

AFRICAN WILDLIFE
FOUNDATION



ANNUAL
REPORT
2016



A NEW African Story



The African story of the past few years has been one of positive change—of rising economic growth, entrepreneurial innovation and rapid development. Those of us living in Africa today are the luckiest generation of Africans ever to walk the Earth. We live on a dynamic continent. We are healthier and living longer than our forefathers.

We are now aspiring to make Africa not just a great continent but also a prosperous one. However, this will not happen if we pursue development at the expense of our wildlife and wild lands... or if all Africa's leaders want to do is to create jobs, grow enough food to feed their people and secure their borders at the expense of healthy ecosystems and wildlife populations.

As president of the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), I have been meeting with African heads of state and regional bodies to tell this side of the story: that development without conservation spells neither prosperity nor progress for our continent. As part of my efforts, AWF recently signed a groundbreaking partnership agreement with the African Union.

The agreement in essence recognizes AWF as Africa's own conservation organization, representing that voice for wildlife that has been missing from development discussions. With this new partnership, we are positioned to be able to effect even more positive change for Africa.

A new brand

Of course, as Africa changes, so must AWF. You may have noticed the new logo on the front of this annual report. As you can see, the new design deliberately preserves the integrity of the elephants that have shaped our identity for the past 50-some years. At the same time, it embraces a more modern aesthetic reflecting our multi-dimensional approach to conservation.

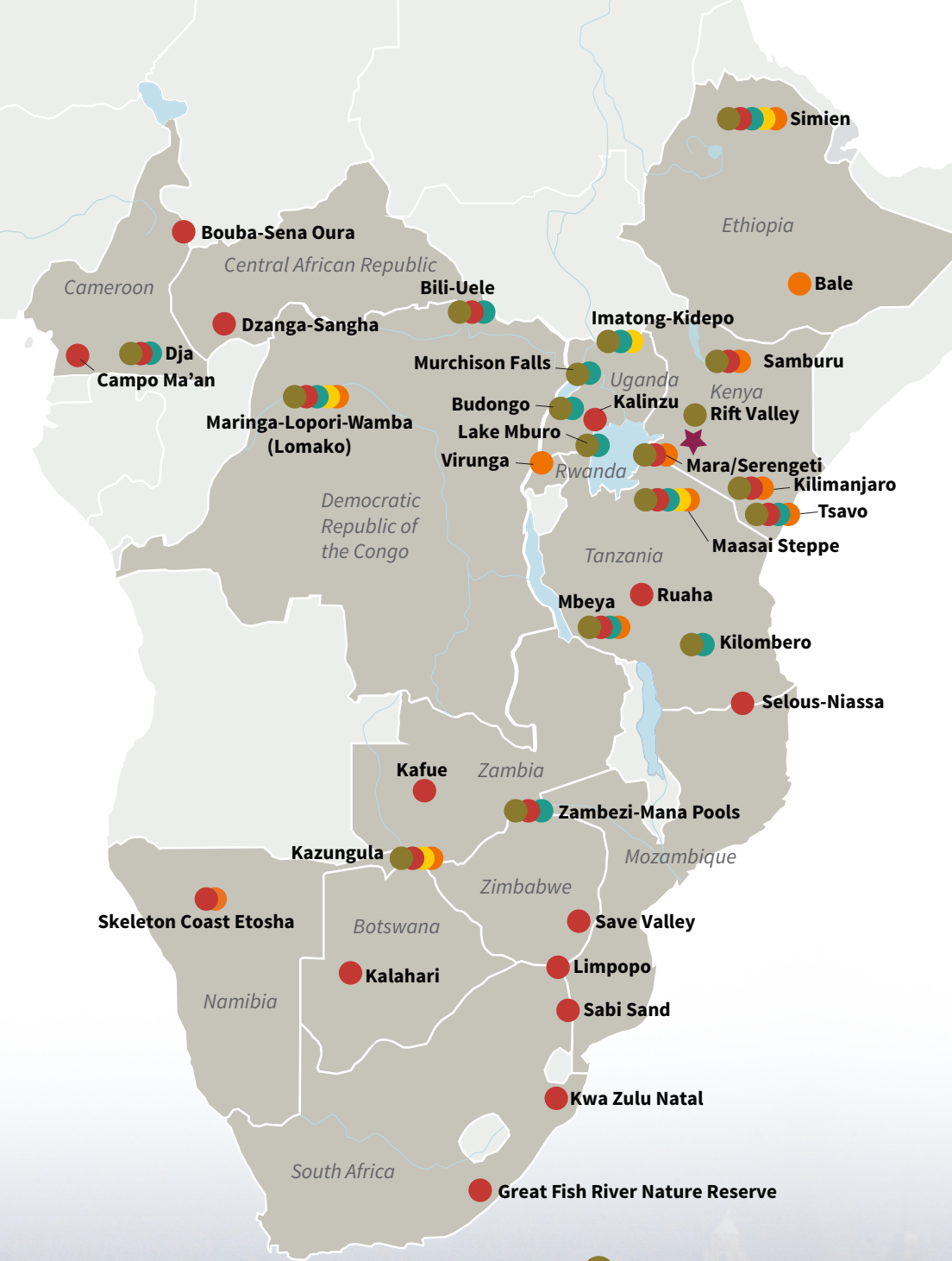
Our visual identity is not all that's changed. We've also unveiled a new mission statement: *"Our mission is to ensure wildlife and wild lands thrive in modern Africa."* This identity proudly reflects our vision of a modern, thriving Africa with wildlife and wild lands at its core.

