

PROTECTED AREAS, PEOPLE AND PARTNERSHIPS **WCS IN AFRICA**



IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress, 18-23 July 2022





WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY (WCS)

WCS works in over 60 countries across the globe to advance the durable conservation of wildlife and wild places. We have a decades-long, demonstrable track record of conservation successes that are built on lessons learned from over 100 years of direct conservation practice in the field across the globe. To achieve conservation, we bring the best science and a pragmatic approach to complex conservation challenges. We partner with national governments, as they are critical stakeholders. We partner with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, as they are vital allies. We partner with donors and intergovernmental agencies to bring resources and policy expertise. And we strive to bring sustainable financing to all projects and programs.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY IN AFRICA

For over 60 years, and through 14 registered country programs, WCS has been pursuing successful conservation programs in Africa at the interface between governments and local communities. WCS brings resources, capacity, skills, partnerships and science in crafting pragmatic and innovative solutions to modern-day problems. In light of the rapid socio-economic changes currently occurring in Africa, WCS believes that well-designed, well-managed conservation efforts represent a tremendous opportunity for the long-term well-being of Africa's people and wild places. Protected areas are at the heart of this opportunity. Long-running WCS conservation programs in Africa have demonstrated that protected areas can become anchors within broader landscapes, not just for biodiversity conservation, but as drivers of economic growth, of strong governance, and of improved well-being for local communities. WCS's Africa conservation strategy seeks to replicate and scale this successful and holistic conservation model across those geographies in Africa where there is both the opportunity and ability for WCS to have a durable impact.

OUR MISSION
WCS saves wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, conservation action, education, and inspiring people to value nature.

OUR VISION
WCS envisions a world where wildlife thrives in healthy lands and seas, valued by societies that embrace and benefit from the diversity and integrity of life on earth.



PROTECTED AREAS, PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS

WCS supports a portfolio of over 20 protected areas in Africa that are large enough to be viable ecosystems, which hold critical populations of highly threatened emblematic species and can also serve as anchors for good governance, security and economic growth for larger landscapes. We focus on Central and East Africa where opportunities exist for WCS to have the greatest and lasting impact.

Five aspects distinguish WCS' strategy in Africa. First, we take a landscape approach, anchored by protected areas. Second, we believe partnerships are vital - primarily with governments and local communities, but also with private sector and non-traditional conservation partners, such as peace-building and development organizations. Third, WCS invests for the long-term, often over several decades - we have a long history of building capacity in park management and governance to a point where we ultimately transition out once core deliverables are met. Fourth, we hire locally and vigorously promote African leadership in conservation. Fifth, we strive to connect landscapes to global innovations in sustainable financing and policy developments - WCS is a global leader in nature-based solutions to climate change and in climate financing mechanisms and seeks to capitalize upon this in its field conservation programs.



WCS IN AFRICA

- 21 protected areas
- 14 registered country offices
- Emphasis on African leadership, with 13 African Country Directors
- Technical support and capacity building at national-level protected area systems for our governments partners in 8 countries
- More than 1,200 staff throughout Africa
- Operational support and best practice development and coordination through the Africa Protected Areas Management Unit, including safeguards and Standard Operating Procedure development, strategic planning for protected areas, and career development.



WCS SUPPORTS AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS

The creation and successful management of protected areas is an immensely challenging task in Africa and indeed across the globe. WCS is honored to be invited to support and partner with African governments in this complex yet highly beneficial endeavor. Effective **Collaborative Management Partnerships (CMPs)**¹ with host governments are a key mechanism for WCS's approach to protected area management in Africa. Clear and honest communications about our respective interests and goals is key to successful CMPs. WCS also collaborates with African governments through targeted technical support to government agencies at national levels. In all models, WCS emphasizes supporting protected areas through building government capacity at the protected area level, whilst also working at the national level through the development of institutional support mechanisms. Finally, WCS strives for increasingly sustainable financing of protected areas over our lifetime of support, through diversification of revenue and investment streams, thereby reducing the dependency upon philanthropic and grant-based investment.

SUSTAINABLE FINANCING FOR AFRICA'S PROTECTED AREAS

WCS commits to raising sustained, adequate financial resources for effective and efficient management of those protected areas we support - thereby providing durable benefits to both biodiversity and local communities. In the short to medium term, funds available through classic channels, such as international donors and national governments, will continue to be essential. Nevertheless, over the medium to long-term, linkages to markets, impact investors, and engagement with the private sector will result in more diverse and innovative funding. Investment in conservation-related enterprises will both directly and indirectly benefit protected areas through income generation and the reduction of pressure on natural resources. In addition, mechanisms such as carbon-financing and eco-tourism linked to protected areas and landscapes have immense potential to generate significant funds that allow both for long-term planning and financial security, as well as reduced dependence on the donor community. Across Africa and the globe, WCS has long been a leader in both the creation and successful implementation of community-based enterprises and business opportunities linked to conservation that provide sustainable sources of income and protected area financing. Many of these are now fully operational and are contributing tangible benefits to both biodiversity and local communities. Throughout WCS's protected area portfolio in Africa, we aim to build on these successes by continuing to develop, diversify and expand the range of sustainable financing mechanisms.

¹ A Collaborative Management Partnership (CMP) refers to when a protected area authority (government, private or community) enters into a contractual arrangement with a partner (private or NGO) for the management of a protected area.
<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/562331632845684383/pdf/Collaborative-Management-Partnership-Toolkit.pdf>



STATE OF CONSERVATION IN AFRICA

Africa is truly a global conservation priority. With 17% of earth's tropical forests, the Congo Basin - the world's only tropical forest carbon sink - is absolutely vital for global climate stability. Africa's grasslands are both the cradle of humanity and home to the world's largest and most outstanding mammal migrations. The continent harbors 25% of the world's biodiversity and critical and abundant populations of emblematic species such as African elephants, lions and great apes. African marine waters are home to 11% of the world's coral reefs, vital habitat for and populations of many of the globe's most threatened shark and ray species, and essential populations of scores of threatened marine mammals and sea-turtles. At the same time, Africa is now facing some of the greatest changes the continent has ever seen. Over the next ten years, population growth in sub-Saharan Africa will be higher than anywhere else in the world. As a result, the continent will experience some of the greatest transitions in land use, infrastructure development and demand for natural resources. It is clear that over the next decade, some of the greatest conservation successes or failures will be felt in Africa. Recognizing these challenges, WCS urges the global conservation community to significantly increase investment into Africa, particularly into African conservation efforts and solutions.



Fourteen regions have high conservation value (light green), with the highest levels of ecological integrity and vital biodiversity.

Protected Areas are anchors of biodiversity conservation in these priority landscapes:

- **65 key Protected Areas each greater than 5,000 km².**



AFRICA IS HOME TO

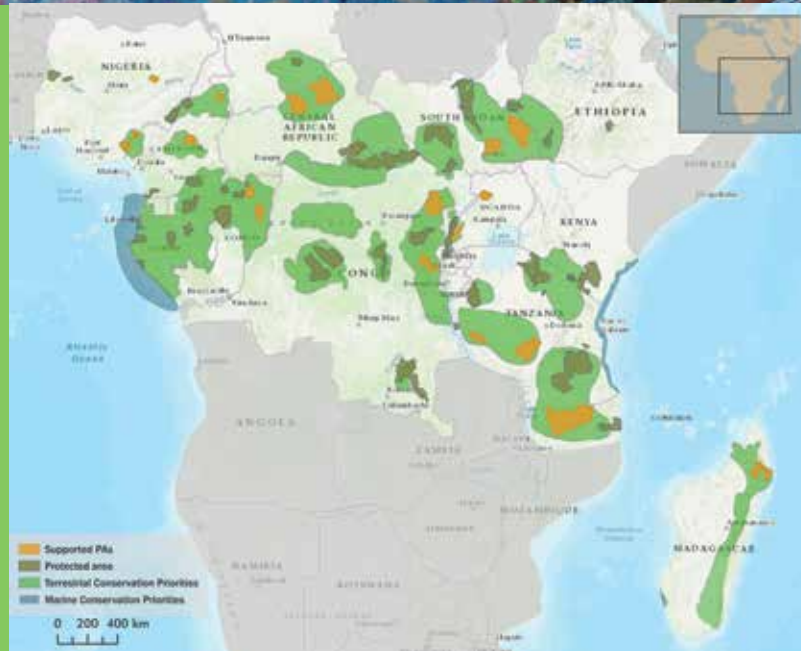
25%
of the world's
BIODIVERSITY
including

