal trafficking of rhino horn. The Summit resulted in an action plan of other tactics that rhino stakeholders should take to more effectively combat rhino poaching, from the ground up:

4

Push Policy

All of these efforts should be supported with expanded outreach to influence policy makers, financiers and government officials at the highest appropriate levels on the issue of rhino poaching and illegal horn trafficking. The AWF/WildAid partnership includes plans to engage policy makers in the Chinese government to generate support for the rhino public awareness campaign.



Considering Ethiopia's Conservation Potential

by Helen Gichohi *President* and Kathleen Fitzgerald *Director, land conservation*

Ethiopia has long been on AWF's conservation radar given its rich ecology and cultural and religious heritage, but until recently had not enjoyed the proper conditions for lasting conservation impact. Two scoping trips by AWF in 2010 and 2011 uncovered potential conservation opportunities, primarily in and around Gambella and Simien Mountains National Parks.

2nd largest mammal migration

While Gambella is not yet gazetted as a national park—the Ethiopia Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) is aiming for gazettelement this year—it is significant ecologically and could be developed as a transboundary conservation area together with Boma National Park in southern Sudan to protect wildlife migration and wildlife and significant habitat. In particular, more than 600,000 white-eared kob are believed to migrate between the two parks, making it the second-largest mammal migration in Africa after the Serengeti–Mara. The park also boasts 69 species of mammals, 327 species of birds, 7 species of reptile, 493 species of plants and 92 species of fish.

Challenges facing the park are numerous, however. The park is bordered by massive agricultural development, posing a real threat of land conversion, chemical and pesticide contamination to the vast wetland system and ongoing encroachment from agricultural development into the park.

Further, though regularly scheduled flights to Gambella offer a significant advantage, the region otherwise lacks infrastructure by way of tourism facilities, roads, scout outposts, and more. During the wet season, entry into the park is only possible by boat.

Endangered World Heritage site

The lowlands of Gambella, with its hot, muggy climate, are far different from Simien Mountains National Park.

Simien is located in the highlands of northern Ethiopia. The national park was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1978, for its biodiversity and exceptional natural beauty. The park is made up of a rocky massif, cut by streams and gorges, which slopes down to grasslands.

Simien has 21 species considered threatened or endangered. Among them are the Walia Ibex, a wild mountain goat with long, heavy scimitar-like horns that is only found in the park; plus the Ethiopian wolf, one of the rarest canines on Earth, and the Gelada baboon, both endemic to Ethiopia. The mountains are also home to 16 bird species endemic to Eritrea or Ethiopia, and a population of the rare lammergeyer, a vulture species.

Unfortunately, Simien is under significant pressure from human activity. The areas around the mountains are heavily populated and cultivated, and approximately 80 percent of the park's territory has in fact been subjected to human use. More than 3,000 people live in a village in the heart of the park. Due in part to some of these factors, Simien was declared a World Heritage Site under threat several years ago.

Potential for AWF investment

AWF sees good potential and an ideal niche for becoming involved in conservation efforts. AWF is now working to secure needed funds to partner with EWCA and other conservation players to help protect each of these parks,



to develop sustainable tourism that will generate funding for the protection and operations of Simien and to work with the surrounding communities in the development of alternative livelihoods that would enhance their lives and alleviate pressure on the parks.

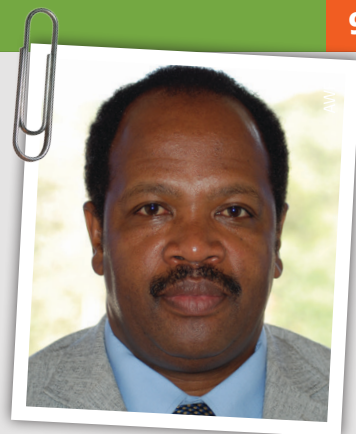
With the right investment, AWF believes Ethiopia's natural treasures, together with the partnership of the EWCA, will transform it into a conservation success story. ■

In addition to diverse ecosystems and a rich culture, Ethiopia boasts a number of endemic or native species, including the Gelada baboon, Walia ibex, and Ethiopian wolf.



New Face in Maasai Steppe

New Maasai Steppe Heartland Director John Salehe comes to AWF with considerable conservation experience, having previously worked as regional forestry advisor for the World Wide Fund for Nature in the eastern and southern regional programme office in Nairobi. Salehe also has a good understanding of how to obtain partner buy-in from governments, NGOs and the private sector for conservation initiatives. Following is what he had to say about ensuring long-term sustainability in the Heartland, located in Tanzania.



