African Conservation Telegraph

Society for Conservation Biology

Newsletter of the Africa Section of the Society for Conservation Biology

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South Africa hosts the 2007 Society for Conservation Biology Annual Meeting

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Lions like this one await you in many of South Africa's parks. Photo by Delali Dovie.

The University of Port Elizabeth/Nelson Mandela Center has been selected to be the site of the 2007 SCB Annual Meeting. The visitors are in for one of their most memorable conferences ever! The Eastern Cape Province of South Africa offers everything from modern, top class hotels and municipal infrastructure to magnificent coastal resorts, to traditional Xhosa villages, robust fish and wildlife and outstanding educational and recreational opportunities.

The City of Port Elizabeth boasts a modern airport with many flights to the subcontinent's hub airports of Cape Town and Johannesburg. The highways are excellent and renting a car is easy, driving is easy. The food is magnificent, ranging from fresh seafood, wild game, to exotic types, and even the basic British Colonial fare. One of South Africa's most note-

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In this issue:

From the Editor

Erika Barthelmess

Exciting times are ahead for the Africa Section of the SCB. You'll note in this issue of ACT a number of different themes. First, the Society for Conservation Biology will meet in AFRICA in 2007 (see above). Many thanks to the Africa section members who have made this possible, mark your calendars, and stay tuned for more. Second, a theme you'll notice in this issue pertains to education. Stephen Awoyemi makes a plea for environmental educators to make better use of the media and Roarke Donnely shows an example of the sorts of grass-roots educational projects students can develop. Nick Oguge's article highlights an Earthwatch project in Kenya, a neat example of a cross-cutting research and educational initiative.

Also, look for changes to come in the next issue of ACT. First, in the Announcements I invite interested persons to contact me about a book review. Also, we're going to try something new: in addition to "Meet a Conservationist" we will also include an interview of an author of a significant paper on conservation in Africa. Volunteers who are interested in helping with any of these matters are most welcome—please con-

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African Conservation Telegraph

www.conbio.org/AFRICA.

The African Conservation Telegraph (ACT) will be produced three times per year to provide information about conservation on the continent of Africa. The African Conservation Telegraph is free of charge, available electronically online (www.conbio.org/AFRICA) and via AfricaList, the listserve for the African Section of the Society for Conservation Biology. It is also available in hard copy for those who are registered SCB members without access to the internet.
Submissions in English should be sent to Erika Barthelmess and in French to Michel Masozera.

Layout and typesetting by Erika Barthelmess.

SCB to meet in South Africa continued

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worthy accomplishments over the past 20 years has been the successful growth of private game keeping, and government assisted establishment of game reserves. The National Parks system has always been one of the best in the world, and that trend continues, with the Addo Elephant Park and Tsitsikama Forest National Parks within short drives of Port Elizabeth. AND, the list of exciting attractions continues: Port Elizabeth's coast supports Cape Fur seals, amazing shark populations, fantastic birds, including penguins, cormorants, gannets, etc. You can go to sea to fish, watch dolphins, whales and seals, count birds and at the end of the day, rest on white sand beaches stretching for miles, backed by 50-200 foot sand dunes. The athletic visitors will bike, surf, dive, run or walk through some of the most beautiful countryside or coastal areas in the world.

There is one remarkable aspect of South Africa that I should report. Since the political turn-around in South Africa in 1994, the people have recognized, and the government has responded to an initiative to develop tourism on a major scale. Everywhere you go, even in remote Zululand and the Kei River country, there is high quality service for the visitor. Just as in the management of public welfare, each region has been given new support and encouragement to develop themselves as their local traditions direct. In my last two trips to South Africa, I found that the people living there know how great their land is, are proud to show it off, and love to host foreign visitors to the NEW South Africa.

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From the Editor continued

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tact me at barthelmess@stlawu.edu. In the meantime, the next issue of ACT (pending an adequate number of submissions) should come out in Feb/March. Thus, submissions will be due on **January 25, 2006.** You may have noticed that we missed a few issues in 2005 — this is the result of lack of submissions. If you have an idea for a story or would like to report on work you are doing, feel free to consult the instructions for authors available on the Africa Section website (http://www.conbio.org/AFRICA) or contact me for details. I am particularly hopeful that I can find someone to act as book review editor and someone to take over the "Meet a Conservationist" column. In addition, if you are interested in working with me to interview an author of a seminal paper, please let me know that, as well.

Feedback on the last issue was very positive—so keep those submissions coming. Many thanks to those who contributed to this issue.

Biodiversity Awareness in Africa and the Media

By Stephen Awoyemi, Tropical Conservancy, Nigeria
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Recognizing that conservation is about people as much as it is about species or ecosystems ...Michael B. Mascia

Concern for biodiversity and understanding the fundamental importance of the integrity of our ecosystems are imperative for biodiversity conservation in Africa. It is therefore necessary to increase awareness among Africans to stimulate concern. One long-term goal for any conservation work in Africa should be to affect attitudes to ensure biodiversity survives continually on the continent.

Africa is a continent richly endowed with biodiversity. Her treasures of diverse life forms have been a source of interest since the advent of European explorers in the nineteenth century (Western 2003) and efforts to conserve biodiversity in Africa date back as early as 1906 (Simon 1962). However, the continent is threatened today by practices that are deleterious to the environment, ranging from slash-and-burn farming to denudation of forests by commercial loggers, over hunting of animals for bush meat and for traditional medicines (National Geographic Society 1999, Winemiller 2001), and deleterious large scale development projects. Furthermore, political and economic instability coupled with corruption are undeniably formidable impediments to biodiversity conservation in Africa (Western 2003).

An important advancement in the appreciation of biodiversity loss as a high international political priority was made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2002. World stakeholders made commitments to reduce global biodiversity loss by 2010. However, how would we in Africa feel the impact of this progression on the ground? As limited financial resources arrive, how will they be channeled to meaningfully prevent biodiversity loss? Western (2003) observed, "The will to tackle the formidable obstacles facing African conservation must arise from within the continent; without that will, no amount of international aid will solve the problems."