11%
of the world's
CORAL REEFS



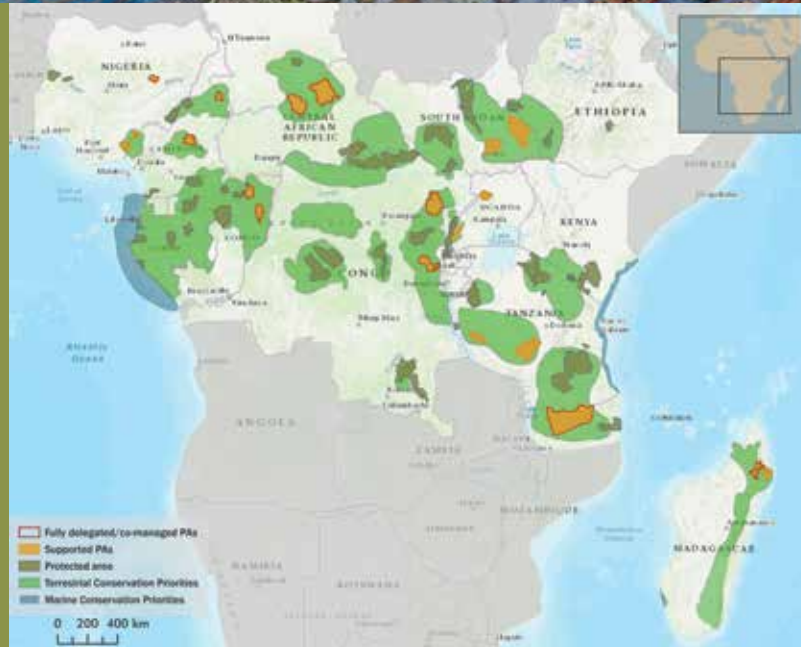
WCS SUPPORTS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES & LOCAL COMMUNITIES

21 protected areas are currently supported by WCS. These protected areas are all anchoring larger landscapes.



Across Africa, WCS collaborates with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities through a **rights-based conservation approach**. We aim to achieve a shared vision for a more secure and resilient future, where wildlife remains a visible, thriving, and culturally valued part of the wild places where our Indigenous Peoples and Local Community (IPLC) partners live and we work. These intact forests, grasslands, and coastal reef systems are a main source of their families' livelihoods and wellbeing and the foundation of their cultural identities. Their direct and continuing interest in the health of these systems has made Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities our best partners and most important political constituency for conserving natural resources in the African landscapes and seascapes where we work. Respectful engagement with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities is a core feature of our approach to conservation, because we have shared interests in the conservation of the intact places they call home.

11 of these 21 protected areas are currently under a Collaborative Management Partnership (fully delegated management and co-management agreements).



SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

A key to respectful and accountable engagement by conservation organizations with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities are robust social safeguards that ensure that actions taken to conserve habitats and species, also protect the rights and safety of the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities who depend upon them for food, livelihoods and cultural practice. WCS fully embraces the need for, has developed and put into practice such social safeguard policies. These policies range from Free, Prior, Informed Consent in the establishment of protected areas and the development of community-based natural resource management activities; establishing grievance redress mechanisms, early warning systems and communication platforms to enable community members a safe space to provide feedback, report insecurity incidents and seek redress; and the continual improvement of these approaches to ensure Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities voices are integrated into protected area governance and management.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Africa's massive 30,500-kilometer coastline spans both tropical and temperate seas, and includes stunning and threatened coral reefs as well as critical populations of numerous threatened species of sharks, rays, marine mammals and sea-turtles. The fisheries sector across Africa employs over 12 million people and provides essential protein for millions more. In this complex milieu, well-designed, well-managed marine protected areas are a vital tool to ensure lasting win-win solutions for both biodiversity and food security for people. Across the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Coast and the Western Indian Ocean in Eastern Africa, and in collaboration with local governments and local communities, WCS has long supported both the creation and ongoing management of dozens of marine protected areas, national marine spatial planning processes, and national fisheries reform. Our ambition is to restore and preserve ecosystem integrity in the most important coastal geographies for marine biodiversity and local communities.



All WCS country and field programs implement these WCS global social safeguards policies and mechanisms, ensuring compliance with all applicable laws, donor requirements and internationally recognized standards as relevant. WCS protected area personnel and partners regularly receive training on these social safeguards mechanisms (including training on human rights), and have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities under these global policies. Last but not least, WCS continues to work with other conservation partners as well as partner governments to further develop and strengthen these training programs with the aim of ensuring alignment at the national level.



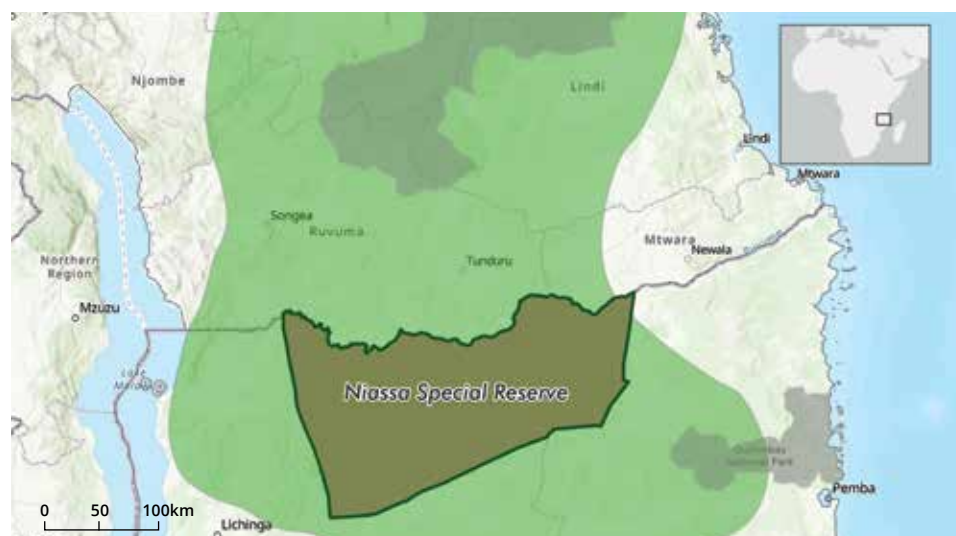
NIASSA SPECIAL RESERVE

Niassa Special Reserve (NSR) in northern Mozambique is one of Africa's biggest and most spectacular protected areas. It harbors the country's largest populations of iconic and threatened mega-fauna such as savannah elephants, lions, and wild dog, and, encompassing one of the most extensive tracts of intact miombo woodland remaining on the continent, it also sequesters globally important volumes of carbon. This vast, unfenced landscape holds the potential to contain significantly larger wildlife populations, and its towering inselbergs likely harbor hundreds of endemics that have yet to be studied. Incorporating over 60,000 residents, 17 management concessions, 2 provincial and 8 district governments, NSR represents one of the most complex protected areas in Africa. It is also under growing internal and external pressure from unplanned land conversion, illegal logging and mining, poaching of high value species, and insecurity caused by the insurgency to the east. Throughout the previous decade, NSR experienced some of the world's worst ivory poaching, emblematic of the weak management and tremendous threats at play around the Reserve. However, thanks to the concerted effort of partners, government and significant financial investments, collectively we were able to reduce that pressure to near zero beginning in 2018.



CONSERVATION VALUE

- Mozambique's largest protected area (31% of all protected land) and one of Africa's largest contiguous wilderness areas
- Home to many of the globe's largest and most important populations of elephant, lion, leopard, wild dog, sable, kudu, wildebeest and zebra.



Surface Area:
42,300 km²

Management Mandate:
Co-Management (renewed 2020)

Government Partner:
Ministry of Land and Environment, implemented by the Administração Nacional para Áreas de Conservação (ANAC)

ACHIEVEMENTS

Conservation Impacts:

- Stemmed 10-year elephant poaching crisis with fewer than 5 incidents detected since 2018
- Strong anti-poaching systems and partnerships in place
- Average sentences significantly increased for poachers and traffickers
- Aerial surveys and satellite collars revealing important movement and density data for key species.

Community Impacts:

- Collaborative human-elephant conflict systems established
- Capacity building trainings for community-based natural resource committees
- Plans in place for establishing a rights-based community conservation model.