Q What are the biggest conservation challenges in this Heartland?

We have a goal of securing wildlife dispersal areas and corridors, but many of the lands are under heavy human development activities. We are piloting best-practise land-use plans in several districts, such as Kondoa, Monduli, Karatu and Babati, where wildlife management area (WMA) processes are advanced. But they need to be scaled up to include the whole area under AWF support.

Q What are some of your goals for Maasai Steppe?

In the short term, we would like to continue building capacity within the existing WMAs, such as financial management, including auditing, investments and investor relationships. WMA members also need to understand what their roles and responsibilities are with regard to Tanzania's wildlife and environment policies.

We need to put in place strategies that will resolve human-wildlife conflicts, such as lion killing due to livestock predation and crop raiding. We are already using predator-proof bomas, but I have also been pushing for a consolation scheme with other players.

We want to ensure that community benefits from wildlife conservation are evident to communities at all levels, including household levels, and ensure the long-term sustainability of the Maasai Steppe Heartland.

Q Are there certain factors that will make it easier for your team to achieve its objectives?

We have a dedicated team that has a good rapport with the government, donors, and key partners within our Heartland and beyond. There is also a broad conservation portfolio to tap into in this country: There are good structures and a number of development agencies ▶

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A state-of-the-art computer lab established by AWF is offering children an opportunity to learn more about conservation and the world at large.

In Rural Tanzania, a Community Plugs into the Future

Computers are a part of everyday life for many students in western countries. In Tanzania, however, many schools lack such technology. Those that do usually have modest setups, featuring old machines that run outdated software. AWF, together with Annenberg Foundation, recently built a brand-new IT lab in Manyara Ranch Primary School in rural Tanzania. Over the course of a few months in late 2011, a former classroom on school grounds was transformed into a state-of-the-art facility with 40 new Internet-accessible HP 500 desktop computers.

Establishing a computer lab involves more than installing a handful of desktops, as James Mithamo will tell you. AWF's IT director had to ensure the computer room would not be too small, given the school's 800 students, and made several infrastructure improvements, from installing metal doors (instead of wooden ones) to reinforcing the ceiling to prevent bats from entering. The Heartland team also had to determine the best network configuration for the school's current—and future—needs, eventually structuring the network to enable easy expansion to the school's dozen-plus classrooms, should such a need arise in the future.

Access to the best technology in the world is pointless, however, if people don't know how to take advantage of it. "Most of the teachers did not even know how to operate computers, so we prioritised teaching the teachers first," Mithamo said. "Once teachers appreciate the power of

technology, they'd be able to pass that knowledge on to students." After a two-week training session for school staff, Mithamo held meetings with key stakeholders and the ministry of education to draft an educational curriculum involving computers.

Though the computer lab is still in its nascent stages, students and teachers alike already see its potential. "Truly these computers will help us a lot and will make us more with today's technology," commented one instructor. A student predicted, "We will... discover the world."

Empowering people

The IT director contends the lab is in keeping with AWF's conservation work. The school is situated on the grounds of Manyara Ranch, which helps protect a critical wildlife corridor that connects Lake Manyara and Tarangire National Parks. Supporting the school and the local community provides incentives to the community to conserve the corridor for wildlife. AWF has worked with the school to incorporate conservation education into the curriculum, and will provide ongoing support by way of school supplies.

"One of AWF's missions is empowering people," said Mithamo. "We are empowering people who live in a far, remote location to link to the world and learn about wildlife and conservation." ■

New Community Reserve Gazetted in DRC

by Charly Facheux *Director, Congo Heartland*

AWF recently helped a community in the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC's) Iyondji District achieve a significant milestone: the gazettement of a new community reserve. The process began after local community members learned about AWF's success in gazettement of the Lomako-Yokokala Faunal Reserve in partnership with communities, and realized that they, too, would benefit from a similar natural reserve.

“The new reserve covers the most undisturbed forest block to the south of the Maringa River

As part of the official gazettement process, AWF, together with the University of Kyoto's Wamba Committee on Bonobo Research and additional partners—including le Centre de Recherche en Ecologie et Foresterie and Forêt de Bonobos—worked with community members and other local stakeholders to plan out the reserve and determine the development and economic alternatives that would offset the cost of conservation. AWF and its partners began

with an initial biomonitoring survey. AWF then worked with Forêt de Bonobos, the NGO formally representing the communities, on considering various community project options. Potential projects include ecotourism, as habituation of the bonobo in this area is occurring quickly, and sustainable agriculture in various microzone areas.