This *will* Western speaks of remains dormant until it is informed and persuaded effectively. In many regions of Africa there is a disconnect between conservation policies and practices. Changes in human behavior are needed for conservation success. Increasing public awareness was among the 3 priorities for environmental education outlined by the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Kassas 2002), and the International Convention of Biological Diversity corroborated the importance of biodiversity education in the field of environmental education (Kassas 2002), setting a threshold for biodiversity awareness. With the incessant pressure on globally important ecosystems in Africa, it would be grossly inadequate to rely on academics, practitioners and educators alone to help augment awareness. Holl et al. (1995) validate the critical need for public awareness on environment related issues to ensure successful conservation efforts. Kassas (2002) also cited a supportive society as one of the perspectives needed by planners of biodiversity education programs. He stated the importance of information dissemination to society and the role of the media as a complement to school curricula and university courses of biodiversity education.

The media is one of the most remarkable influences on human nature today. In Africa, radio, television and newspapers are the major outlets of information for the largely poor populace. Radio, for instance, with the ability to reach almost any rural area, is vital technology in developing countries. Through this medium, rural communities learn of events in their region and issues on government policies and plans are brought to their notice (Bennet 2002). Kassas (2002) helps recognize further the advantages of the media and its immense potential in positively influencing the populace towards the desired outcome of environmental consciousness. He gives three advantages of the media, especially radio and television. They can: (1) present messages in series that are regularly transmitted and become part of the daily programs of recipients, (2) combine news with expert com-

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Science, Society and Development

Saving biodiversity in pastoral land: Earthwatch Institute's Samburu Conservation Research Initiative, Kenya.

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Over the years, conservation programs in Kenya have been based on protected area (PA) systems. To date, there are 61 National Parks and Reserves in Kenya with a total area approximating 30,000 km^2. Substantial (>70%) wildlife biomass nonetheless remains outside of such protected areas, largely in community or private land in semi-arid landscapes. Currently, wildlife managers recognize communities as important partners in conservation leading to development of conservancies on traditional pastoral land to augment income. Thus, biodiversity underpins two important industries in semiarid Kenya – pastoral economy and tourism. Saving biodiversity in pastoral land presents the great challenge of balancing livestock productivity for a growing human population, and thus development, with conservation.

Conservation biologists are often interested in areas that have high species diversity, levels of endemism, or experience a high rate of habitat loss (biodiversity hotspots). Such areas tend to be 'terrestrial islands' such as isolated forests on mountain tops. In savannah and semi-arid ecosystems, most studies have tended to focus on ecology and behavior of large charismatic mammals. Globally, such areas are home to 2 billion largely pastoral communities. In Kenya, dry lands constitute two-thirds of the entire landmass. One such area, the Samburu-Laikipia landscape of northern Kenya, is rich in cultural, wildlife and habitat diversities. In a bid to develop an initiative that will enhance conservation of this fragile environment, Earthwatch Institute held three strategy-planning workshops between April and August 2003 that evaluated issues on sustainable environment and livelihoods for this eco-region. This laid a foundation for the setting of Samburu Conservation Research Initiative (Samburu CRI) - a comprehensive environmental program developed in collaboration with partners and local communities to develop a conservation action plan based on scientific research that addresses complex issues in

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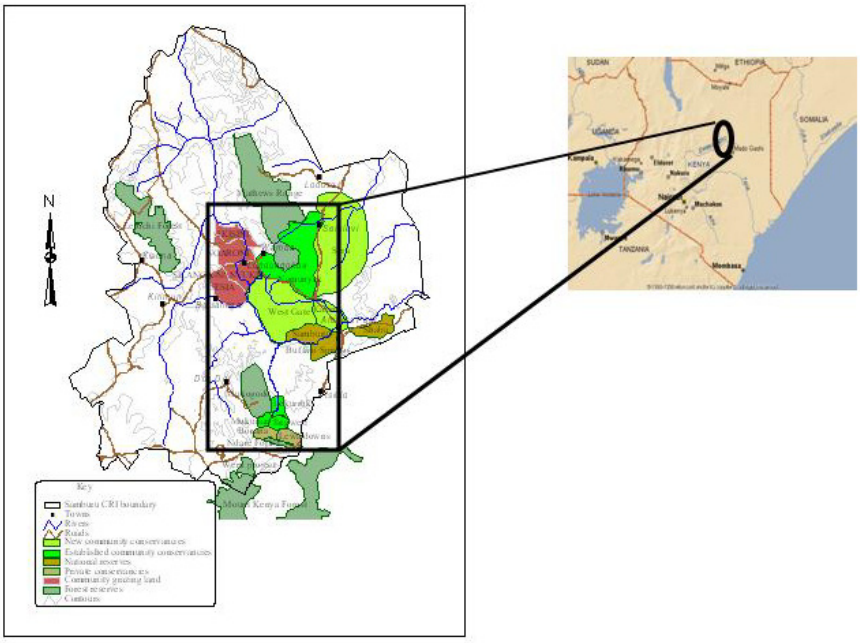

Figure 1. A map of Samburu-Laikipia region of northern Kenya showing different land use systems within the Conservation Research Initiative area. Inset: Map of Kenya showing position of conversation landscape area.