OPPORTUNITIES

- A new 20-year co-management agreement was signed in 2020 with the Administração Nacional para Áreas de Conservação (ANAC)
- A 10-year General Management Plan is currently being drafted with support of all management concession-holders, which sets out a framework for unprecedented coordination among NSR stakeholders.

5-YEAR IMPACT INDICATORS

- Stabilize or grow key wildlife populations (elephant, buffalo, sable, zebra, lion)
- Achieve 100% management concession occupancy with engaged operators meeting contractual obligations and benefiting from a collaborative management approach
- Establish the foundations of a green economy where the conservation of wildlife and natural resources directly contributes to the wellbeing of local communities and financial sustainability of the reserve
- Establish a new Zoning Plan, including community governance of natural resources
- Establish a robust central monitoring system that uses cross-sectoral Reserve-wide data gathered from across the Reserve guiding adaptive management.





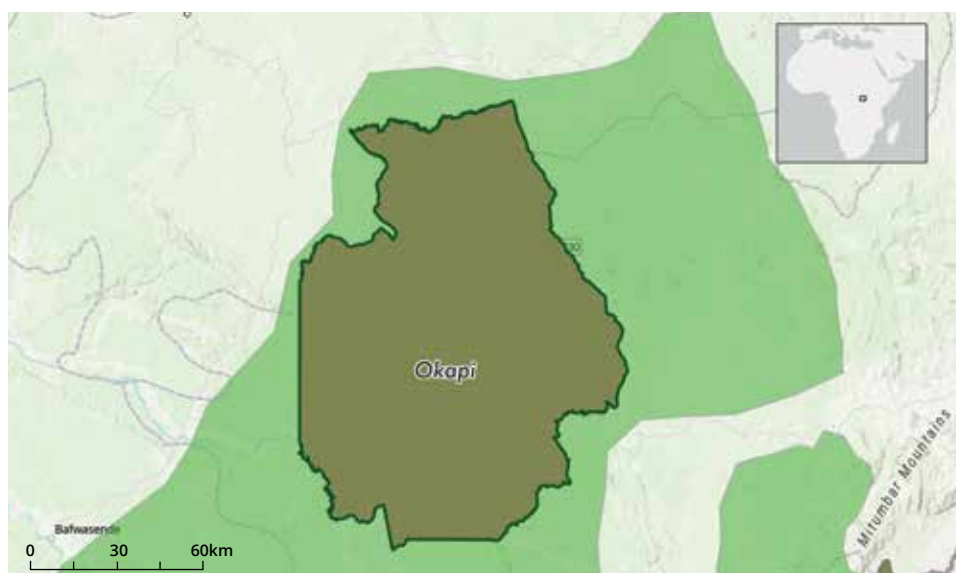
OKAPI WILDLIFE RESERVE

The Okapi Wildlife Reserve (OWR) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is of exceptional biodiversity importance, harboring one of DRC's largest remaining strongholds of forest elephants and chimpanzees, and the largest stronghold of okapi. As a result of these uniquely high levels of biodiversity and its intact ecosystem, UNESCO listed the OWR as a World Heritage Site in 1996. The Reserve is also of great cultural significance, with the Mbuti and Efe Indigenous People thought to have inhabited these forests for some 40,000 years. In 2018, WCS signed a 10-year Public-Private-Partnership agreement with the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) for the continued management and protection of the Reserve.



CONSERVATION VALUE

- Significant populations of forest elephants, eastern chimpanzees, and okapi (~5,000)
- Highest diversity of forest primates in Africa (17 species)
- DRC's largest tract of intact lowland rainforest
- 27,000 people live here, 25% are Indigenous Mbuti, Efe Forest Peoples.



Surface Area:
13,726 km²
Management Mandate:
10-year Public-Private-Partnership Agreement (since 2018)
Government Partner:
Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN)



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- Stable chimpanzee populations
- The deforestation rate is 90% lower than in the 50km buffer area
- Well-trained, robust patrol system installed and steadily increasing in both coverage and effectiveness since 2020
- Improvement of the security situation since the 2018 new management agreement.



Community Impacts:

- Increased community engagement with focus on social safeguards development and training
- Foundations of good community relations, especially with the Indigenous Peoples living around the Reserve.

OPPORTUNITIES

- 10-year renewable fully delegated management since December 2018
- Important opportunity to set a new standard for rights-based conservation
- Great opportunity for the Okapi Wildlife Reserve to serve as a catalyst for security, development and good governance in the Ituri Province.

5-YEAR IMPACT GOALS

- Clear illegally issued mining permits in the South-West sector of the Reserve
- Secure integrally protected core zone in the Reserve from illegal mining and poaching
- Establish improved co-management of natural resources between the Reserve and its residents
- Improve and integrate the role of Indigenous Efe and Mbuti people into Reserve governance and decision-making
- Implement and buffer zone management program to address external pressures to the Reserve.

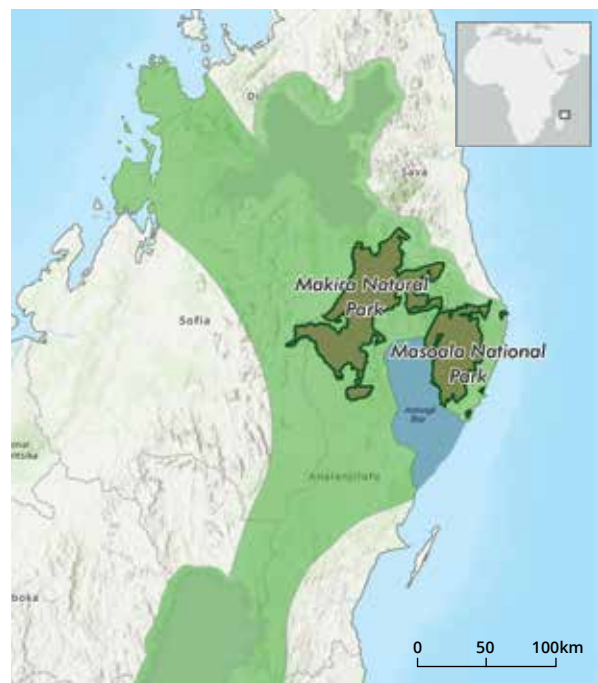




MAKIRA NATURAL PARK, MASOALA NATIONAL PARK & BAY OF ANTONGIL



The MaMaBay (*Makira, Masoala, Antongil Bay*) Land and Seascape in north-east Madagascar supports the largest and most intact area of lowland and mid-elevation tropical evergreen forest remaining in Madagascar, encompassing over 10,000 km² of land and sea. The landscape comprises Makira Natural Park (3,700 km²) and the contiguous Masoala National Park (2,300 km²) where forest extends to the shore of Antongil Bay. WCS has been working in the MaMaBay Land and Seascape for more than 20 years and has obtained a delegated management agreement with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development for Makira Natural Park since 2012. A similar delegated management agreement is under development for Masoala National Park where we currently provide technical assistance. Over the last few years, WCS helped achieve tangible progress in the ongoing process of establishing Antongil Bay as a Marine National Park.



Surface Area: 10,000 km²

Management Mandate:

- Makira Natural Park (Delegated management agreement, since 2012)
- Masoala National Park (technical assistance, co-management discussions underway)
- Bay of Antongil (under establishment as a Marine National Park)

Government Partner: Ministry of Environment & Sustainable Development, Madagascar

CONSERVATION VALUE

- The terrestrial protected areas of the landscape support more than 20% of Madagascar's biodiversity, including lemurs such as Indri, Red-ruffed Lemur, and Silky Sifaka
- Antongil Bay supports diverse coastal habitats including seagrass, mangrove, coral reef, and is an important site for migrating humpback whales, as well as sea turtles, sharks, and rays
- 230,000 people rely on the land/seascape's ecosystem services for agriculture and fisheries
- Largest remaining tract of eastern rainforest.



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- Documented reduction in deforestation rate
- Evidence-driven improvement in natural resource management through sustained, highly-trained SMART patrols
- Sustained, long-term monitoring of forest cover and indicator species on land and sea has enabled robust adaptive management.



Community Impacts:

- Improved well-being of local communities through collaborations on sustainable agriculture, agroforestry, livestock management and fish-farming
- Development of value chains through conservation agreements and agriculture-based incentive schemes that work for people and forests.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Integrated management of the entire MaMaBay Landscape as one ecosystem and establishment of a Collaborative Management Partnership for Masoala National Park, and obtaining protected status for Antongil Bay
- Enabling communities to manage land and coastal waters through establishment of more than 100 community-managed sites in the buffer zones of terrestrial protected areas and 27 locally managed community marine reserves.

