

2022

ANNUAL REPORT



 EWASO
LIONS

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EWASO LIONS IS DEDICATED TO CONSERVING LIONS AND OTHER LARGE CARNIVORES BY PROMOTING COEXISTENCE BETWEEN PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE.

We see a secure future for lions in a dynamic, cultural landscape, achieved through community-led conservation.

Ewaso Lions is an independent 100% African wildlife conservation organisation which engages and builds the capacity of key demographic groups (warriors, women, elders and children) by developing approaches to reduce human-carnivore conflict. Our conservation landscape includes; three protected areas (Samburu, Buffalo Springs and Shaba National Reserves) and eleven Community Conservancies in northern Kenya. We raise awareness of ecological problems to spur solutions from within our communities, and conduct research and educational initiatives that reinforce traditionally held beliefs and the evolving culture of wildlife conservation across the landscape.

ABOUT LIONS

The African lion population has disappeared from 92% of their historical range*. It is estimated that there are between 20,000 to 30,000 lions remaining across the continent - down from perhaps 200,000 lions a hundred years ago.

In Kenya, the national population now numbers less than 2,500 individuals. The reduction in lion numbers in Kenya is primarily due to habitat loss and conflict with humans, typically when lions kill people's livestock. More recent threats now include the development of large-scale infrastructure projects, disease and climate

change leading to loss of prey. Lions and other large carnivores are wide-ranging species and designated protected areas are often not large enough to ensure their long-term survival. Therefore, it is crucial that the conservation of these species, as well as their prey, is addressed throughout the landscape, which not only incorporates protected areas but also the surrounding areas where communities live.

*Stolton, S. and Dudley, N. 2019. The New Lion Economy. Unlocking the value of lions and their landscapes, Equilibrium Research, Bristol, UK

LEADERSHIP TEAM

DR. SHIVANI BHALLA
Founder & Executive Director

JENERIA LEKILELEI
Director Of Community Conservation

TOBY OTIENO
Director Of Impact & Operations

ARZINA BHANJEE
Finance Director

FRANCIS LENDOROP
Community Liaison Manager

EVANSON KARIUKI
Education Manager

EVELYN ODUOR
Operations & People's Manager

MUNTELI LALPARASARO I
Mama Simba Manager

MATTHEW WACHIRA
Research Manager

ELIJAH LENGAINA
Camp Manager

BUILDING A CULTURE OF CONSERVATION

We began our work in northern Kenya with a quest to understand conflict at a time when the population of lions in Kenya numbered less than 2000.

The journey became a mission to promote coexistence. With a focus on lions, local leadership and embracing the pastoral way of life, a thriving lion population is now safe on community lands, and we have seen true ownership of lions grow across the landscape. 15 years on, we reflect on our journey.



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF EWASO LIONS



Jeneria

My biggest highlight is seeing lions roaming and permanently residing in community areas - something I never would have imagined when Ewaso Lions started. When they cause problems, I can convince even angry people to like lions - even if they have lost livestock. This is because my community have ownership over lion conservation and this is a huge achievement. Samburu women have also taken over - I am so happy."



Arzina

I recall when I was first contacted by Shivani in 2009 to help her with the accounts for Ewaso Lions. She brought me a bag full of jumbled up receipts. It took me weeks to sort, compile and create a basic accounting structure for Ewaso Lions to start with. What was initially a part-time job then became full-time. Since then, Ewaso Lions became a formal company and our staff grew from 10 to more than 60 members as of 2022. Our donations also grew over time (thanks to amazing donor support), and we were able to establish many community-led programmes. I have been very proud to see Ewaso Lions grow and contribute so much to the community."



Shivani

One evening last year, our team WhatsApp group lit up with a flurry of messages flooding in. I was amazed to see reports and photos from teams representing Mama Simba, Kura's Pride, Lion Kids Camp, Lion Governors and 3 lion teams. I had a real moment and I thought about how much Ewaso Lions has grown and what a tremendous impact we had in just one day. I reflect back to when we started and how only 4 of us would try and do everything. Our capacity was so limited back then. But things changed and from our small temporary camp in the valley to our permanent hill-top camp with the most spectacular views, I am so so proud of our team and how far we have come. And of course Kura walking in to my life over 10 years ago has to be one of my most special moments. Many say that I rescued him - but he definitely rescued me."