Hot Topics

Kenyan government degazettes Amboseli National Park

By Erika Barthelmess, Biology Department, St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY, USA
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Many of us have heard of Amboseli National Park in Kenya. The park is noted for a number of reasons, not only as a significant tourist destination but also, and more importantly to conservation, as an important ecosystem. With a core area of 39,206 hectares and a buffer zone of 244,000 hectares, the park sits in the shadow of Mt. Kilimanjaro and is a significant elephant reserve. Amboseli was originally declared a National Reserve and given to the Maasai community in 1948, but human-wildlife conflict led to its establishment as a National Park, managed by the Government, in 1974[1]. Recognition of the park's value to the global community led to its designation in 1980 as an International Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations[2]. Recently, Amboseli's status as a Kenyan National Park has come into question. On September 29, 2005, Kenyan president Mwai Kibaki took measures to "downgrade" Amboseli from a National Park to a National Reserve[3] in a process called "de-gazetting." Minister of Tourism and Wildlife Morris Dzoro issued a gazette notice changing Amboseli's status from a National Park to a National Reserve, to be managed by the Olkejuado County Council. Some have suggested that de-gazetting of the park is merely a political move aimed at gaining Maasai support for an upcoming constitutional referendum in Kenya. However, if the new constitution is approved on November 21, all parks and reserves will revert to government control. Many claim the downgrading of the park is illegal, and refer to the Wildlife Conservation and management Act Chapter 276, Section 7, which indicates that the downgrading of any park cannot take place without a Parliamentary resolution[4]. Apparently the Kenya Wildlife Service, the body which manages the Park, was not cconsulted in the decision[5].

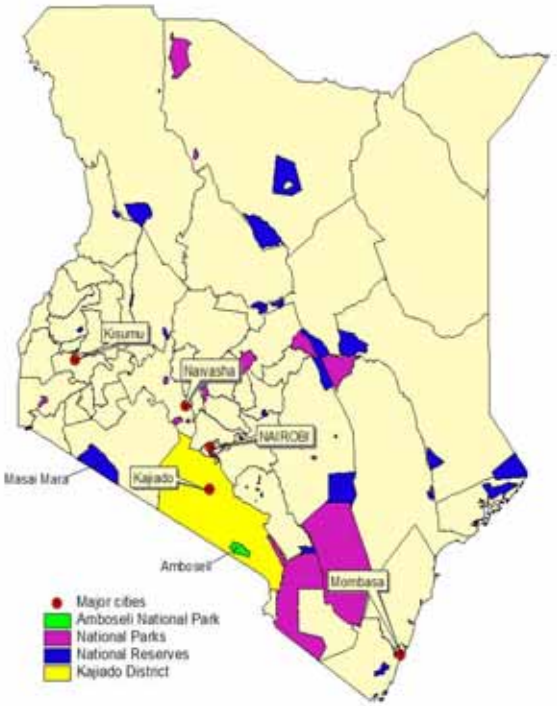

Figure 1. Map of Kenya showing major cities, Amboseli National Park (green), Maasai Mara National Reserve, as well as other National Parks and National Reserves.

A number of different voices have weighed in on this decision. Conservation groups including the East African Wildlife Society, Youth for Conservation, the Centre for Environmental Legal Research and Education, and the Born Free Foundation are opposed to the change in status and have sought an injunction in the Kenyan courts[6]. Dr. David Western, former Director of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and current Director of the African Conservation Centre, suggested that the change will have "dire consequences" for wildlife and parks in Kenya[7]. Concern is not only for the management of Amboseli itself, but for the precedent set by this seemingly unlawful change. Western indicated that "every other national park and reserve…risks being erased on a political whim at a moments notice." There is also concern that the Olkejuado County Council lacks the capacity to properly manage the park.

The opinion of the Maasai community appears to be split. While several Maasai spokesmen have praised the move, others have condemned it. Praise comes primarily from the community that

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Meet a conservationist

Interview by Erika Barthelmess

In this issue of *ACT*, meet Stephen M. Awoyemi. Stephen was born in Sagamu, Nigeria and was raised in Benin City, Nigeria. If you've been reading past issues of ACT, you may know Stephen already from his contributions. If not, be sure to read his submission in this issue, "Biodiversity Awareness in Africa and the Media" (page 3). You may also know Stephen through his role as Information Officer on the board of directors of the Africa Section of the SCB.

A member of the Society of Conservation Biology for three years, Stephen serves as African Coordinator for Tropical Conservancy (http://www.tc-biodiversity.org/), a registered non-profit scientific organization based in Ottawa, Canada that publishes the journal Biodiversity (http://www.tc-biodiversity.org/biodiversity.htm). Prior to obtaining this position, Stephen obtained a Bachelor's degree in Zoology from the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. He is currently working on his Master's degree at the same University and is initiating his first on-the-ground conservation project in Africa, the "Ogba Forest Reserve Conservation Project." The goal of the project, set in southwestern Nigeria, is to reverse "degradation of the Ogba Forest Reserve and advocate for its adequate protection." The project has received approval from the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources in Edo State, Nigeria. Stephen is also working on a second proposal to study forest elephant ecology in Okomu National Park.

When asked his perceptions of the major conservation issues facing Africa today, Stephen had much to say:

"It is common knowledge that conservation has to compete with other pressing issues of political priority in Africa – development, poverty, health issues like HIV/AIDS & Malaria, and education. Low awareness on conservation issues, few indigenous African technical professionals, inadequate funding and support, lack of cohesion and synergy amongst practitioners, organizations and institutions, and low standard of education are other challenges. In my opinion, to transcend these limitations conservation leaders with strong interdisciplinary backgrounds are needed, who will envision and conceptualize solutions, make informed decisions, and skillfully adapt globally pertinent strategies (that have been tested and proven successful elsewhere) to their local contexts. The information divide between Africa and the West must also be bridged. Africans themselves must wake up to the call and address these issues themselves without overdependence on the West. Interdependence is the key not overdependence".

Stephen's interests in biodiversity conservation stem from a course sponsored by the Tropical Biology Association (http://www.tropical-biology.org/home.html) set in the East Usambara Mountains in Tanzania and held in 2002. He reports that the course was "life changing" and adds that …"the exposure to current topics in tropical ecology and conservation, knowledge of the precarious situation of biodiversity, intimacy with nature, a feel of real life issue pertaining to conservation, intercultural exchange and the prestige of a noble cause" were all pivotal in causing Stephen to make a personal commitment to conservation biology. Stephen identified three "conservation heroes" who have influenced him. They include Rosie Trevelyan of the Tropical Biology Association and Beth Kaplin of Antioch New England Graduate School. They are heroes because of "their ability to stretch themselves to achieve the seemingly impos-

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Above: Stephen Awoyemi, Nigerian conservation biologist, has particular interests in the tropical rainforest regions of Africa. Photo courtesy S. Awoyemi.