It is a vision that is shared by the African Union and by committed conservationists like you. With your support, AWF will continue to work across the continent to fulfill that vision and write a new chapter in Africa's development story.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sebunya'.

Kaddu Sebunya
President

COVER: Thanks to your support and partnership, AWF is protecting Africa's important wildlife, such as elephants, and their habitat.



-  Land Protection
-  Species Protection
-  Community Conservation
-  Classroom Africa
-  Enterprise/AWC Investment
-  AWF Headquarters

There is room for development and wildlife and wild lands in a modern Africa.

Protecting Priority Wildlife Populations

The illicit wildlife trade continues to pose an immediate threat to Africa's keystone species. Through our Species Protection Grants (SPG) program, AWF is providing local partners with much-needed support to stop the killing of wildlife on the ground.

The result: We maximize the impact of your donor dollars, while you help ensure that critical populations of elephants, rhinos, carnivores and great apes receive the protection they need.

Enhancing mobility

Park W Landscape, Benin

In Benin's Pendjari Biosphere Reserve—a protected area bordering Niger's Park W transfrontier region—AWF helped wildlife authorities establish their first-ever rapid response unit to combat elephant poaching. AWF also supplied four motorbikes. Working with an informer network, the unit has

already arrested a known poacher and recovered the tusks in his possession.

Preparing rangers

Great Fish River Nature Reserve, South Africa

Thanks to you, 15 rangers received advanced training to better protect the reserve's black rhinos. Additional funds have provided support for aerial patrols. These efforts led to the arrest of seven suspected poachers within the reserve in the first eight months of 2016. Staff were also instrumental in the arrest of three poachers responsible for the brutal killing of at least 10 rhinos countrywide.

Covering more ground

Samburu Landscape, Kenya

With SPG funding, AWF partner Ewaso Lions purchased a new field vehicle to cover more ground within the Samburu landscape. AWF support also enabled the NGO to attach GPS tracking collars to 24 lions. Both the vehicle and the collars expand Ewaso staff's knowledge of lion movement, and help mitigate human-lion conflict in the process.

Patrolling smarter

Campo Ma'an National Park, Cameroon

AWF helped the resource-strapped wildlife authority respond to rising bushmeat hunting and poaching, training rangers in use of CyberTracker and the Spatial Monitoring and Analysis Tool (SMART). The technologies allow rangers to easily gather and analyze patrol data, informing future patrol decisions. From January 2015 to August 2016, rangers seized 200 kg of bush meat, removed 544 snares, and dismantled 59 poaching camps.



Through Species Protection Grants, AWF is working with local partners to protect critical populations of rhino and other wildlife. RIGHT: Your donation is helping to equip those on the front lines of the poaching crisis, providing necessary gear and training to rangers.

You help ensure that critical populations receive the protection they need.



Powerful Deterrent

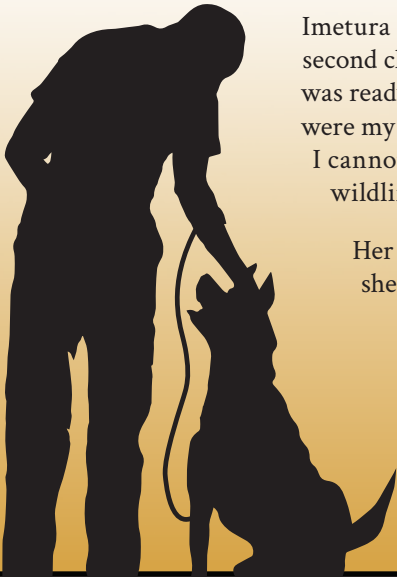
AWF's Canines for Conservation Program was once just an idea. With the program now in its second year, that idea has developed into a formidable deterrent for wildlife traffickers across Africa.

Dog-and-handler teams at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, Kenya, busted wildlife traffickers more than 30 times in 2016, not only sniffing out ivory, but also pangolin scales, lion parts and live tortoises. The finds by the AWF-trained teams represent more than half of all busts made at the airport over the past seven years.

In contrast, the detection units posted at the Port of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania initially faced challenges getting consistent access to the shipping containers. But they, too, are picking up steam. In October, the units helped the Tanzania Wildlife Authority discover and arrest a suspected ivory trafficker. "Word travels fast in Tanzania, so even talk of the bust can be a powerful deterrent for wildlife traffickers," says Will Powell, director of AWF's canine program.