Lempagaani

I started off as a security officer and later joined the kitchen department. Working here has aided me to educate my children and fend for my family. I am so happy that Ewaso Lions is offering employment opportunities to my community and even those from other ethnic groups ultimately changing the lives of Kenyans."



Evelyn

I vividly remember how remarkable it was during our 10-year celebration as an organisation. The support from the team, donors and that of the community was immense, and we all worked together as a team which made the day successful and memorable."



Sarah

Last year, we visited Remot which has a dense stand of the invasive alien plant *Prosopis juliflora* (known locally as mathenge). Lions are using it to hide in during the day time but this is not a long-term solution for them and will ultimately be harmful because of it undermining the ability of prey species to survive. Amazingly, we managed to see two lionesses and three cubs which emerged from the dense mathenge forest at dusk. Fast forward a few months and I was providing a training to the team and partners on mathenge management. I thought about the lions in Remot and realised that no matter how complex the problem is, with imagination, the right tools, determination and unity, we can find the solutions needed for lion conservation."



Evanson

I joined Ewaso Lions when the organisation was expanding within the education programme. All through, I have seen sponsored students transition from primary school to tertiary education and even finally getting employed. At the beginning, most of the team were not conversant with Swahili and our presence has aided them to learn new skills and many now speak fluent Swahili! I have been exposed to a great deal while working here and I am now confident to work in a diverse and multi-cultural environment. The teamwork exhibited has immensely built me and has offered me a bridge to work in varied social contexts."



Toby

We had a deadline. The vet was only available briefly and our window was small. We had to find Kwenia and put a tracking collar on him. But I was really nervous. Jeneria and Shivani were away and we had never collared a lion without them in the past. But somehow I kept my nerves in check and we searched everywhere for Kwenia - we waited for a long time for him to come out of the bushes and the vet was there and Kwenia was darted and collared. I will never forget that moment he popped out of the bushes and we were successful. Our team's capacity had really grown - what a great moment."



Francis

Ewaso Lions started with only 4 individuals and I was one of them. Now we have more than 60 staff. I look back and see this growth, and I get so overwhelmed with joy because of the journey and the impact it has caused in my community. It was so hard in the beginning to work in lion conservation but with perseverance, it has become easier and the community are getting to understand."



Munteli

When I started driving it made me so happy and I was so proud of my achievement as the first woman from my community to drive. After my driving classes I was surprised with a Suzuki vehicle that enabled me to implement my conservation work in the Mama Simba programme. I now have a larger vehicle and nothing can stop me now. It is heart-warming to see lions permanently reside in my community area and my people's attitudes towards conservation is changing. I feel so happy to be a part of this process."

OUR 2022 HIGHLIGHTS



50

THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF LIONS WE RECORDED IN 15 YEARS WITH ZERO LIONS KILLED IN RETALIATION THIS YEAR.



1,709

HOUSEHOLDS WITHIN WESTGATE CONSERVANCY RECEIVED FOOD RELIEF FROM EWASO LIONS DURING THE SEVERE DROUGHT IN THE REGION.



233

CHILDREN FROM 7 CONSERVANCIES ATTENDED 9 LION KIDS CAMPS. 2022 MARKED THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF LION KIDS CAMPS COMPLETED FOR CHILDREN ACROSS THE LANDSCAPE, SINCE 2013.



26

LIVESTOCK COMPENSATION CLAIMS THAT WE HELPED THE COMMUNITY FILE AT THE KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE. WE PROVIDED TRANSPORT TO LIVESTOCK OWNERS WHO HAD LOST LIVESTOCK KILLED BY CARNIVORES.



645

DOMESTIC ANIMALS WERE ATTENDED TO THROUGH THE COMMUNITY ANIMAL HEALTH INITIATIVE.



7

NEW LIONS WERE IDENTIFIED IN THE LORIAN SWAMP IN ISIOLO COUNTY. OUR TEAM JOINED PARTNERS TO EXPLORE THE PRESENCE OF LIONS WITHIN THIS COMMUNITY LANDSCAPE.