Leveraging Education to Conserve Kori Bustards and Biodiversity

By Roarke Donnelly, Oglethorpe University, Atlanta, Georgia, USA
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In the fall of 2005, I led my Conservation Biology class on a tour of a facility devoted to captive propagation of rare wildlife from Africa and South America. The students left expressing dismay and frustration over the number of species threatened by anthropogenic "habitat loss" and "overharvest." They did not think they had any power to counter these threats, especially in distant locations. Rather than let them feel helpless, I encouraged them to produce an educational brochure that would support an ongoing effort to reduce poaching of Kori Bustards in Africa—specifically poaching for feathers used to make flies (a type of fishing lure) in North America. Three students (Ben Corey, Deirdre Hubbard, and Kelly Sands) voluntarily produced the information below for distribution to fly tiers with molted Kori feathers collected at U.S. zoos. The fact that these students made this significant personal investment in conservation after only a single course suggests that education has the power to recruit many new conservation volunteers and professionals. Moreover, the work of those recruits may reach beyond their home continent.

Figure 1. Adult Kori Bustard

What are Kori Bustards?

Have you ever seen a Kori Bustard? Probably not, unless it was in a zoo. Kori Bustards are native to grassland areas and dry savannas of Eastern and Southern Africa. Despite their great size (12-33 pounds and up to three and a half feet tall) they can fly, making them Africa's heaviest flying bird. Unfortunately, Kori populations are rapidly declining due to human activities. Populations in parks appear stable, but the species is declining throughout its range and some populations have disappeared entirely in the last 30 years. In 2002, they were given a chance for survival when a Species Survival Plan (SSP) was developed to maintain a healthy and self-sustaining population in captivity. Through this management they will be studied to learn more about how to save them in the wild.

What are threats to Kori Bustards in the wild?

Kori Bustard populations are declining primarily due to the following human activities:

- Conversion of grassland and savannah to agriculture (crops and grazing). Since 1950 agriculture has increased by 26% in the entire East African Region.
- Use of poisons to control insects that the Kori Bustards eat
- Collisions with over-head power lines
- Harvest of Kori Bustards for food
- Harvest of Kori Bustards for feathers to be used by fly tiers.

Why should we save Kori Bustards?

"To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution to intelligent tinkering."

-Aldo Leopold

In the habitat of the Kori Bustard, small African birds called "bee eaters" play an important role in controlling insects. In order to protect themselves and keep an eye out for predators, they use bustards as moving perches. This is just one positive effect bustards have on their neighboring animals. In order to maintain the world we live in and the things we enjoy about it, we must conserve all parts of its ecosystems. Like Leopold's metaphor of cogs and wheels, the Kori bustard is a "cog" with numerous contributions to its habitat. There are more than likely numerous other interac-

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Biodiversity and the Media continued

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ments and explanations, (3) be used for programs of group education and hence allow for group interactions.

Biodiversity awareness programs have been carried out in developed countries. Initiatives such as "Engaging the Public on Biodiversity: A Road Map for Education and Communication Strategies," carried out in North America is an exemplary approach (Biodiversity Notes summer/fall 1998). A Biodiversity Education summit assembled by *The Biodiversity Project* was held in collaboration with the World Wildlife Fund and the American Museum of Natural History in June 1998 in New York City (Biodiversity Notes summer/fall 1998). The program sought to foster connections between biodiversity educators and to lay the foundation for augmenting efforts on biodiversity education and public awareness in the U.S.

This approach has been recognized by some international organizations and is being employed in developing countries, resulting in significant breakthroughs. In Nepal, the Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development helped complement the government's efforts on agro-biodiversity awareness through a rural participatory radio program. As a result of the nineteen radio episodes, public awareness of biodiversity issues in Pokhara Valley increased, as did direct sharing of new findings and information with target communities. Furthermore, the program stimulated forums for panel discussions between the farming community and high level policy makers and brought together various stakeholders. In January 2003, Conservation International's (CI) Communications Department collaborated with Madagascar's National Park Service and a local NGO, FANAMBY, in the production of a 14-minute documentary to raise awareness of biodiversity on the island. The project attracted the attention of the government, generated several high-profile editorials, and helped to increase public awareness and appreciation for Madagascar's biodiversity (Conservation International 2003). Other biodiversity awareness campaigns carried out by CI include Ghana's Bush meat Crisis Awareness Campaign, Cardamom mountains media campaign, and Republic of Congo: Expansion of Odzala National Park (Conservation International 2003).

Biodiversity awareness in Africa through the media is a pragmatic approach in ensuring that conservation efforts are satisfactorily realized. The conservation community is increasingly convinced of the necessity of tackling the challenges of conservation from the grassroots and favorably, these are who the media reach out to. Scientists and conservationists are beginning to decry the impracticality of over dependence on research, workshops, conferences and symposia with little effectiveness on the ground. The movement by donor organizations to discourage unsuccessful conservation ventures by project planners is on the increase, and success indicators before, during and after an initiative are critical.

A good example of the effectiveness of the media in educating the populace is seen in the HIV/AIDS awareness campaign in Nigeria, South Africa and several other African countries. Its far reaching effects and the support given from myriad donor agencies, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, private and public institutions are worthy of emulation. Television dramas (interwoven with African cultural values), talks and discourses, advertising campaigns on radio, television, newspaper and billboards are designed with the underlying HIV/AIDS awareness message. Gradually, a new consciousness – AIDS IS REAL - has been established in the hearts and minds of the people, a move that is saving innumerable lives in Africa. Similarly, by using such an approach for a biodiversity awareness campaign, we can anticipate a new consciousness - BIODIVERSITY IS PRICELESS- in the populace. The media has been underutilized as a conservation tool in Africa. The conservation community should explore new opportunities through the media to reach out to Africans.