Under Powell's direction, AWF graduated its second class of detection dogs and handlers in August 2016. The 12 handlers—all from Uganda Wildlife Authority—and six dogs have since deployed to Entebbe International Airport in Uganda's capital city of Kampala.

In October, the units helped discover a suspected ivory trafficker.



Imetura Imelda was one of two women to graduate in this second class. On graduation day, it was obvious that she was ready to get to work. "I used to be afraid of dogs—they were my biggest fear," she laughs. "Now, I am really excited. I cannot wait to get started making busts to ensure wildlife has a bright future."

Her partner in this endeavor? A large Belgian shepherd dog named Elsa. |

As news of AWF's canine work spreads, other governments are asking for similar support. The program has now secured funding to expand into Botswana.

14 No. of detection dogs AWF has trained and deployed, along with 25 handlers.



500kg

The largest pangolin-scale bust by AWF-trained dogs—first in March, and then the same amount in June. The detection dogs also uncovered lion parts in three separate instances, despite not being trained on these scents.



Just a few years ago, the judicial system was Africa's weak link in the battle against wildlife trafficking. Tales abounded of known wildlife criminals being arrested with ample evidence, then released with a small fine or other light punishment, such as community service. According to AWF Law Enforcement Manager Didi Wamukoya, "Historically, wildlife crimes were treated like petty crimes."

That is starting to change. Thanks in part to judicial sensitization

workshops being hosted by AWF, law enforcement officers across Africa are learning that wildlife crimes have significant negative economic, societal and ecological impacts—and that they themselves can be critical players in halting wildlife crime.

"The judiciary is very important in the war against wildlife crimes," remarked Charles Tumwesigye, deputy director of conservation for the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), during a judicial workshop jointly hosted by AWF, UWA and the International Fund for Animal Welfare in Kampala in June. "High conviction rates and penalties play a vital role in deterring wildlife offenders."

To that end, more courts are starting to hand down severe sentences to convicted wildlife traffickers. The most publicized example was of Feisal Mohamed Ali, a notorious ivory kingpin who received a 20-year sentence and \$200,000 fine from Kenyan courts last July.

Other courts are also weighing in with the heavy hand of justice. "Courts are increasingly handing down deterrent sentences, demonstrating that they are

Weak Link No More

now trying these cases like the serious crimes that they are. Every part of the law enforcement chain needs to be strong in fighting wildlife crime, from detection through prosecution. If there is any weak link, it will be exploited by wildlife traffickers," said Philip Muruthi, AWF's vice president for species protection.

AWF continues to provide judicial trainings appropriate to each country, including a regional East African law enforcement workshop with participants from six countries and a training in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Between April 2015 and November 2016, AWF trained more than 624 law enforcement officers through its judicial workshops. |



38 From January through September 2016, canine units at the international airport in Nairobi, Kenya, intercepted wildlife contraband on 38 separate occasions.

624



Number of law enforcement officers trained in AWF-sponsored judicial workshops between April 2015 and November 2016.



Making Wildlife a Presidential

African countries are poised for rapid economic growth and infrastructure development. What will this mean for Africa's wildlife and wild lands?

AWF President Kaddu Sebunya is leading the charge to ensure the continent's critical natural resources are not forgotten in its march to development.

Since taking on the post of president at the beginning of 2016, Sebunya has crisscrossed the continent to build relationships with influential decision makers—in the process gaining access to high-level discussions on Africa's development. In July, for example, the AWF president attended the African Union Heads of State meeting in Rwanda and made critical contacts with African leaders, thanks to former Tanzanian President—and AWF Trustee—H.E. Benjamin W. Mkapa.

This past September, Sebunya gave a keynote address to more than 650 companies attending The Global African Investment Summit in Kigali, Rwanda, arguing for businesses to invest sustainably. At the conference, Sebunya also signed an MOU on behalf of AWF with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

(COMESA). The largest trading bloc in Africa, COMESA's membership comprises not only 20 African states but also most of the major foreign investment companies and countries working in Africa.

Work at scale

Companies negotiate with COMESA as a single entity—meaning that rules surrounding infrastructure and extractive industries apply across all 20 countries. In essence, a single MOU with COMESA allows AWF to work at scale, in 20 countries at once.

Africa's resilience depends on the continent's natural systems.

“As a COMESA partner, AWF now has access to information about potential projects in the early planning stages,” Sebunya says. “AWF can speak for wildlife and wild lands to make sure that these projects occur in places



Issue

At The Global African Investment Summit, AWF President Kaddu Sebunya (right) met with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni (from left) and Rwandan President Paul Kagame to advocate for development that considers conservation.

suitable for development and do not threaten Africa's rich natural heritage.”

Sebunya adds: “Too often, development decisions are made independent of wildlife and wild lands conservation. Wildlife, however, is very much an economic issue.