1

PAPER PUBLISHED ON WARRIOR WATCH WHICH WAS EVALUATED SHOWING THAT COMMUNITIES WERE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE LIKELY TO REPORT POSITIVE CHANGES IN THEIR ATTITUDES AND TOLERANCE TOWARDS LIONS SINCE THE INCEPTION OF WARRIOR WATCH, AND TO ATTRIBUTE THESE CHANGES TO THE PROGRAMME.



3

JEREMY LUCAS EDUCATION FUND (JLEF) STUDENTS GRADUATED FROM UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES ACROSS THE COUNTRY. THROUGH JLEF, WE HAVE SUPPORTED SOLOMON, PAINOTI AND SANIKI THROUGH SECONDARY SCHOOL AND TERTIARY EDUCATION.

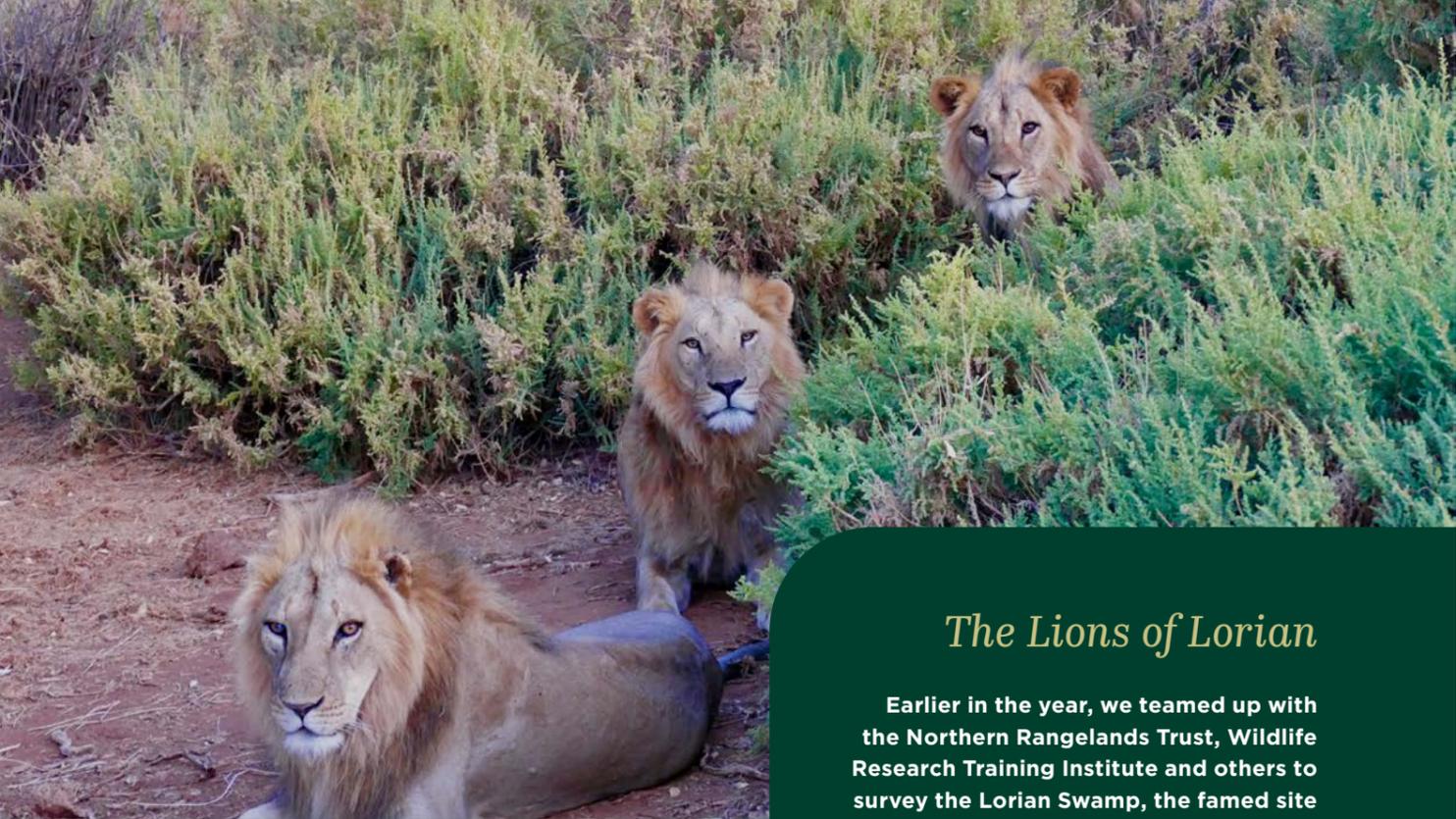


AN AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED WITH THE SAMBURU COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK AND FISHERIES AND VETINWILD CONFIRMING OUR JOINT ACTIVITIES IN IMPROVING DOMESTIC ANIMAL WELFARE.



