

Africa



Africa is home to many of the world's most spectacular species and diverse ecosystems.

Unparalleled populations of large migratory

mammals cross the savannas of eastern Africa. Three species of great apes: gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos, occupy the immense swath of equatorial forest that spans western and eastern Africa, centered on the world's second largest forest block, that of the Congo Basin. The coast of East Africa has an almost continuous string of coral reefs from northern Kenya to South Africa. From the deserts of the Sahara in the north and Kalahari in the south, joined by the

savanna and forest zones of Central Africa, the diverse assemblage of wildlife species and habitats create a rich fabric of ecosystems that is unparalleled in the world today.

Against this majestic backdrop, wildlife is confronted by an array of threats. Human populations, illegal hunting, and transformation of land for agricultural purposes are increasing throughout Africa. The exploitation of natural resources is placing increased pressure on wildlife habitat as industries such as mining, logging and petroleum extraction open more areas with roads. In some countries, political instability undermines the ability of government agencies to protect and manage wildlife. To adequately address these challenges, wildlife professionals need not only strong scientific capacity but also non-traditional skills including community outreach, conflict resolution, and coalition building.

The goal of the Wildlife Without Borders-Africa Program is to assist African nations to develop the

human and institutional capacity for biodiversity conservation and management focused in and around protected areas. Protected areas play a crucial role for effective in situ conservation of species and ecosystems, providing an important refuge to safeguard key wildlife populations while in some cases providing an opportunity to earn valuable revenues and improve the livelihoods of neighboring communities.

By raising the human and institutional capacity for wildlife conservation throughout Africa, the WWB-Africa program meets a growing demand for non-traditional skills and approaches to conservation. Additionally, the program provides support to build capacity to mitigate the impact of extractive industries, climate change, human / wildlife conflict, illegal trade in bushmeat, and/or wildlife disease in and around protected areas. Target audiences include: wildlife managers, guards, rangers, protected area managers, outreach and educational specialists, community leaders, educators, and decision makers.



Top left: Tracking Chimpanzees in Nyungwe National Park, Rwanda. Direk Byler/USFWS

Above: Impala and Burchell's Zebra in Kenya's Maasai-Mara Game Reserve. Richard Ruggiero/USFWS

The Wildlife Without Borders-Africa Program supports projects designed to strengthen the ability of African institutions to manage and conserve species, habitats, and ecological processes for the benefit of the people of Africa and the world.

MENTOR Fellowship Program

The rising demand for bushmeat in Eastern Africa from a burgeoning human population has led to a severe decline in many wildlife populations. Alleviating the impact of the illegal bushmeat trade requires a multidisciplinary approach involving wildlife policy, law enforcement, public awareness, and sustainable alternatives.

The Wildlife Without Borders Africa program builds capacity in these areas through fellowships based at the College of African Wildlife Management in Tanzania. The newly established MENTOR Fellowship Program (*Mentoring for ENvironmental Training in Outreach and Resource conservation*) supports wildlife professionals from four Eastern African countries (Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan) to gain the requisite skills to address the illegal bushmeat trade. Fellows undertake a unique combination of active fieldwork and individually-tailored instruction in preparation

for participation in a network of Eastern African wildlife professionals dedicated to reversing the rising trend of illegal hunting. A hallmark of the program is the involvement of four highly experienced African conservation professionals, who work closely with the fellows throughout the 18-month program.

During the course of the program, the fellows implement field projects in their home countries. The first phase involves conducting local bushmeat assessments through field work, research, monitoring, stakeholder workshops, and policy reviews. Based on these assessments, the fellows develop innovative pilot interventions to address issues such as alternative livelihood and food security strategies, policy and legal solutions, law enforcement, wildlife-human health interactions, and/or education and constituency building activities.

The fellowship program brings together international expertise

to team in developing innovative new approaches to complex, long-standing problems. Other benefits include the creation of a network of professional conservationists dedicated to bringing greater attention to the illegal bushmeat trade. Fellows gain greater exposure to the international dimensions of the issue and develop new contacts with the long-term goal of developing a coordinated response to the bushmeat crisis in Eastern Africa.

MENTOR is implemented in partnership with numerous international and local African institutions.



Program mentors discussing curriculum with the Director of the Bushmeat Crisis Task Force
Direk Byler/USFWS



Program mentors and fellows at College of African Wildlife Management
DirekByler/USFWS

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