“If Africa harvests and trades away its natural resources, our continent will not continue to enjoy robust economic growth. If we raze our forests and develop every last inch of our savannas, our children will inherit a continent with declining air quality, growing water insecurity, depleting food resources, declining tourism and more. By engaging with business leaders and heads of state, AWF is working to elevate conservation to the status of an economic and foreign policy issue in the eyes of governments.” |

Engaging the conservation community

As AWF President Kaddu Sebunya champions wildlife in trade and development forums, AWF continues to engage with the international conservation community:

■ **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.** An AWF delegation attended the history-making Paris climate talks in December 2015. AWF lobbied countries to support the limits on global temperature rise and showcased its climate mitigation and adaptation programs. Africa's future depends on successful implementation of the Paris Agreement.

■ **World Conservation Congress.** Six staff represented AWF at the September 2016 IUCN event, and we co-sponsored 10 motions. AWF and other organizations voted to urge countries to forbid all industrial activity in IUCN protected areas—not just national parks and World Heritage Sites—and to ban domestic ivory trade.

■ **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).** Sebunya and Philip Muruthi, AWF's vice president for species protection, attended the 17th Conference of the Parties in Johannesburg in September. At the conference, countries voted to ban trade in pangolins, strengthen trade restrictions on lions and uphold the ban on trade in elephant ivory and rhino horn.



Making a Mark

Simon Muchatibaya admits he was “very young” when he joined the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks) some 18 years ago. But youth didn’t prevent him from making his mark—over the course of his career, Simon has arrested numerous poachers and repeatedly earned recognition for his excellence as a wildlife ranger. This past year, he received two national awards from Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe.

Now, Simon is applying his expertise to the new role of AWF technical advisor at Zimbabwe’s Mana Pools National Park. As AWF’s representative on the ground, Simon brings experience and leadership to the landscape. He knows the challenges faced by the wildlife authority in fighting poaching, and where AWF support is needed most.

Mana Pools, like many parks in Africa, is vast. It harbors one of the

continent’s most important populations of elephants—making it a target for poachers. This World Heritage Site makes up the southern end of the Lower Zambezi Valley, which includes Zambia’s Lower Zambezi National Park. According to aerial surveys in the early 2000s, more than 80 percent of the valley’s elephants were found in Zimbabwe. More recent surveys have found that the park’s elephant population dropped by more than a third between 2001 and 2014. The resource-strapped ZimParks cannot counter the elephant poaching alone.

That’s where AWF and Simon come in. Already, AWF has supported two local NGOs in building a patrol base at Mana Pools for a rapid-response unit, which Simon will help lead. The technical advisor also facilitated joint patrols between Zimbabwean and Zambian authorities on the Zambezi River—the first ever joint patrols in the area. Much remains to be done, but Simon is just getting started. |

The AWF technical advisor brings leadership to the landscape.



Mana Pools National Park is an elephant haven under threat, but AWF is working in partnership with Zimbabwe's wildlife authority to resolve the poaching crisis there.

To Take Back the Forest

Encounters with the Lord's Resistance Army are not the kind of experience welcomed anywhere, much less in the middle of an isolated tropical rainforest. But in the Bili-Uele Protected Area Complex in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), running into the rebel group is a very real danger—one that's always in the back of Alain Lushimba's mind when he heads out for work every morning. "Each kilometer we walk in the forest, we do so under stress," says AWF's technical advisor.

With your support, however, AWF is assisting the Congolese wildlife authority to take back the forest from the rebel group. Under a co-management agreement, we have helped institute regular patrols in the central part of the protected area complex. AWF also purchased two mobile anti-poaching "units," plus a host of patrol equipment, to aid in the patrols. The all-terrain quad bikes come equipped with radios, first aid supplies, camping gear and a system for transmitting data remotely. As a result: Rates of encounters with humans, as well as the discovery of snares and ammunition cartridges, have declined over the past year.

Alarming Scenario

More than 90 percent of Cameroon's Dja Faunal Reserve is estimated to be undisturbed, according to UNESCO, which named Dja a World Heritage Site in 1987. An AWF-led survey of the reserve in 2015 found a more alarming scenario, however: a virgin forest with intact habitat but very few signs of wildlife.

AWF has since assigned a full-time technical advisor to the reserve, who is helping to support an anti-poaching program in this dense Cameroonian rainforest. We have established fixed, permanently staffed ranger camps at three priority sites in this expansive protected area and installed camera traps in key locations. These efforts and a continued presence help ensure the reserve's chimpanzees, western lowland gorillas and forest elephants remain protected.

Dja is not the only protected area in Cameroon where AWF is working. We have also signed an agreement with Cameroon's Ministry of Forest and Wildlife to collaborate in Campo Ma'an (see page 2) and Faro National Parks.

AWF is partnering with wildlife authorities to overcome challenges in a number of forested environments in Central Africa—and we're yielding encouraging results.