5-YEAR IMPACT INDICATORS

- Establish stable populations of key wildlife species including diurnal lemurs
- Threats to migrating humpback whales significantly reduced
- Rate of forest loss reduced to less than 0.1% across the entire landscape or stable
- Continued tangible and measurable improvements of the well-being and economic status of local communities
- Collaboration with coastal communities to support sustainable management of their marine reserves, leading to increased catches and better livelihood status.





BAMINGUI-BANGORAN & MANOVO GOUNDA ST. FLORIS NATIONAL PARKS

The Northeastern Protected Area Complex (NPAC) extends across 104,000km². It encompasses the Bamingui-Bangoran National Park, the Manovo-Gounda St Floris National Park, also classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and faunal reserves and old hunting areas that function as biodiversity corridors. In 2018 WCS signed a Collaborative Management Partnership with the government of Central African Republic to develop and implement conservation solutions, park management and community conservation models. This long-term mandate aims to save the remaining wildlife populations, protect wild places and critical natural resources that are vital for the livelihoods and well-being of local people, and help mitigate global climate change.

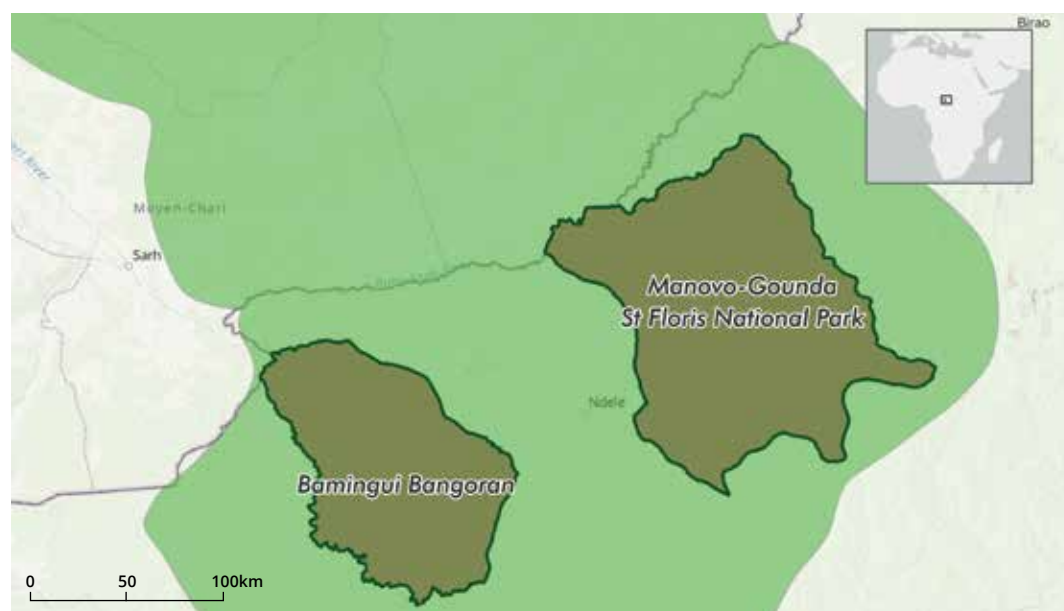
Surface Area: 104,000 km²

Management Mandate: 25-year Public-Private Partnership (since 2018)

Government Partner: Ministry of Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing

CONSERVATION VALUE

- At the heart of one of Africa's most intact forests and largest protected area complexes
- Despite history of poaching, surveys confirm small but critical populations of savanna elephants, Kordofan giraffe, giant eland, roan, hartebeest, buffalo
- Lions, leopards, spotted hyenas, African wild dogs are still present
- The Northeastern Protected Area Complex is the main water source for all of northeastern CAR and a crucial contribution to the Chari basin and Lake Chad, which provides drinking water to over 30 million people across four countries.



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- Stopped poaching in core areas of the park and increased park protection
- Effective and efficient transhumance strategy with reduced cattle presence in the core zone
- Early signs of wildlife rebounding.



Community Impacts:

- Since the beginning of WCS' engagement and, given the challenging politico-security context in northern CAR, WCS has been able to establish constructive dialogue with local communities through workshops, radio transmissions and the continuous work of a dedicated community conservation team.

OPPORTUNITIES

- 25-year fully delegated management agreement in place since 2018 to ensure long term management and financing of the Northeastern CAR protected area complex
- Great opportunity for the Northeastern Protected Area Complex to serve as a catalyst for security, development and good governance in the region
- Trans-boundary partnership between CAR and Chad to develop an integrated approach for the conservation of the Central Chari Basin ecosystem.

5-YEAR IMPACT INDICATORS / GOALS

- Wildlife populations stabilize and begin to recover
- Local communities tangibly and measurably benefit in both livelihoods and well-being from the management of the protected areas
- Maintain the effectiveness of our protected area surveillance and bio-monitoring operations in an unstable security context
- Strengthen the implementation of protected area management and land use plans
- Ensure the continued financing of conservation and sustainable development actions, as well as the gradual increase in operations and infrastructure on the ground
- Build and strengthen the management capacity of personnel.





NOUABALÉ-NDOKI NATIONAL PARK

Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park (NNNP), approximately 4,000 km² of contiguous lowland rainforest in northern Republic of Congo, is one of the best examples of an intact forest ecosystem remaining in the Congo Basin. The region is a stronghold for important populations of large mammals, including forest elephants, western lowland gorillas, and chimpanzees. But protecting the park is increasingly difficult. Illegal ivory poaching and trafficking, commercial hunting, and increased accessibility from new roads all pose threats. Created in 1993, the park and its buffer zone have benefited from more than 25 years of collaboration between the Congolese Government and WCS. In October 2014, WCS signed a collaborative management partnership agreement with the Ministry for Forest Economy, creating the Nouabalé-Ndoki Foundation (NNEF), to ensure the long-term management and financing of the park.

Surface Area: 4,240 km²
Management Mandate: 25-year Fully delegated management (since 2014)
Government Partner: Ministry for Forest Economy, Republic of Congo



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- Populations of forest elephants and great apes have been stable since 2014
- Elephant poaching has dropped by 69 percent since 2017
- 62 convictions of elephant poachers/traffickers (average 71 percent conviction rate), including landmark 30-year conviction in the criminal courts
- The park holds the longest running field-research site on the western lowland gorilla, providing groundbreaking insights into social organization and population dynamics.

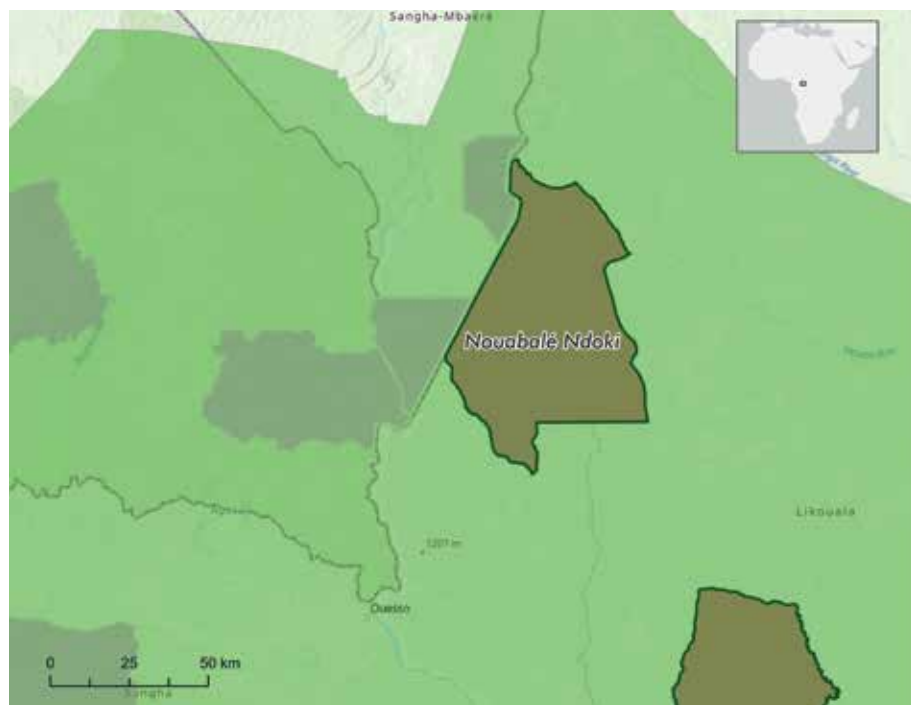


Community Impacts:

- 80% of local households employed by the Park
- Business training and enterprise development (i.e., community tourism)
- Secured two major private sector investors to invest in community-benefiting enterprises in the landscape
- Village Development Fund established: health clinic, primary school, boreholes and maternal center constructed.