Cultural traditions and values are good pivots around which the media may reach Africans. Africans value biodiversity. Many times these values are responsible for protecting some ecosystems and the survival of different plant and animal species. For instance, in Nigeria sacred forests are still valued and key people in some societies continue to

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Samburu-Laikipia eco-region. The CRI encompasses a wildlife corridor between forests on the northern foothills of Mt Kenya northwards through private and community lands, and wildlife reserves to the Mathews range (Fig. 1). Current challenges to managing this landscape to sustain lifestyles, culture and wildlife include growing population density, burning, poaching, and overstocking with livestock among other threats.

The Samburu CRI is collaborating with partners in the region to (i) make a contribution towards the sustainability of the Samburu-Laikipia bioregion through research, education and public engagement, and (ii) assess the costs and benefits of different land-use tenure systems for sustainable livelihoods and environment. These are to be achieved through (i) developing integrated research projects that address conservation issues, (ii) supporting scientists through funding, volunteers, and other activities, (iii) building supportive communities, and (iv) providing educational opportunities.

During a strategy planning workshop, communities, stakeholders and scientists developed 11 priority research fields for the CRI. Specific questions for targeted outreach and project development are as follows:

1. What are the effects of barriers to resource access by wildlife, livestock and humans?
2. What are the critical habitats inside and outside protected areas and are these habitats successful in maintaining populations of target species?
3. What is the current spatial distribution of human-wildlife conflict, and, how does this compare to past distributions and conflicts?
4. What are the effects of encroachment on known wildlife corridors?
5. What is the temporal and spatial distribution of water (e.g. springs, rivers, pools and dams) in terms of quality and quantity, as a habitat for biodiversity and human use, including potential for conflict?
6. What are the diurnal patterns of water point use in competition by livestock and wildlife in various communities?
7. What are the status use of indigenous plants and the effects of utilization?
8. What are the indigenous conservation management techniques and valuation of wildlife resources in terms of economic, cultural and aesthetic benefits?
9. What is the relationship between wildlife and livestock health?
10. What are the effects of different strategies of land-use tenure on human-human and human-wildlife conflict, both past and present?
11. What are the socio-economic and conservation impacts of various wildlife management enterprises?

Currently, there are four projects running in the CRI. Two contribute to the conservation of a viable population of the endangered Grevy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*) in the Samburu-Laikipia landscape, through ecological monitoring in (i) a wildlife conservancy, and (ii) livestock grazing land. The Grevy's zebra has experienced a 90% decline in range, and 88% decline in population in the last 30 years. This northern Kenya dry-land specialist is estimated at 2000 individuals in the wild with only 150 left in Ethiopia. The study in the protected area at Lewa wildlife conservancy on the south end of the CRI has been running for four years and provides baseline information on ecology, population parameters, predation and interactions. The Principal Investigator is Prof. Daniel Rubenstein (Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department, Princeton University, USA) and co-Investigators are Joseph Kirathe (Earthwatch Scientist at Lewa) and Dr Nick Oguge (Eathwatch Institute, Kenya). The Grevy's zebras study on livestock grazing land is on the northern end near the foothills of the Mathews range. This has been running for two years and is providing information on the effects of human influence on Grevy's zebra's ecology and behaviour. The investigators include Dr Paul Muoria (National Museums of Kenya), Prof. Rubenstein, Dr Philip Muruthi (African Wildlife Foundation), and Dr Oguge.

Two other projects in the CRI commenced in July 2004 and are addressing (i) critical wildlife habitats, and (ii) water resource distribution and

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quality. The project on critical wildlife habitats aims at identifying and assessing the ability of habitats to provide suitable environmental conditions for wildlife species, as well as the role of protected area systems in conservation of the critical habitats. This study is to apply remote sensing, GIS and integrated spatial analysis together with ecological field based techniques to link habitat data with multi-species habitat models. Also, spatial-temporal analysis routines will be applied to quantify landscapes in terms of structure, fragmentation, juxtaposition, interspersion, heterogeneity, and other habitat indices and their effects on wildlife conservation within Samburu CRI. This study will identify the current ability of different areas to provide individual wildlife species with suitable environmental conditions, needs for food, cover and space. The results of this project will be critical to understanding the effectiveness of community-based PA systems in sustaining animal populations and of the capability of land outside PA to sustain populations of critical species. The investigators here include Dr Donald Ogweno (Moi University, Kenya), Mr Fred Atieno (International Plant Genetics Research Institute), and Dr Alexander Njue (Kenyatta University).

In semi-arid conditions, as is this landscape, water as a resource is key to survival of the inhabitants, their livestock and wildlife. During the dry season, water availability becomes limited in supply, leading to human-wildlife conflict. The nature and dynamics of this interaction are yet to be clearly documented. Dr Alexander Njue and Dr Kiplagat Kotut, both of Kenyatta University, have developed a study to detail the spatial distribution of aquatic resources in the Laikipia-Samburu Eco-region; how this distribution varies between seasons and years; and how much is retained over time. It will also assess the suitability of water from the above sources for domestic and livestock use; composition of aquatic organisms; and how humans, livestock, and wildlife use water over time. By providing baseline information on the presence of pathogenic microbes such as *Salmonella* and *E. coli* in water, the study is of public health importance.

Of the six big predators in Kenya, one is endangered (the wild dog); two vulnerable (lion and cheetah), two are conservation-dependent (stripped and spotted hyenas), and only one is of least concern (the leopard). Management and conservation of these predators outside protected areas will depend largely on how communities, largely pastorals, tolerate their coexistence. Yet there has been a severe flare up in human-predator conflict in Kenya in recent months. This has been in the form of livestock depredation by large carnivores and retaliatory killings by pastoral communities. Current management by wildlife authorities such as responsive shooting and trapping and relocation of problem

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Meet a conservationist continued

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sible, their courage, resilience, unflagging commitment, broad vision, passion, compassion and sincerity," which Stephen calls "key necessities of conservation success anywhere in the world." Stephen also names David Orr of Oberlin College as a hero who has inspired Stephen through his writing.