Through this process, AWF collated:

- Letters from the local communities expressing their desire to have a reserve to conserve their forest resources;
- Reports on a feasibility study of this project;
- Reports and minutes of meetings and workshops related to this effort;
- Biological, socioeconomic and cartographic studies;
- A digitised map of the proposed reserve; and
- The technical note requesting the classification of Iyondji forest.

Next, AWF, together with the legal department of the DRC Ministry of Environment, drafted an order to classify the area as a community reserve, for subsequent approval by an ad hoc committee. While committee approval is not necessary for gazettement to occur, AWF wanted to ensure that all steps were taken to ensure a smooth process. The committee—made up of representatives from the Ministry of Environment, the Congolese Wildlife Authority (or ICCN), the private sector, civil society and various other experts—met in September 2011 and validated the proposed decree with some recommendations.

Finally, on 12 April 2012, the DRC Ministry of Environment, Conservation, Nature and Tourism signed the decree declaring the creation of the 1,100 km² Iyondji Community Bonobo Reserve.

The new Iyondji Community Bonobo Reserve covers the most undisturbed forest block to the south of Maringa River. There is limited human settlement in this area and therefore research scientists will be able to undertake unbiased studies of bonobo ecology and contribute to the understanding of the interspecies variation in the ecology and social structure of bonobos. Funding support for this project came from Disney's Friends for Change: Project Green, Regina B. Frankenberg Foundation, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. ■

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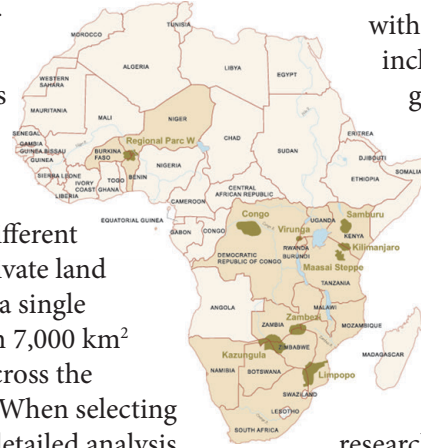
Cover Photo Credits: White rhinos, Craig R. Sholley; Drinking waterbuck, AWF; Ethiopian river, Kathleen Fitzgerald; Kids in computer classroom, James Mithamo.

AWF's African Heartlands Programme

AWF achieves conservation impact in Africa by focusing 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 are our African "Heartlands."

Heartlands 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. When selecting Heartlands, AWF conducts a detailed analysis that looks at the region's biological, ecological,

social and economic opportunities. AWF's initial Heartland commitment is 15 years. In each Heartland, AWF works closely with partners and stakeholders—including national and local governments, communities, research organisations, other NGO's and the private sector—to develop priority interventions specific to the area. AWF works in the following strategic areas: land and habitat conservation, species conservation and applied research, conservation enterprise, capacity building, and policy.



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Most important is finding powerful examples through our work, such as through our conservation enterprises, that show the positive impact of conservation.

Finally, when you work in remote environments, there are always logistical and capacity challenges. It is difficult to attract the best and brightest young people—most would rather work in the city with the infrastructure and conveniences of living in an urban area. We're working with governments on this, to open up places. If a government builds a road, for example, that solves 100 percent of your logistical issues. We have also hired staff to provide supply chain support, implemented centralised purchasing and more. For capacity, there is CMTP (Conservation Management Training Programme, see p. 2 for more).

How is your previous experience at AWF helping you with your current position?

Experience is everything. I've been fortunate to work in most of the Heartlands, either directly or indirectly. So I not only understand the programmes but I also understand the conditions and partners in that environment—it gives me operating context. Knowing the organization well is a big plus for me.

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that already support conservation, and good demand for improved conservation at the community level. We need to strategically tap these resources—where there's a need and a development agency that wants to support that, we should leverage this opportunity.

We also have knowledge from lessons learned, including working through a broad range of partnerships—governments, NGOs, individuals, schools and religious institutions—for enhanced conservation, rather than just the district officer.

How do you ensure long-term sustainability in the Heartland?

Long term, you want to implement a resource mobilisation strategy around each of your conservation activities. I think we need to improve on that.

Most of our programs last two or three years, but we should have fundraising strategies right from the start of the project rather than waiting until the funding is almost out to figure out how to continue the work.

Because conservation is not a short-term process.