CONSERVATION VALUE

- Best example of intact forest ecosystem in the Congo Basin
- Never been logged, no settlements or roads
- Important populations of forest elephants, western lowland gorillas, chimpanzees.



OPPORTUNITIES

- WCS has a 25-year fully delegated management agreement signed in 2014 to ensure long-term management and financing of the Park
- Protection from external threats to the Park through strong buffer zone partnership with FSC-certified logging companies
- Potential for 20% of Park revenue to come from the expansion of tourism activities in the next 10 years.

5-YEAR IMPACT INDICATORS

- Build a world-class tourism experience that directly supports the Park, the local economy and the national government tourism strategy
- Implement a sustainable business plan for the 21,000 km² of FSC-certified logging concessions surrounding the Park
- Recover elephant populations in the buffer zone
- Build capacity of Park leadership at all levels
- Expand formal protection around the Park by at least 5%.



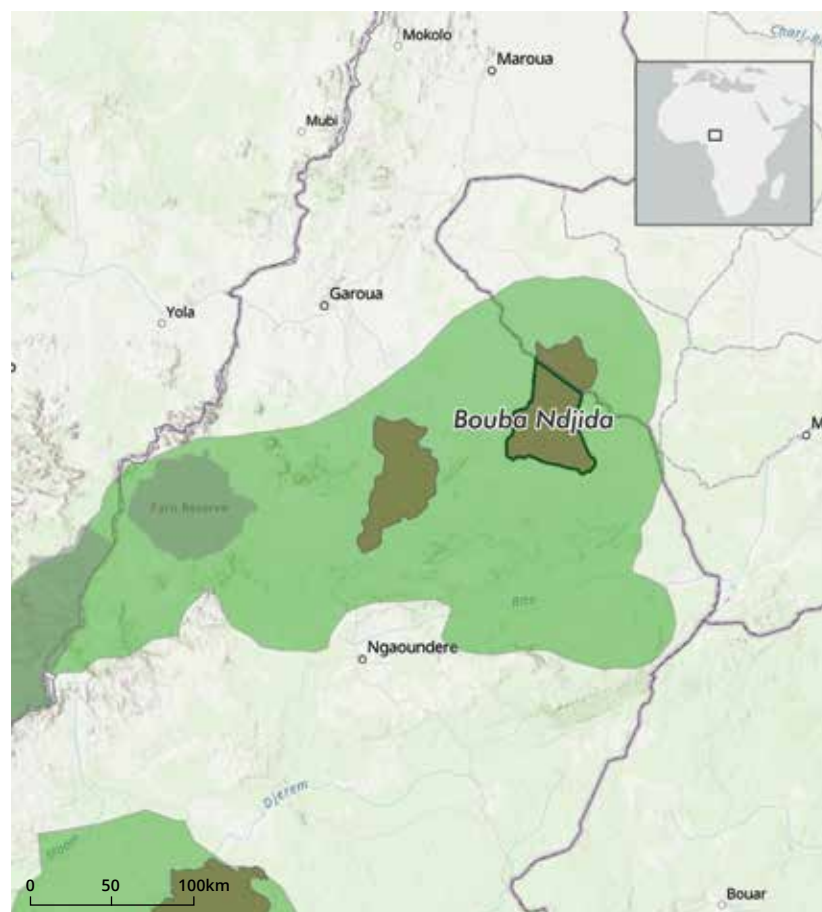


BOUBA NJIDA NATIONAL PARK

Bouba Njida National Park in Cameroon is part of a transboundary complex that spans a total area of 650,000 hectares and includes Bouba Njida National Park in Cameroon and the Sena Oura National Park in Chad. WCS works in partnership with the government of Cameroon to manage the Park, rehabilitate the landscape and protect its key wildlife populations.

CONSERVATION VALUE

- One of the most intact wildlife assemblages remaining in the Sudano-Savannah zone
- Small but significant lion population.



Surface Area: 2,200 km²

Management Mandate:
Co-management (since 2017)

Government Partner: Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOP)



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- Significant areas of the Park invaded by cattle have been secured and habitat is recovering
- A wildlife corridor was established to Benoue National Park to the west
- Replication of model in progress in Benoue National Park.



Community Impacts:

- Increased community engagement with focus on social safeguards development and training
- Clear focus on local recruitment and capacity building through dedicated trainings.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Transboundary partnership between Chad and Cameroon to rehabilitate the greater Bouba Njida-Sena Oura landscape
- Great potential to significantly leverage public financing
- Opportunity to replicate the habitat recovery model across the entire Northern Region (*"Région du Nord"*).

5-YEAR IMPACT INDICATORS

- Rehabilitate habitat and recover wildlife populations – including elephants – across the Bouba-Sena Oura landscape
- Extend the successful recovery model in Bouba-Njida National Park to the surrounding hunting zones
- Rehabilitate wildlife corridors to neighbouring Benoue National Park
- Strengthen the Park's management capacity
- Reform of the local revenue-sharing model for the hunting zones surrounding Bouba-Njida National Park and optimise stakeholder coordination
- Enact full reform of local revenue sharing model for the hunting zones.





KAHUZI-BIEGA NATIONAL PARK



Kahuzi Biega National Park was created in 1970 to conserve the Grauer's Gorilla, the world's largest gorilla species. With 6,000 km², the park covers a habitat range from lowland tropical to Afro-montane forests. WCS signed a Public-Private-Partnership agreement in May 2022 to help rehabilitate this extraordinary habitat, protect the Grauer's gorilla and help conserve the important ecosystems that the surrounding population relies upon. Lives and livelihoods are completely entwined with conservation successes, providing an unparalleled opportunity for WCS to develop a rights-based model for conservation.

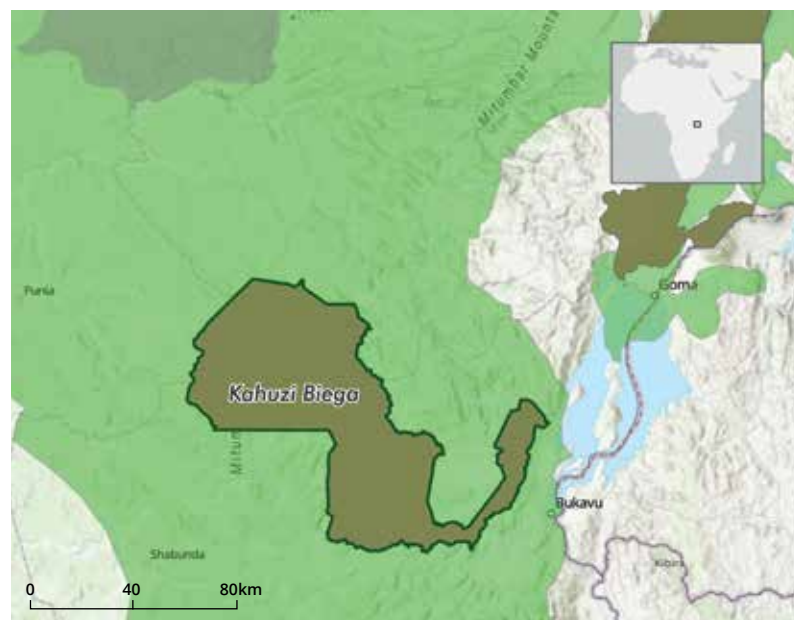
CONSERVATION VALUE

- Only protected area conserving habitat ranging from lowland tropical to Afro-montane forests
- World Heritage Site since 1997 for species diversity and endemism
- 60% of the global population of Grauer's gorilla
- Crucial ecosystem services for local communities, towns and cities. Enables access to clean water for more than 5 million people.

Surface Area: 6,000 km²

Management Mandate:
10-year Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) Agreement (since 2022)

Government Partner: Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN)



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- Grauer's gorilla population stable or increasing in those sectors of the Park receiving WCS support.



Community Impacts:

- Three new community concessions secured to the west of the Park and consultations ongoing for the establishment of a new reserve
- Capacity building and local employment opportunities in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park tourism sector.