If you'd like to contact Stephen to learn more about his conservation projects (or about his involvement with the Africa section of SCB) do so by e-mail at awoyemi@tc-biodiversity.org. We wish Stephen the best as he begins his conservation efforts in Nigeria.

SCB to meet in South Africa contd

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Dramatic views and opportunities to see a wide variety of animal and plant species are just some of the treats that await you in South Africa. Photo by Ron Abrams.

Finally, the conservation biology practiced in South Africa has long reflected the principles to which SCB members ascribe: protect the intrinsic value of the natural resources and the resource will repay you many times over. In my decade of studying and working in South Africa, I gained much of my most influential field experiences, and matched that with strong academic support at the University of Cape Town and Rhodes University (a few hours from Port Elizabeth). Since my time in the Cape, the University at Port Elizabeth has grown substantially, and now has a profile on a par with excellent institutions world-wide. The conference will be supported by an excellent local academic community. The conference will be well managed, as they have modern facilities that are even hired by regional corporations operating in the Cape (e.g. Mercedes Benz and other European companies use UPE's facilities). The communications, travel and accommodation should satisfy even the most particular visitors.

There is one warning for visitors: you will not want to leave South Africa, and there won't be enough time to do everything that appeals to you. For the really adventurous, flying through Johannesburg gives you the opportunity to visit the Kruger National Park, Africa's oldest, most carefully managed and wildest game viewing area I have ever seen! And its only 5 hours from Johannesburg by car, with a wide range of excellent accommodation (tents to palaces, as you like)! So, leave an extra week or two in your trip (it is a long flight), book your flights early, and plan to return one day to pursue your curiosity…this place will get into your blood!

Kori Bustards continued

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tions we do not yet know about that are just as important, indicating that the loss of Kori Bustards would be highly detrimental to the African ecosystem.

What can I do?

Thank you for already playing a part in saving these magnificent birds by obtaining naturally molted feathers (Figure 2) from zoos and guaranteeing that no birds were harmed in the process. The Kori Bustard faces a difficult path, with extinction being a very real possibility if we do not help them. Though the dangers presented by humans are many, one of these can be eliminated by using only lures made from captive bustard feathers. It is a very easy thing to do, and this simple act can greatly help in the fight against illegal hunting of this declining species. Though loss of habitat and overgrazing will continue to harm the Koris we can work together to diminish the impact of poaching.

Figure 2. A contemporary Ardeotis Kori fly designed and tied by Paul Rossman using Kori Bustard feather.

Biodiversity and the Media continued

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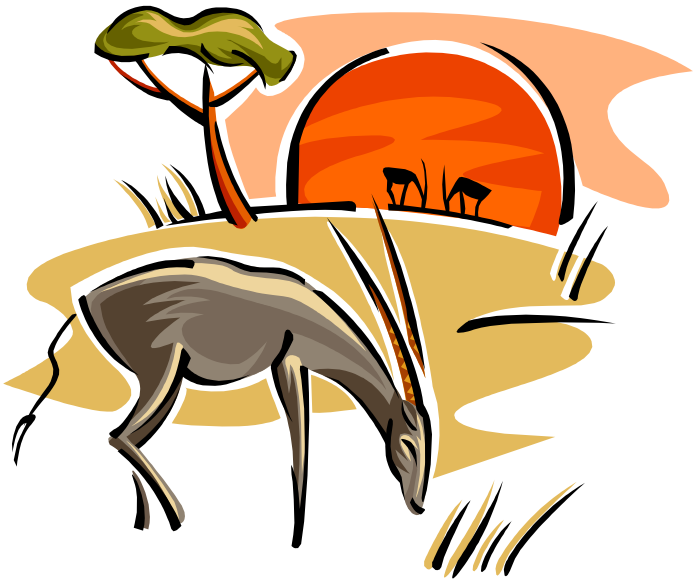
support their preservation. However there are limitations. First, these traditions and values differ from tribe to tribe and region to region and hence many times are too specific to be utilized for a wide audience. Second, non-indigenous religious values and urbanization, amongst other factors, lead to cultural erosion in Africa. The challenge is to stimulate a general concern that cuts across all aspects of society. An in-depth study by the conservation community to see how the media can adequately reach the hearts and minds of the African populace is paramount. Design of programs and messages that would put biodiversity in the spot light and generate a sense of pride and appreciation of their heritage should be researched. In addition, the environmental, social and economical significance of biodiversity should be emphasized.

Decision makers should consider the role of the media in biodiversity education more seriously and help augment efforts in this area. Furthermore, increased funding should be channeled to support and sponsor media opportunities in sending the message of biodiversity awareness to Africans. These steps would be practical and purposeful in the actualization of ensuring that biodiversity survives in Africa in perpetuity.



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Amboseli National Park continued

(Continued from page 5)

stands to benefit most. The Olkejuado County Council will be in control of the approximately $3.4 million (US) brought in as revenue to the park each year. Also at stake is the claim by some Maasai that the land was taken illegally in the first place. Meitamei Ole Dapash calls those opposed to the de-gazetting move "anti-Maasai" and asks "What legal or constitutional process did Mzee Jomo Kenyatta follow when he used Executive fiat to declare Amboseli a National Park? If Kenyatta's order was legal or constitutional, why isn't Kibaki's?"[8] Other reactions have condemned the political nature of the move. Godfrey Ntapayia, Coordinator of the Maa Civil Society Forum, said "We are convinced that this is another divide and rule strategy to draw rift between the community and undermine its solidarity." He went on to question why such transfers were not also being done in many other Maasai communities such as Laikipia, Transmara, Isiolo, Marasabit, Nakuru, Samburu and Narok[9].