The Many Roles of Women in Conservation

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), women play a major role in conservation. Take Sophie Mboyo. Sophie lives in a remote part of the Congo rainforest and bears the burden of keeping her household running. Her husband is often away pursuing seasonal work, leaving her to somehow earn enough to feed, clothe and educate her eight children. With no other option, Sophie turned to selling bush meat.

Sophie's situation is not unique. But selling certain species of wildlife as bush meat is illegal under Congolese law. It also depletes the forest of wildlife critical to the ecosystem. That's why, with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (or USAID), AWF partnered with a local organization, *Réseau des Femmes Africaines pour le Développement Durable* (REFADD), to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for Sophie and other "market mamas" like her.

REFADD and AWF helped 32 market mamas in the town of Djolu fill a gap in the local market's offerings—soap. The women received training in soap production, literacy and marketing.

Today, they make more money selling soap than they ever made from selling bushmeat. Over a six-month period, the market mamas sold 4,500 bars of soap, making a profit of almost \$2,000.

Conservation front lines

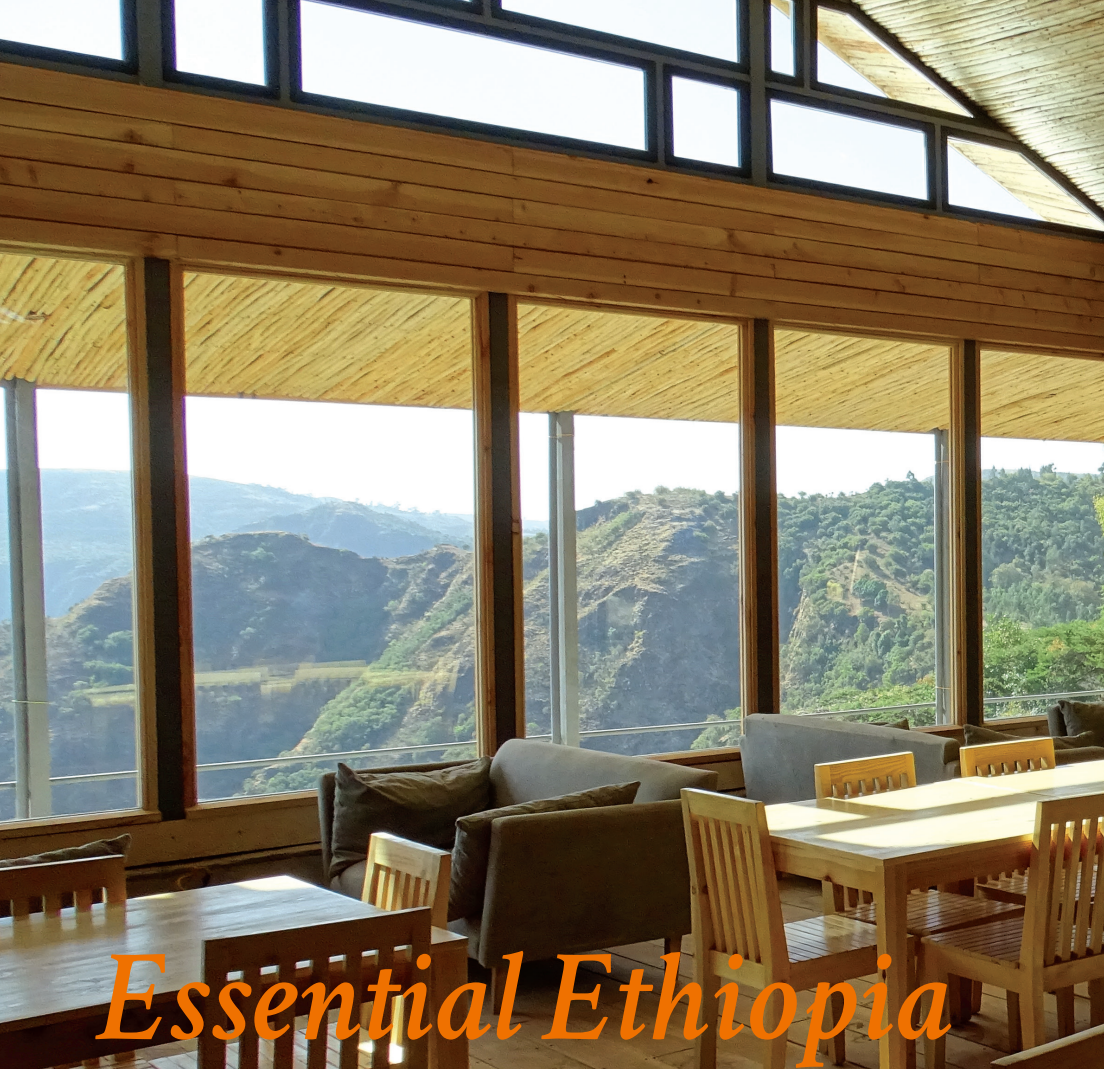
Another woman on the conservation front lines is Pacha Lotango, one of 11 female ecoguards AWF has trained

Today they make more money than they ever made from selling bush meat.

in the DRC. Pacha—who completed her training at the top of her class of 24 in August 2014—was leading a patrol several months later in Iyondji Community Bonobo Reserve when she and her unit were ambushed. (AWF, by the way, helped establish Iyondji in 2012.) She sustained a head injury severe enough to require treatment in Kinshasa and Nairobi. Pacha later returned to work and continues to lead patrols in the landscape to this day—and even plans to become a park warden later in her career. |

Women in Africa have tremendous impact on the natural environment around them.