A DETAILED PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN EWASO LIONS, GREVY'S ZEBRA TRUST, LAPSSET AND CETRAD WAS DEVELOPED FOLLOWING A LANDSCAPE VISIT. THIS IS TO BE SIGNED IN 2023.





The Lions of Lorian

Earlier in the year, we teamed up with the Northern Rangelands Trust, Wildlife Research Training Institute and others to survey the Lorian Swamp, the famed site where the Ewaso Nyiro River terminates.

There had been reports of many lions present and our team went to investigate. We are pleased to report that a pride was identified. Our team played distressed animal sounds on a loudspeaker which attracted 7 lions! Their images were captured using a pair of night vision binoculars.

The challenges in this landscape are great. Despite being a swamp, there is little water in Lorian and the prolific, invasive Mathenge consumes most of the water. Lorian provides perfect habitat for lions, but the lack of water and prey brings them into conflict with the local communities living here. There are signs of hope mainly from the community who despite losing livestock are keen to have lions present in their newly formed Conservancy. With our support, the community are keen to address these challenges to keep the lions of Lorian safe.



THE EWASO LIONS: NEW LIONS ACROSS THE LANDSCAPE

Corridors for Connectivity

After spotting tracks of 3 males, we immediately knew these had to be new lions. We searched and waited patiently for them and finally they emerged from the thick *Salvadora* bushes. As soon as we saw them - it was confirmed - new males!

One was a very unusual looking male with very short legs and small, distinct ears. We learned that they had moved 80 kilometres from Laikipia to Samburu and after spending a few days in Westgate Conservancy, headed south to Il Ngwesi Conservancy where they were seen and closely monitored by our team. This year, they surprised us a few times by travelling to Samburu. They caused major disruption and our resident males Kwenia and Loingopa fled west. The new males did not spend too much time in Samburu before heading back south again through Buffalo Springs to Il Ngwesi - covering over 50 kilometres. Keeping these critical corridors open is central to the work we do allowing lions to move from one safe refuge to another.

EXPANDING LION MONITORING

Over the past year, we have increased our lion monitoring efforts through setting up permanently stationed teams in 3 different regions, across 3 counties.

We have Letupukwa and Jeremiah in the central region, Thomas, Samuel, Jisana, Sanangi and Martin in the southern region, and Lenakae and Lkasian in the northern region supported by a team based at our mobile camp in Remot. To retain the institutional memory and wisdom within our teams, our Lion Governors have been included in the various regional teams to monitor lions, reduce conflict and continue to engage the community in lion matters. Our Lion Governors play an important role as leaders in their communities embedded in these teams.

“

We have a lot of achievements as an organisation. Since I joined in 2013, the organisation has grown and the lion population has grown too. I too am growing and am currently a Regional Coordinator managing 4 Conservancies - what a growth! We are very happy that our team received a vehicle that made lion monitoring in our home area more efficient. Coordinating my team has become easy and we are able to solve conflicts and locate lions swiftly.”

Thomas Ekiru, Southern Regional Coordinator



Northern



Southern



Central





LIONS & DROUGHT

2009 presented one of the worst droughts our region had experienced. Wild herbivores and livestock died in their thousands. The Ewaso Nyiro River was dry for 10 months that year – and communities were travelling long distances in search of water.

2017 also marked a severe drought where 5 lions were lost as people, livestock and wildlife converged on the last grass, which happened to also be prime lion refuges. This represented over 10% of the known lion population in the area at the time - a devastating loss. Droughts don't make the news in the same ways as other lethal weather events, but they have multiple devastating impacts as felt in 2022.