What course of events will transpire in the management of Amboseli remains to be seen. However, it is clear that Conservation Biologists cannot be myopic in our approach to conservation problems. The Amboseli case shows the role that politics can and does play in determining conservation priorities. Would this situation have developed differently had more inclusive park management tactics been taken over time? Promises by the government that the community would share in water and revenues generated from Amboseli National Park did not materialize, leading to mistrust by the community. And now Government has taken control of the park out of the hands of the Kenya Wildlife Service but expects the agency to continue managing wildlife, now without revenue with which to do so. The situation appears to be a "no win" for any of the parties involved, and at the bottom of the list of considerations is the unique and globally significant ecosystem that is Amboseli.

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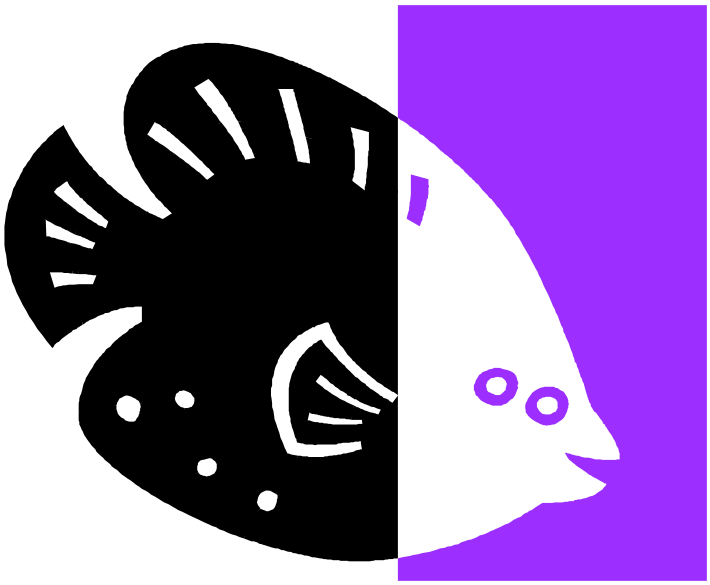

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carnivores is unsustainable. Sometimes the affected communities undertake poisoning, spearing or shooting of the predators further affecting the species. There is thus need to gather more ecological and socio-economic data in order to come up with sustainable solutions. Dr Samuel Andanje (Species Programme, Kenya Wildlife Service), Dr William Ogara (Head of Public Health, Toxicology and Pharmacology, Veterinary School University of Nairobi) and Dr Oguge and are developing a study on ecology of large predators in the Samburu-Laikipia region. A key component of the study will be to identify the distribution and intensity of 'problem' species, and document mortality factors. Such information is vital to the formulation of appropriate conflicts mitigation and thus conservation of the predators. The study will take cognisance of and interact with ongoing predator studies in the region, such as the lion projects in Lewa (Prof Dan Rubenstein) and Laikipia (Dr Laurence Frank; Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley), and the wild dog project in Samburu-Laikipia region (Dr Rosie Woodroffe; Department of Wildlife, Fish and Conservation, University of California, Davis).

Wild resources are harvested by rural people throughout the world to sustain livelihoods. Such harvests are motivated by cultural traditions, survival needs and increasingly for cash income to supplement earnings from other sources. However, the extent of such resource use is not explicit, just as its general impact on the diversity of such resources and sustainability of continued use. Thus, Dr Callistus Ogol, Prof Paul Okemo and Prof Isaiah Ndiege all of Kenyatta University, Kenya have developed a study to establish types of floral resources that are used for medicinal purposes among the Samburu people, the extent of use, and how it impacts on resource sustainability. They hope to develop an understanding of the relationship between biodiversity and local systems of knowledge and resource use. This work will be applied to community-based management of biological resources.

In June 2004, we started an internship program at the Samburu CRI and hosted two students: (i) Dina Brick (Tufts University, USA) who studied 'community perception to conservation' towards her Master's degree, and (ii) Lorraine Stockdale (Kalamazoo College, USA) studied 'endoprasites of zebras' towards her Senior Individualized Project (SIP). This year, we hosted two locals. Carol Muriuki (Moi University, Kenya) investigated the distribution of carnivore-livestock conflict in the Samburu landscape. Esther Mwele (Kenyatta University, Kenya) studied the socio-economic and conservation impacts of wildlife management enterprises in Samburu District. Internship programmes are based on 8-week field research. We are keen to host students from other parts of Africa to carry out conservation research studies with Earthwatch funded scientists.

The Samburu CRI has made great strides within a relatively short period from setting up a field facility, to developing a program to support the scientific community, building supportive communities, and providing educational opportunities. The CRI has engaged and thus won trust of communities and partners as worthy collaborators in environmental conservation and education. By involving all stakeholders in developing a strategic plan and to prioritise researches, all work undertaken in the CRI will not only be relevant, or have ready end users, but also the communities will have a sense of ownership of findings. We have ensured that the suite of projects at the Samburu CRI are of high scientific quality, interlinked, and the results address conservation issues on the ground but with global implications.

Figure 2. Earthwatch scientists, volunteers and community members carrying out a vegetation study in *Acacia* dominated scrubland

Announcements

1. Internship with the IUCN EU Liaison Unit, Brussels. Reporting to: Jean Claude Jacques, Senior Advisor. Timescale: Deadline for applications is Friday 9th December, the internship will run from beginning January to end of June 2006.

   The EU Liaison Unit represents IUCN to the EU and works to influence EU policies and provide support to IUCN's offices and members in accessing European funds. The Unit currently comprises 3 staff members working on EU policies concerned with mainstreaming biodiversity into overseas development, and nature conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources within the EU.

   Candidates must be registered as students for the duration of the internship and available to work in Brussels from the beginning of January to the end of June 2006. An ability to work in English is essential and knowledge of other EU languages is also useful. The internship is unpaid, but 600 Euros per month will be provided to assist with living costs.