Essential Ethiopia

Dave O’Connell and Karen Ayd had already booked their trip to Ethiopia when they learned of a travel advisory against non-essential travel to the country. The advisory was in response to an outbreak of regional unrest in Ethiopia.

The Pennsylvania couple considered their options... then took their trip anyway, in October of 2016. Their itinerary mostly featured visits to Ethiopia’s various cultural wonders, with one nature-based trip to Simien Mountains National Park. “The nature aspect of our trip fit in perfectly with the cultural tour,” O’Connell relayed, noting that with

Ethiopia being largely rural, the visit to this World Heritage Site in Danger only served to reinforce that pastoral feeling.

Adding to their enjoyment of the park: their stay at the newly opened Limalimo Lodge, a high-end eco-lodge built atop a bluff in the Simiens. Limalimo was built with financing from African Wildlife Capital, AWF’s impact investment subsidiary. “Having never been to Ethiopia before, we liked the idea of being able to go trekking during the day, having a comfortable place to sleep at night and supporting the local community as we did so,” explained O’Connell.

O’Connell added: “You can’t believe how amazing Limalimo is until you see it! The facility fits perfectly into the park. You could sit on the patio and never leave. In fact, we spent several hours just sitting and looking out over



Endemic species like the Ethiopian wolf—Africa’s most endangered carnivore—await those who visit Simien Mountains National Park.



Limalimo's capacity to make a positive impact was why African Wildlife Capital invested in the lodge in the first place.

Through African Wildlife Capital, AWF leveraged the private sector to bring about conservation impact—and jobs—in Ethiopia's Simien Mountains.

the canyon, watching birds of prey circling and gelada monkeys grazing on the grass.”

Sharing His Passion

That's the kind of experience Limalimo owners Shiferaw Asrat and Meles Yemata had imagined for guests when they conceived the lodge. A seasoned Simiens trekking guide, Shiferaw wanted to target a different, higher-end market—allowing him to share his passion for the park while also helping the local people. With limited lodging options available in the Simiens, this lodge would fill a special niche.

Meanwhile, Limalimo's location not only offered a scenic outlook but also had the potential to bring jobs and tourism income to a nearby community that had historically not benefited from tourism to the park. Limalimo's capacity to make a positive conservation and socioeconomic impact

was why African Wildlife Capital invested in the lodge in the first place.

Shiferaw and his wife, Julia Jeans, operations manager at Limalimo, did delay the lodge's opening by a month in response to the aforementioned travel advisories. But fortunately, the unrest in Ethiopia has stabilized and does not seem to have had any long-term impact. “Bookings for the end of December, January and February—which are typically peak times—are looking healthy,” said Jeans in late November.

Business continues to build as people like O'Connell and Aydt take pleasure in visiting Ethiopia. O'Connell said he and his wife encountered no problems during their tour of the country. “Ethiopia is a wonderful country with beautiful scenery. It couldn't be easier to travel there, and the people are wonderful. And to think, we almost didn't go,” he marveled. |

Through AWF's Classroom Africa program, rural communities in target areas make significant conservation commitments in exchange for primary school support.



Connecting Classrooms to *Conservation*

Through its Classroom Africa program, AWF is giving rural communities in Africa access to a quality primary school education for their children—and in the process incentivizing them to participate in conservation in exchange for education opportunities.

Part of this effort includes weaving conservation into the curriculum at AWF-supported schools. At the Lupani Community Primary School in Zambia, for example, teachers underwent training to learn how to teach science in a way that makes use of the natural world around them. The landscaping around the school was designed to underscore this connection. Nature trails lined with indigenous trees—all

properly labeled, of course—weave throughout the campus.

The biggest conservation impact of Classroom Africa, however, comes from the landscape protection that goes hand-in-hand with our support. In exchange for AWF constructing a new school or renovating an existing one—and providing teacher training, conservation education and other support to ensure a quality school—communities agree to specific, significant conservation actions. With Lupani School, for example, the community set aside roughly 40,000 hectares of their land for a critical elephant corridor. These conservation covenants directly address the threats that make each location a priority for AWF in the first place.