The drying up of the Ewaso Nyiro River is a common sight now in our landscape. In much of Samburu, the Ewaso Nyiro River is the only source of water and herbivores

congregate along it in search of waterholes that elephants or humans have dug. Lions and other carnivores often lie in wait along the river in the thick riverine habitat and ambush their prey. Typically the dry seasons have always suited lions – they come together more in smaller groups, cub survival is high and generally their hunting success rate is higher as they bring down weaker prey.

Change is coming and now the future for lions during these dry seasons is threatened. While the immediate worry is the increased conflict and decreased tolerance leading to lion killing, the longer impacts include the devastation of an already dwindling prey base leading to a cycle of perpetual conflict. Our strategy must now take a longer view...

WORKING THROUGH THE DROUGHT

These climate crises are here to stay. It is not a climate emergency, but climate change, and it is here to stay for the foreseeable future.

Our approach, which for so long had been one of responding urgently to each crisis, has changed to incorporating drought management in our day-to-day efforts. Our plan is multi-pronged, and we work with multiple partners and as an organisation to shore our defences against the drought in several ways:

Digging for water: The Ewaso Nyiro River, our region's lifeblood has dried up several times this year, necessitating digging operations which our Mama Simba team led. The water in the riverbed has helped sustain livestock, wildlife and people alike.



When drought struck, Ewaso Lions provided food relief to the community and this melted my heart. Lion conservation, has brought aid to my community during harsh environmental conditions."

Marko Lekapana, Lion Governor

Food relief for communities: Ewaso Lions teamed up with well-wishers and partners to provide much needed food to over 1700 households and schools. The situation has been extremely dire, with malnutrition in both adults and children being felt across the areas we work.

Assisting partners with herbivore supplementary feeding: Ewaso Lions worked to support the Grevy's Zebra Trust (GZT) to provide grass to Grevy's zebra, the most critically endangered zebra on earth. Our team worked to help the GZT team with grass provisioning and transport for the vet who was working to keep weak individuals alive.

Relief package for team: Ewaso Lions held firmly to the tenet that our priority must remain to provide sustained support to our team, the arms and legs of our operation. For several months, we provided extra stipends to our whole team so that each person felt like their family can survive through this, which has in turn bolstered their efforts to support communities, wildlife and livestock.

Supporting the National Reserves: We supported the National Reserves and Conservancies in their patrol efforts to keep carnivore refuges safe.



COMMUNITY ANIMAL HEALTH INITIATIVE: ONE YEAR ON

In 2021, Ewaso Lions (through Kura's Pride), Animal Care Centre, VetinWild and the County Government of Samburu came together to bring veterinary services closer to communities through the Community Animal Health Initiative (CAHI).

CAHI's aim is to reduce the burden of diseases that have a negative impact on wildlife and to reduce human-wildlife conflict. The programme began operations in October 2021 and is run by Dr Jessicah Kurere and Solomon Lenasalia.

THIS YEAR: A TOTAL OF 645 ANIMALS WERE ATTENDED TO

Case types:

Vaccinations: 190

Post-mortem: 1

Population Control: 40

Emergency treatments: 42

Treatments: 372

19 of these were camels

Education and awareness programmes: 714 people



CAHI has 4 main objectives:

1. MANAGING RABIES AND DISTEMPER DISEASES IN DOMESTIC ANIMALS THROUGH VACCINATIONS AND POPULATION CONTROL
2. DISEASE SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING
3. SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY THROUGH PROVIDING TREATMENTS FOR THEIR DOMESTIC ANIMALS THAT WERE ATTACKED BY WILDLIFE
4. COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND AWARENESS PROGRAMMES TO REDUCE DISEASE SPREAD AND IMPROVE DOMESTIC ANIMAL WELFARE



KURA'S PRIDE: MEET LOIBUOR & MBERUS

As told by Jessicah & Solomon

This is Loibuor, meaning "pale". He comes from Ngutuk Ongiron in Westgate Conservancy. He was very sick with Canine Distemper.

Because of the love his family has for Loibuor, they carried him with a motorcycle for kilometres, and even across the Ewaso Nyiro River to get to Ewaso Lions. Loibuor was too weak to walk, eat or even breath properly. Our domestic animal mobile veterinary unit attended to Loibuor on many occasions, including putting him on a drip, ensuring he got to a stable condition. In all the days Loibuor was being attended to, his brother Lngatuny (meaning "lion") stuck by our side giving us company and providing comfort to Loibuor - right until his recovery.