   To discuss this opportunity in more detail, please contact Jean Claude Jacques or Janice Weatherley at IUCN-ROfE in Brussels on: +32 (0) 2732 8299. To apply, complete the online internship application form and send with a covering letter, CV, and an explanation of less than 400 words of why you want to work with IUCN ROfE to: Jean Claude Jacques, IUCN Regional Office for Europe, Boulevard Louis Schmidt 64, 1040, Brussels, Belgium, or send by email to: europe@iucn.org. Deadline for applications is Friday 9th December 2005.
2. Treasure Our African Environment (formally the African Bird Migration Project) has launched a conservation competition to award groups & individuals who have shown commitment to their projects over a period of time as well as show case various projects from all over the world. The dates for the competition are 1 January to 1 June 2006.

   The competition has been divided into two age groups these are eight to fourteen and fourteen to twenty. A variety of prizes will be awarded, ranging from binoculars and cameras to tents. Certificates will be given to all participants. The organizers of the competition are looking for the school or conservation group who have shown constant commitment to a conservation project or research of an animal species. Individuals also have the to submit their work so that they will not be at a disadvantage compared with conservation groups.
   <http://www.treasureourafricanenvironment.org>
3. Employment Opportunity—Manager of Tourism Development. The Carr Foundation (a US based non-profit) and the Mozambican Ministry of Tourism are together restoring Gorongosa National Park in Sofala Province, central Mozambique. The 3700 square kilometer park once held the highest concentration of wildlife in all of Africa. Gorongosa, the flagship national park in the country, contains spectacular natural beauty and a diverse set of ecosystems. Tourism attractions include savannah game viewing, lake, river and waterfall scenic spots, mountain and limestone gorge hiking trails, rare species bird watching, historical and cultural sites of interest, and more. The Manager of Tourism Development will be based at Gorongosa National Park and will report to the Head of the Gorongosa Restoration Project. She/he will be a department head (with corresponding budget accountability) and a peer with the other senior managers of the project, who are the department heads of science, conservation, education, community and operations. It is the responsibility of the Manager of Tourism Development to create an enabling environment in Gorongosa Park such that private sector tourism investor/operators can successfully establish tourism businesses. The Manager of Tourism Development will also oversee the establishment of public tourism accommodations in the Park. A portion of tourism revenue will be paid to local communities in exchange for their support of Park objectives. The Manager of Tourism Development will engage with local communities in designing tourism plans.

   The ideal candidate will have professional experience in tourism master planning and protected area management planning in an African national park or reserve. An advanced degree in science, business management or a related field is recommended. Private sector business and negotiation experience is a plus. The individual will need to have the capacity to simultaneously organize "big picture" strategy as well as "start-up" tasks. Success will be measured against the goals of creating a multi-million dollar (eco-friendly and socially responsible) tourism industry in the Park and of attracting tens of thousands of annual visitors. At its peak Gorongosa hosted 30,000 annual visitors and it is the objective of this restoration project to meet and exceed that number. Candidate must speak Portuguese or be prepared to engage in intensive Portuguese language study. This is a full-time position and the commencement date is Spring 2006. Salary and benefits will be commensurate with experience. Please send your CV and covering letter explaining what attracts you to this job and what personal characteristics and expertise you will employ. Information should be sent electronically to Katherine Raphaelson, Carr Foundation, Cambridge, MA USA (katherine@carrfoundation.org)
4. Reviewer wanted! ACT has received a copy of "Conservation and Development Interventions at the Wildlife/Livestock Interface," recently published by the IUCN. If you are an African conservation biologist and would like to review the book (and receive a free copy for your efforts) please send an e-mail stating your qualifications to the ACT editor, Erika Barthelmess, at barthelmess@stlawu.edu. Stu-

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Announcements continued

(Continued from page 15)

dents are especially encouraged to apply. Others: A PDF copy of the book is available at no cost from the IUCN website (http://www.iucn.org/bookstore/SpeciesOccPap1.htm#B2172)

5. Call for applications - 2006 BP Conservation Programme Awards. Deadline 16 December 2005. E-mail applications and enquiries to: bp-conservation programme@birdlife.org.uk. For details, see http://conservation.bp.com. The aim of BP Conservation Programme Awards is to contribute to long-term environmental conservation and sustainable development in priority areas by encouraging and engaging potential leaders in biodiversity conservation, and providing opportunities for them to gain practical skills and experience. Three types of awards will be offered in 2006:
    i. Future Conservationist Awards - Approximately 20 awards of up to $12,500 each, plus training.
    ii. Conservation Follow-up Awards - Approximately 5 awards of up to $25,000 each, plus training. Available to previous BPCP award winners only.
    iii. Conservation Leadership Awards - 2 awards of $50,000 each, plus training. Available to previous BPCP award winners only.

    These three tiers allow progression from encouraging and supporting inexperienced teams undertaking small-scale, basic surveying and awareness-raising projects, to the stage where teams are engaging in more complex decision-making, and developing stronger communication and leadership skills.

    The application deadline is 16th December 2005 for ALL applications, and awards will be announced mid-March 2006. All details, including new guidelines and application forms, are now available on the Programme website http://conservation.bp.com/. All teams submitting an application receive feedback on their proposal and advice on other sources of funding regardless of whether or not they are granted an award. For Future Conservationist Awards, applicants must fulfill the following eligibility criteria (further criteria are included in the guidelines, which can be downloaded from the website): (i) Teams must include only members < 35 years of age with not > two years professional conservation experience, (ii) Projects must address a recognised international biodiversity conservation priority at the species or site level, (iii) Projects must take place outside countries that have ratified the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD Countries: see http://www.oecd.org for a list) and (iv) Projects that are specifically for PhD research or Masters dissertations will not be supported.

    Please consider whether you have any ideas for projects you think would be eligible and could benefit your scope of activities. Feel free to contact us for advice or with questions: bpconservation-programme@birdlife.org.uk

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View from the continent

The baobob tree (*Adansonia digitata*) is one of Africa's most important and multipurpose trees but is now faced with recruitment problems in some countries. Photo: Delali Dovie in Nyanyadzi, Zimbabwe.

Submissions for next issue due January 25, 2006!