OPPORTUNITIES

- 10-year Fully Designated Management Authority agreement (since 2022)
- Great opportunity for Kahuzi-Biega National Park to become a catalyst for security, good governance and development in eastern DRC
- Unique opportunity to center the rights of the Indigenous Batwa and local communities in the management and governance of the Park
- Great potential for increased tourism capacity.

5-YEAR IMPACT GOALS

- Stabilize threats from illegal mining, and grow wildlife populations, including Grauer's gorilla
- Implement a pioneering rights-based model for Park management that integrates the values of the Batwa and other communities
- Establish Kahuzi-Biega as a world-class tourism destination
- Drive a diverse sustainable financing and development portfolio with private-sector partnerships that delivers benefits for the Park, people and local communities
- Build a buffer zone management program in the vast western Oku community forests.



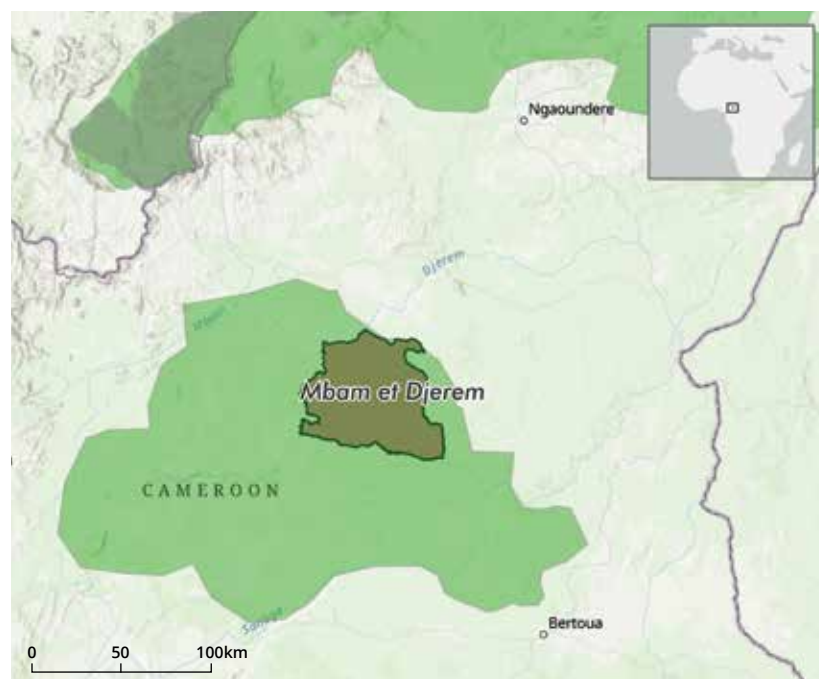


The Mbam & Djerem National Park was established in 2000 and extends over the Cameroonian regions of Adamaoua in the north, the East Region and the Centre Region. The main river of Cameroon, the Sanaga, has its upper reaches in the park (as the Djerem) and the river runs through the Park from north to south. Covering an area of 4,165 km², the Mbam & Djerem National Park is the most ecologically diverse national park in Cameroon, sitting on a transition zone between the savannahs of the north and the gallery forests and new colonizing forests of the south.

Surface Area: 4,165 km²
Management Mandate: Technical Assistance (since 2003)
Government Partner: Ministry of Forestry & Wildlife (MINFOF)

CONSERVATION VALUE

- Transition zone between savannahs of the north and the gallery forests of the south with fauna and flora of both ecosystems
- The northernmost stronghold for forest elephants in Africa
- Critical conservation site for the Nigeria-Cameroon *elliotti* subspecies of chimpanzee with an estimated population of 1,396 individuals.



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- A wide variety of wildlife surveys conducted over many years, contributing to enhanced knowledge of the Park, its conservation challenges and priorities
- Elephant and chimpanzee populations stable or increasing
- Spatial distribution of species such as bongo, duikers and diurnal primates has improved in recent years.



Community Impacts:

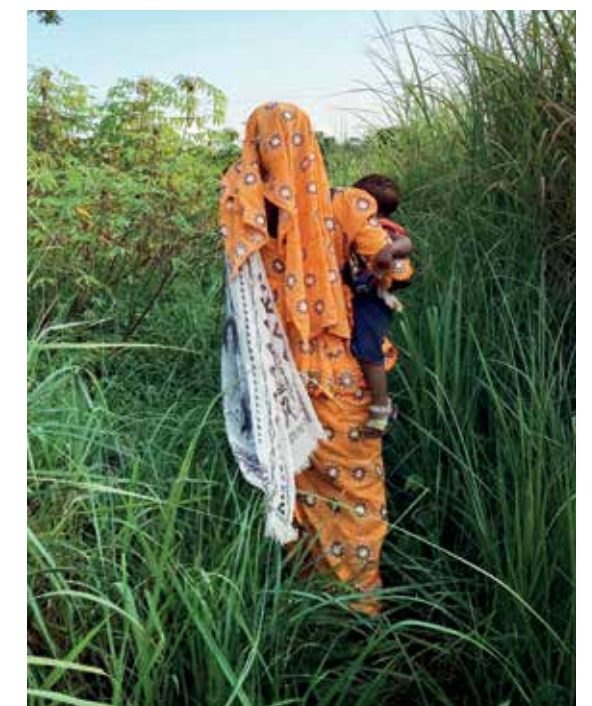
- Participative mapping with communities has led to an agreed upon framework for land use and micro-zoning
- Numerous revenue-generating activities conducted within the local communities with wide reach and engagement
- Community committees established in the three administrative regions where Mbam & Djerem National Park is located, with good support for the Park through the establishment of an effective communications network.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Favorable national legislative framework and regulations for protected area protection
- Even higher standards for rights-based conservation to be developed
- Great opportunity for creating an even broader constituency for conservation with the local communities, with various legal entities already in place and in great support of the Park
- Great potential for sustainable financing in the form of ecotourism and carbon offsetting projects
- Potential for the expansion of existing public and private initiatives for sustainable forest management in the area.

5-YEAR IMPACT GOALS

- Demonstrate improvements in key biodiversity and ecological integrity indicators of the Mbam & Djerem landscape
- Improve the livelihoods of communities who live in the Park's periphery through improved management of Mbam & Djerem National Park
- Make clear progress on the installation of a long-term financing strategy for the Mbam & Djerem landscape.





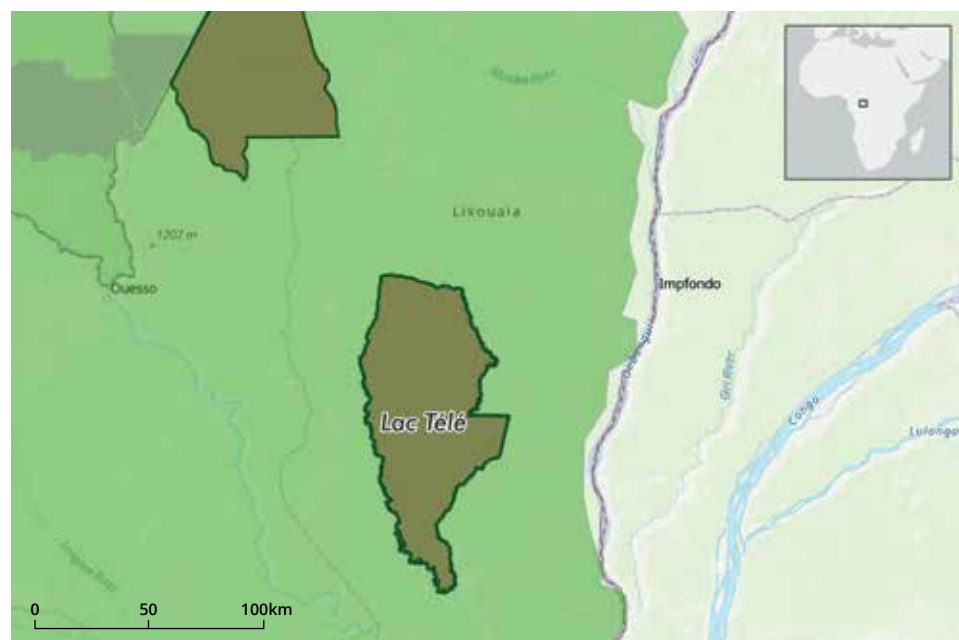
LAC TÉLÉ COMMUNITY RESERVE

Created in 2001, the Republic of Congo's only Community Reserve forms part of a unique landscape spanning two countries, the Lac Télé – Lac Tumba Congo Basin Forest Partnership Priority Landscape. Lac Télé is managed by the Ministry of Forest Economy in partnership with WCS Congo and is known as the world's largest swamp-forest. Situated between the Sangha and Oubangui rivers of Central Africa, the Reserve's swamp-forest, grassland and floating prairies are seasonally flooded by those two rivers; and they further pump water into the area's lakes, ponds and tributaries. Around 20,000 people live inside the Lac Télé Community Reserve, and they depend heavily on the Reserve's natural resources, playing a vital role in both managing and protecting the Community Reserve.