Wildlife corridor

Manyara Ranch Primary School once sat in the middle of a key wildlife corridor connecting Manyara and Tarangire National Parks in Tanzania, impeding the movement of wildlife. AWF intervened in 2008, rebuilding and relocating the school to give wildlife like the lesser kudu (at right) the space it needed, while keeping students and teachers out of harm's way. AWF is currently renovating the school, which continues to thrive academically thanks to AWF support.



Protecting the forest

Deep in the forests of the Democratic Republic of Congo, bushmeat hunting and forest degradation threaten critical habitat and wildlife, including the endangered bonobo (at left). Several years ago, the local community made a commitment to conservation when it—despite fierce opposition from neighboring villages—agreed to work with AWF on a land-use plan to protect the forest and practice sustainable agriculture. When AWF constructed the Ilima Conservation Primary School, the community further agreed to stop illegally hunting.



Securing biodiversity

Kidepo Valley is part of a landscape that traverses northern Uganda up to the Imatong Mountains in South Sudan. On the Uganda side is Kidepo Valley National Park, which boasts at least 86 species of mammals, including the aardwolf, caracal, African elephant and

buffalo. Deforestation and expanding agriculture threaten the integrity of this diverse ecosystem, but 14 area villages have recently agreed to a land-use plan covering 659 sq. km. AWF is planning its next cluster of Classroom Africa schools to support the villages in this venture.



New Models for



Conventional wisdom holds that agriculture and conservation are at odds, yet a growing global population continues to require food, fuel and fiber. With seemingly abundant unexploited land, Africa has become the go-to source to meet this demand. Many of Africa’s “empty” expanses, however, provide valuable ecosystem services. Southern Tanzania is one such region. Known for its elephants, this is also where the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania aims to engage tens of thousands of smallholder farmers in commercial agriculture.

In this growth corridor, AWF is modeling a green, inclusive approach to agricultural development. With support from the MacArthur Foundation and the Barr Foundation, AWF is teaching smallholder farmers in the Mbeya area to practice climate-smart agriculture that can produce high yields on small plots. AWF has also linked farmers to more lucrative markets for their crops. In exchange, farmers participate in land-use planning and watershed protection.

In the Kilombero area, AWF is leveraging public–private partnerships through IUCN’s Sustainability and Inclusion Strategy for Growth Corridors in Africa (or SUSTAIN) program. With support from the Netherlands Development Cooperation Agency, AWF works with a variety of partners to incorporate conservation throughout value chains for crops like sugar and rice.

“AWF’s model for agriculture maintains the ecological systems that underpin food production,” says Andrea Athanas, AWF program design director, Europe. “We believe this region—and others like it—can achieve its lofty economic goals more effectively by taking conservation into account.” |

Thanks to Our FUNDING PARTNERS



Agriculture



Agriculture and conservation need not be at odds—in southern Tanzania, AWF is working with farmers to implement sustainable, climate-resilient cultivation practices.

A convening role

AWF implements a variety of technical projects throughout Africa, but we also often act as a convener to bring partners together on critical issues:

Responding to bad development. A slew of potential development projects, ranging from a mega-dam to a golf course, have the potential to negatively impact wildlife corridors and even flood a conservancy in Kenya's Samburu landscape. AWF hosted a stakeholder workshop for more than 60 area organizations to coordinate a response to the planned development. The workshop led to the formation of the Ewaso Ng'iro Basin Stakeholder Forum. AWF is the forum secretariat.

Sharing best practices. Community conservancies represent a proven method of creating protected areas. In April, AWF hosted a one-day workshop on conservancy best practices. More than 70 conservancy professionals from various countries—including Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Uganda—attended. AWF also tapped various experts to write papers on numerous aspects of conservancy establishment, which we collected into a volume for others interested in the conservancy process.

Networking for great ape practitioners. For the past few years, AWF's African Apes Initiative has gathered great ape practitioners from around the sites we support in Central and West Africa so they can talk with and learn from one another. Most recently, these researchers, protected area wardens and rangers got a new conservation perspective when they met in a savanna setting in Kenya's Kilimanjaro landscape and engaged with conservationists based there.



Implemented by **giz** giz is a joint venture of the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) and the German Federal Government.



It's Time to Take Action

I had never stepped foot in Africa before being introduced to AWF. My interest in the organization's work on the continent was immediate, however.

Africa and its wildlife had always held an allure for me. So to find an organization that recognized a need and was eager to engage China in conserving Africa's wildlife and wild lands was exciting. I was ready to get involved right away.

It was not until my first visit to Africa a year later that I fully comprehended just how important it is for us all to protect what's left of the continent's incomparable landscapes and wildlife. I determined immediately that I wanted my child, and her children, to have the same opportunities to experience the awe I felt while observing an elephant herd in the bush... the thrill of spying a lion stalking through the tall grass... and the sense of peace I experienced while standing under an expansive sky and seeing nothing but wilderness in all directions.

I realized then that if we do not all take action, the wonders of Africa will disappear before my daughter, or anyone's sons or daughters, get a chance to experience them.

