



Journalists discuss natural resources management with representatives from Uganda Wildlife Authority.
Photo: CONNECT/IUCN.

EAST AFRICA

CONSERVING NATURAL CAPITAL AND ENHANCING COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY RESOURCES IN EAST AFRICA

The East Africa region is endowed with rich biodiversity and natural resources that transcend national boundaries. These include vast landscapes, iconic wildlife species, watersheds, arable lands, and minerals. Broadly defined as natural capital, these resources are an important source of economic revenue and critical to East Africa's economic growth. The region's nature-based tourism industry, which is almost entirely dependent on wildlife and protected areas, contributes 7.5-10 percent of GDP to the region and supports local communities depending on the natural capital for their livelihoods.

However, the current COVID-19 pandemic has hit East Africa's tourism sector hard with a consequent reduction in revenue for protected and conserved areas, including vital support to local community livelihoods. The purpose of the Conserving Natural Capital and Enhancing Collaborative Management of Transboundary Resources in East Africa (CONNECT) is to strengthen the conservation and management of transboundary natural resources, including wildlife and landscapes in the region. The project seeks to strengthen East African Community's institutional leadership and deliver on its regional mandate and commitments to conserve and manage shared environment and natural resources in East Africa. The project works to strengthen and support existing regional conservation initiatives through generating

evidence-based information, innovative methodologies, tools, and best practice for the benefit of the EAC Partner States and their citizens.

OUR WORK

The project activities are geared towards improving conservation and management of natural capital in the East African region. Key intervention areas include:

- Technical assistance to the EAC to create and implement conservation policies, strategies, and legal frameworks.
- Increase capacity for building community-based tools to combat illegal wildlife trade.
- Increasing political support on the economic and intrinsic value of wildlife.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Finalization of briefing paper on ‘Building Forward Better towards a Carbon Neutral and Equitable Nature Positive East Africa.’ The paper helps donors, Governments and the EAC with their development planning for pandemic recovery.
- Hosted five webinars that engaged over 800 participants on natural capital for small/medium enterprises and local communities dubbed [“Valuing Natural Capital & Local Communities for Business in Eastern & Southern Africa.”](#)
- Supported pilot projects to improve government perception of the role of youth and women in preventing wildlife crime in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania. In Kenya the *Adopt a Park ChangeMakers* group mobilized over 150 youth to collect over 2.6 tons of invasive species in Lake Nakuru National Park. In Rwanda, Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association recruited youth to conduct the 5th annual (endangered) Grey Crowned Crane census.
- Launched Eastern Africa-TWIX website, a centralized database of wildlife seizures in the region. Twenty Kenyan law enforcement officers were trained and the system has engaged 205 law enforcement officers from 29 institutions in the region.
- Launched the East Africa Association of Prosecutors (EAAP) website embedded with thematic interactive virtual microsites, key among them being the Wildlife and Environmental Crime Prosecutors Forum. Since November 2020, over 1000 people have used the website and 73 prosecutors attended online courses available on the site.
- Finalization of the “Role of seaports in the illegal wildlife trade: a focus on East Africa” report which will be distributed to stakeholders in Tanzania and Kenya.
- Monitored poaching and trade of bushmeat at selected sites of Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya from November 2020 to September 2021.
- Hosted a [media trip](#) in collaboration with the EAC, Environmental Incentives and Internews. The trip took place concurrently in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, and was attended by over 20 journalists from leading media houses in East Africa. Twenty-four news articles have been published thus far because of this trip.
- Completed the ‘Wildlife in the Economy’ study for Uganda. EAC will use the collective learning from this study combined with studies from Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania to identify interventions at country and regional level and facilitate dialogue on the wildlife economy

BUDGET: USD \$4,900,169

DURATION: 2019-2023

ACTIVITY LOCATIONS

EAC Member States of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan Tanzania and Uganda and other strategic countries in the region.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO)

KEY PARTNERS

Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network
Worldwide Fund for Nature
East African Community

USAID CONTACT

Brian Otiende
Program Management Specialist
Tel: +254-20-363-2012
Email: botiende@usaid.gov

IUCN CONTACT

Leo Niskanen
Regional Technical Coordinator
Conservation Areas and Species Programme
Tel: +254-20-249-3561/65
Email: Leo.Niskanen@iucn.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email: usaidkea@usaid.gov
Website: www.usaid.gov/east-africa-regional
Facebook: USAIDEastAfrica
Twitter: @USAIDEastAfrica