Surface Area: 4,400 km²
Management Mandate: Co-Management (since 2008)
Government Partner: Ministry of Forest Economy

CONSERVATION VALUE

- 70% wetland, the world's largest swamp-forest
- Key habitat for western lowland gorillas with the highest known densities in the world
- Large population of chimpanzees and other key wildlife populations (elephant, hippopotamus) as well as a sizeable population of waterbirds
- Part of a large transboundary RAMSAR site, covering a large part of the entire Congo basin.



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- No elephant poached since 2018
- Increases in gorilla and chimpanzee populations since 2006
- Productive partnership with our host government in halting the illegal commercial bushmeat trade, with hundreds of kilos of bushmeat intercepted on a monthly basis.



Community Impacts:

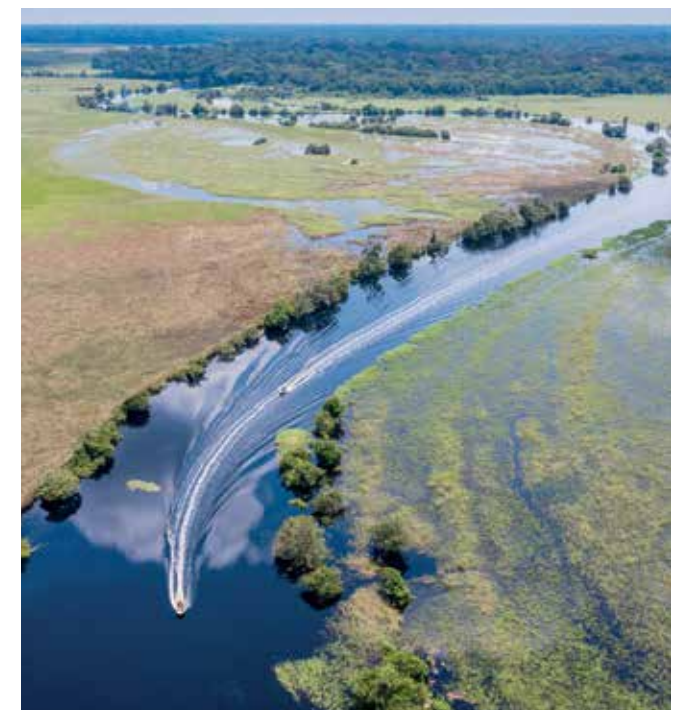
- 55 full-time employees, largely coming from the Reserve
- Establishment of committees at village level for the sustainable management of the Reserve's natural resources
- Reduction of charcoal use through support for energy-efficient ovens, thereby ensuring secure and safely stored food
- Supported the development of an agroforestry project (cacao) with communities inside the Community Reserve, with the aim of diversifying income.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop payment for ecosystem services mechanisms thanks to carbon storage and avoid deforestation from wildfires
- Great potential for tourism (trekking, canoeing, bird watching)
- International attention on peatland following CoP26, fostering opportunities for further research and project development
- Only community reserve in the Republic of Congo – great potential to set the standard for rights-based conservation.

5-YEAR IMPACT INDICATORS

- Build skilled and inspirational local leaders for the Reserve
- Continue to expand Indigenous People and Local Communities participation in critical Lac Télé decision-making bodies
- Develop a business plan for the Reserve that takes into account the sustainable financing potential
- Increase knowledge on the biodiversity of the Reserve by developing collaborative projects with international research institutions.



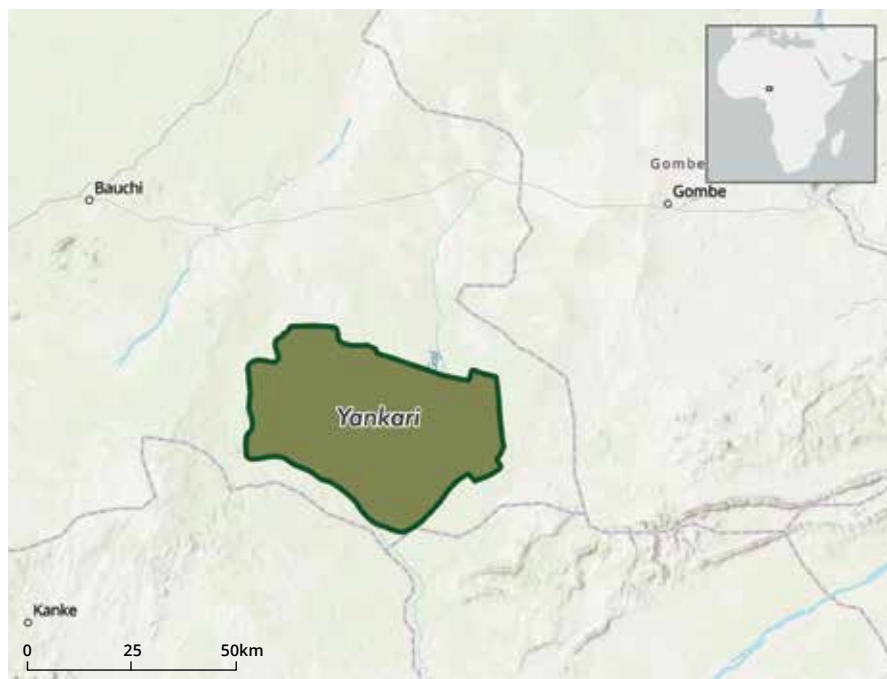


YANKARI GAME RESERVE

Situated in Bauchi State in northeastern Nigeria, Yankari Game Reserve is the country's richest wildlife oasis. The Reserve contains the largest surviving elephant population in Nigeria and harbors an important population of the critically endangered West African Lion, in addition to key species such as buffalo, hippopotamus, roan and hartebeest. In 2014 WCS signed an agreement with the Bauchi State Government for the co-management of Yankari Game Reserve and since then, protection efforts have been increased and significant results have been achieved.

CONSERVATION VALUE

- One of the largest remaining elephant population in West Africa
- Important population of the West African Lion
- Important site for 5 species of vulture: White-Headed, Hooded, White-Backed, Rüppell's, and Egyptian
- Important site for the Critically Endangered slender-snouted crocodile
- Healthy populations of a number of different antelope species.



Surface Area: 2,244 km²
Management Mandate:
 Co-Management (since 2014)
Government Partner:
 Bauchi State Government
 (Ministry of Information,
 Culture & Tourism)



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- Ranger force revitalized, with levels of discipline and morale improved and a zero-tolerance approach to corruption
- Protection-levels improved considerably and elephant poaching reduced dramatically (only 4 cases of elephant poaching recorded since 2014).



Community Impacts:

- The important Elephant Guardian Program has helped reduce levels of human-elephant conflict in nine local communities surrounding the Reserve that are particularly impacted by conflict
- A schools-based education program set up, covering more than 40 communities.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Great potential for the development of various eco-tourism products
- Major enhancement of the ongoing Reserve-linked local livelihood support program, including the provision of safe drinking water for local communities
- Opportunity to develop grazing reserves and support for livestock production in the surrounding communities
- Opportunity to test methods to reduce levels of human-elephant conflict even further, such as the construction of watchtowers and other innovative strategies.

5-YEAR IMPACT GOALS

- Increase and stabilise the important lion and elephant populations in the Reserve
- Reduce human-elephant conflict even further to acceptable levels
- Maintain the existing strong levels of conservation support from the surrounding communities
- Improve the water supply for at least 30 local communities
- Strengthen the Reserve's management capacity.