Starting at Home

For me, "taking action" begins at home. Much of the Chinese general public still

has not connected the dots between what has been "tradition" in our country—purchasing decorative ivory carvings—and the horrific poaching crisis occurring in Africa. It is up to those of us who are aware to educate our countrymen.

And we must also engage Chinese industry, which has had monumental impact on African landscapes over the past two decades. Much of it has produced positive development for Africa, but there have been far too many negative impacts on the environment in the process. Those of us engaged in business must do better.

So, I am taking action. I am taking action because I am Chinese. And because I am a parent. And because I am a businessman. But most importantly, I am taking action because I am a proud citizen of this planet... and I want to make a difference.

Gordon Cheng is CEO of Cameron Pace Group – China and an AWF trustee.



As Africa's largest trading partner, China is poised to have a tremendous positive impact for conservation in Africa.



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Thank You for Your Support*

Your generosity is ensuring the continued survival of Africa's wildlife and wild lands. We appreciate your support.

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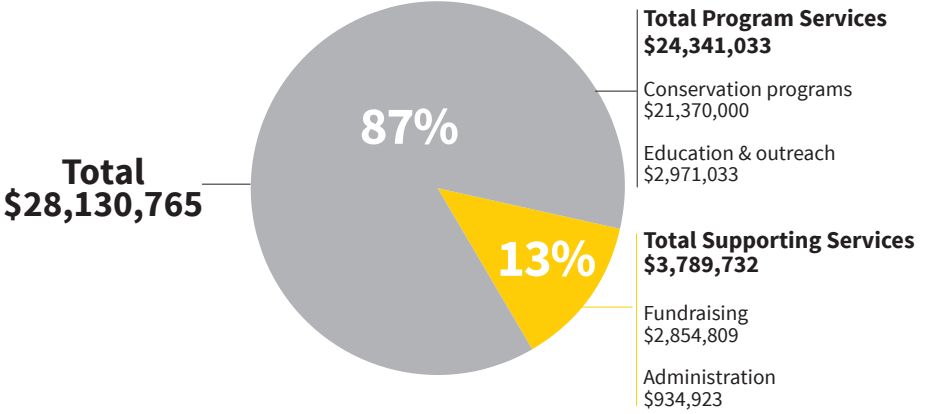


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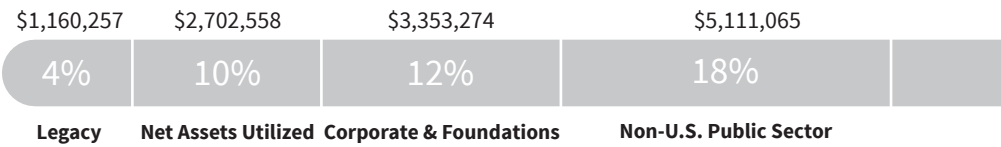
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12.3 Million

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60

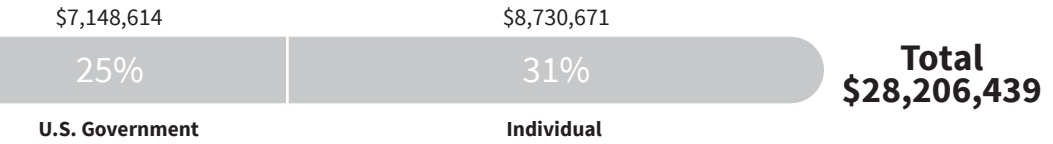
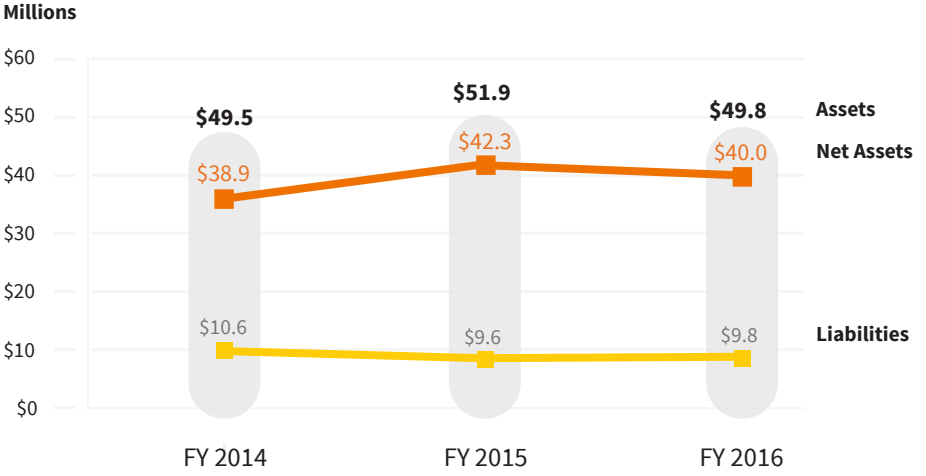
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