RUAHA & KATAVI NATIONAL PARKS

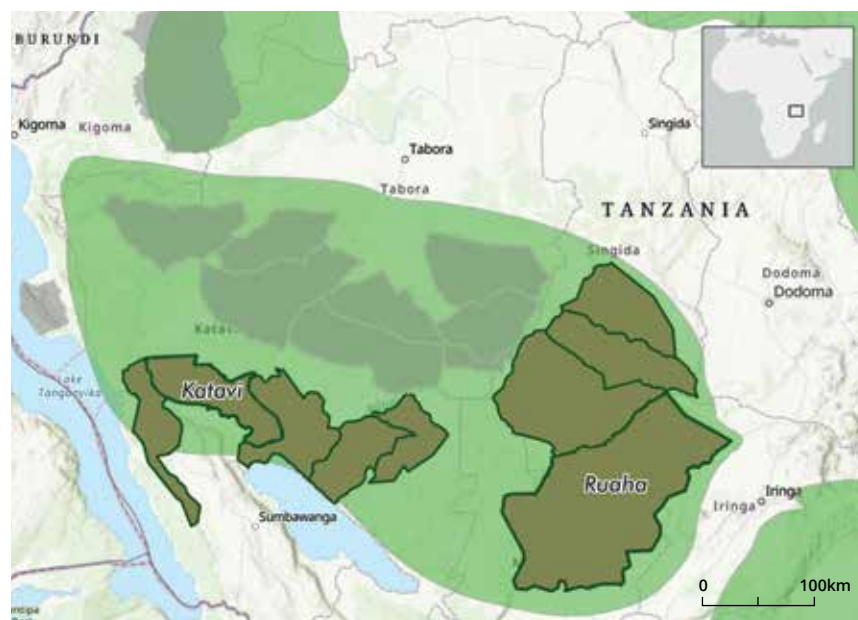
The Ruaha-Katavi Landscape in central-western Tanzania is one of Africa's largest ecologically intact savannah ecosystems, harboring East Africa's largest population of elephants (19,883 +/- 2,198 SE), and globally significant populations of wild dog, lion, and giraffe. Bookended by two national parks, the heart of this stronghold is a mosaic of game reserves, forest reserves, and community protected forests covering 82% of the landscape. The ivory poaching of the 2010s were brought under control in part through a strategic capacity building partnership between WCS and the Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA). WCS is now collaborating with the Government of Tanzania to tackle key current threats to Ruaha-Katavi, such as maintaining landscape-wide connectivity, human-wildlife conflict, and zoonotic disease transfer.

Surface Area: 92,500 km²

Management Mandate: Technical Assistance in MoU's with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA), Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority and Tanzania Forest Services Agency

CONSERVATION VALUE

- Key habitat for endangered and vulnerable species including elephant, lion, wild dog, giraffe, hippo, sable and roan antelope
- High habitat diversity including miombo plains, forested highlands, rivers, lakes and wetlands
- The catchment of the Greater Ruaha River lies in the Southern Highlands on the southern boundary of the landscape, one of 25 Global Biodiversity Hotspots
- The landscape is of great importance to five vulture species, four of which are Critically Endangered.



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- WCS data and insight supported the doubling in area of Ruaha National Park
- Support to the establishment and growth of four of Tanzania's first community wildlife management areas
- Significant contribution to reduced rates of elephant poaching
- Support to the establishment and operation of TAWA's first three elite rapid reaction ranger teams and first two patrol boat units.



Community Impacts:

- Provided more than 560 tailored individual training opportunities for protected area staff
- Pioneering work to improve community-based management of two crucial wildlife corridors, allowing for retained ownership and benefits
- Community engagement with a clear focus on rights-based community conservation models including social safeguards development and training.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Strengthened conservation governance and delivery through years of relationship and capacity building with partners including improved partnerships among wildlife corridor stakeholders
- Potential to influence site and national-level systems and policies and support rights-based community conservation
- Significant potential for sustainable carbon financing for avoided deforestation
- Partnership with TAWA paving the way for a potential SMART monitoring system national roll-out.

5-YEAR IMPACT GOALS

- Stabilize or grow wildlife populations of elephants, wild dog, puku, vultures, and lions
- Bring two nationally important wildlife corridors under improved management, with active coordination between all land-use partners and wildlife connectivity demonstrated through monitoring data
- Establish three Joint Village Land Forest Reserves for communities to protect key habitat and ecosystem services
- Sign carbon investment agreements to secure sustainable financing for avoided deforestation, reversing the conversion of designated wildlife corridor community lands to zero within five years
- Secure at least two site-level co-management mandates with partners within the next five years.





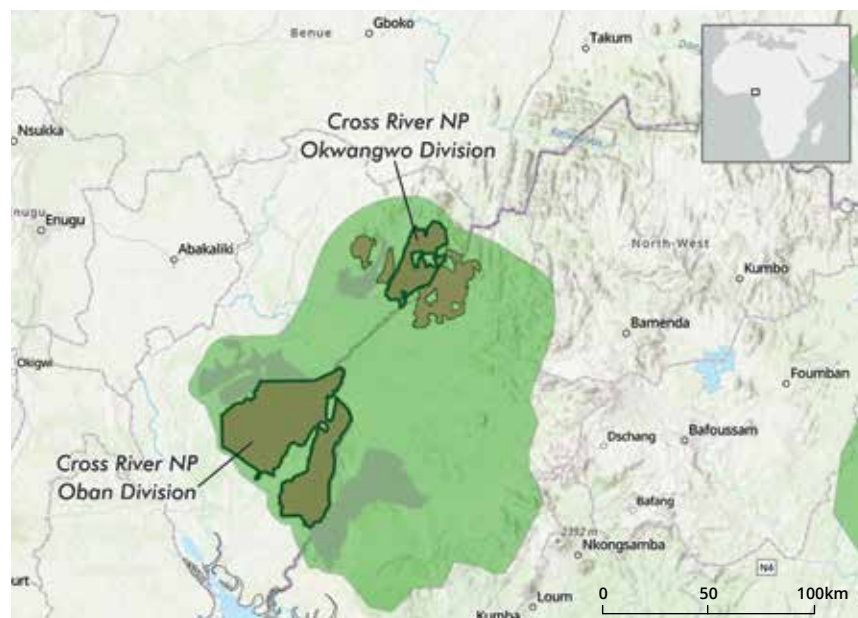
CROSS RIVER NATIONAL PARK

Cross River National Park contains the largest forest block left in Nigeria, with a wide variety of habitats ranging from dense rainforest to montane forest to high-altitude grasslands, spread over an altitudinal gradient from 150 to over 1,700m. Contiguous with forests in Cameroon, Cross River National Park has been recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and as a proposed World Heritage Site. WCS has provided technical assistance to the Nigeria National Park Service since 2011.

Surface Area: 3,640 km²
Management Mandate:
 Technical assistance (since 2011)
Government Partner:
 Nigeria National Park Service

CONSERVATION VALUE

- Biodiversity hotspot of global significance and a centre of endemism for primates, birds, freshwater fish and amphibians
- Primate hotspot with 19 species including Cross River gorilla, Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee, drill, Preuss's red colobus and Preuss's monkey
- Important populations of forest elephants
- More than 470 bird species, including at least 10 globally threatened species: the yellow-casqued hornbill, mountain saw-wing, Cameroon montane greenbul, grey-headed greenbul, green-breasted bush-shrike, Mount Kupe bush-shrike, Crossley's ground thrush, white-throated mountain babbler, Bannerman's weaver, and grey-necked rock fowl
- Forests within Cross River National Park are important local watersheds.



ACHIEVEMENTS



Conservation Impacts:

- Levels of protection improved through support for ranger training, and provision of field equipment, field rations and camping allowances
- No cases of Cross River gorilla poaching recorded for more than 15 years.



Community Impacts:

- Working with over 1,000 cocoa farmers to improve production of sustainable cocoa to help boost local incomes, reduce rates of forest loss and protect important habitat corridors for endangered species
- Conservation education program has established more than 100 school conservation clubs.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Expansion of livelihood support program including provision of safe drinking water
- Development of community-managed conservation areas surrounding the National Park
- Great sustainable financing potential through the development of ecotourism.

5-YEAR IMPACT GOALS

- Develop model of conservation cocoa and help organise cocoa farmers into local cooperatives
- Stabilise the forest elephant population
- Improve levels of conservation support from surrounding communities through support for sustainable agriculture and diversified livelihoods
- Revitalise transboundary collaboration with Cameroon for enhanced conservation
- Creation of a Transboundary World Heritage Site together with Korup and Takamanda National Parks in Cameroon
- Combat illegal wildlife trade in the region, especially transboundary wildlife trade from Cameroon.





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