“

When I first saw Loibuor, I was devastated at his state. He could hardly stand. We went to see him daily, putting him on drips as he was not eating. And when he finally did, I was so excited! Jess and I ended up giving him all the milk we had in the car. From then on, we always carried an extra pack just for him. I was so happy to see him regain his strength and health. Loibuor is a special animal for me.”

Solomon Lenasalia, Kura's Pride Coordinator



This is Mberus, meaning "big stomach". She was bitten by a snake while chasing a hyaena away from their homestead.

One of the young boys came to her rescue only to find an agitated puff adder and Mberus in a lot of pain. After a few days of treatment, Mberus made a speedy recovery thanks to the intervention by the mobile veterinary unit. Today, she leads all the dogs in their homestead in keeping their livestock safe while herding during the day and all through the night.



LION KIDS CAMPS REBOUND

Lion Kids Camps give children the chance to experience and learn about our wildlife in a positive light. 2022 marked the highest number of camps completed for children across the landscape, since 2013.

Taking on both herding and school-going children, the Lion Kids Camp team carried out 9 full camps bringing together in total 233 children from 7 Conservancies. The children learnt volumes about how to herd livestock better and track the various carnivores in the landscape. They also heard words of advice and lessons from the Mama Simba ladies, Lion Governors, the Kura's Pride team, our sponsored students and many more. As always, the highlight was their safari into Samburu National Reserve in our Lion Kids Camp bus, giving many participants a glimpse of wildlife up close and from a safe distance for the first time.

“

We want more camps like this in our home area so that many of our friends can be able to learn more about wildlife like we have done!”

Lepore Looshu, a young herder from Nanapisho Conservancy

During almost all of the Lion Kids Camps held, the children were lucky to sight lions, a testament to the hard work of the team, communities, Reserve managements and all our partners.

“

Recently, my daughter participated in a Lion Kids Camp and she affirmed that she aspires to be a conservationist in the future. The conservation future is bright”.

Thomas Ekiru, Southern Regional Coordinator



“

Seeing the Mama Simba approach being replicated elsewhere by other organisations, makes me feel so proud of the mamas bravery which formed this programme. This replication is important as a wider range of women will get involved in conservation.”

Munteli Lalparasaroi,
Mama Simba Manager



MAMA SIMBA RESTRATEGISE

In September, Mama Simba ladies gathered to take stock of how their work was evolving, and decide how to re-weight various conservation programmes and activities.

They have articulated their mission as “bringing back wildlife to women” through:

- Preserving their culture through meetings and workshops with women and children
- Working with partners to support lion habitat recovery activities, through tree-planting, control of invasive species and growing grass in enclosures
- Providing support to wildlife during droughts through digging waterholes
- Monitoring of lions within the community landscape
- Implementing community education and awareness programmes through our Conservation Game and holding meetings
- Participating in environmental literacy classes

The Mama Simba ladies now hold firmly to the historically held belief that wildlife belongs to women.





THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT – ASHE OLENG

Ewaso Lions is an independent non-profit organisation and relies on donations and grants to run our programmes and operations.

In 2022, 93% of the funds raised supported our conservation and research programmes, 3% went to administration and 4% went to fundraising.

Thank you so much to all our partners who enable us to make a conservation impact in Kenya:

KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE

WILDLIFE RESEARCH TRAINING INSTITUTE

SAMBURU, ISIOLO AND LAIKIPIA COUNTY GOVERNMENTS

SAMBURU, BUFFALO SPRINGS AND SHABA NATIONAL RESERVES MANagements

COMMUNITY CONSERVANCIES (WESTGATE, KALAMA, NASUULU, NAKUPRAT-GOTU, NAAPO, NANAPISHO, MEIBAE, LEPARUA, IL NGWESI, LEKURUKKI, NAMUNYAK)

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION NETWORK

WORLD WOMEN WORK

WHITLEY FUND FOR NATURE

HOUSTON ZOO

SAN DIEGO ZOO WILDLIFE ALLIANCE

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

SAMBURU COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF VETERINARY SERVICES

GREVY'S ZEBRA TRUST

SAVE THE ELEPHANTS

NORTHERN RANGELANDS TRUST

VETINWILD

ANIMAL CARE CENTRE

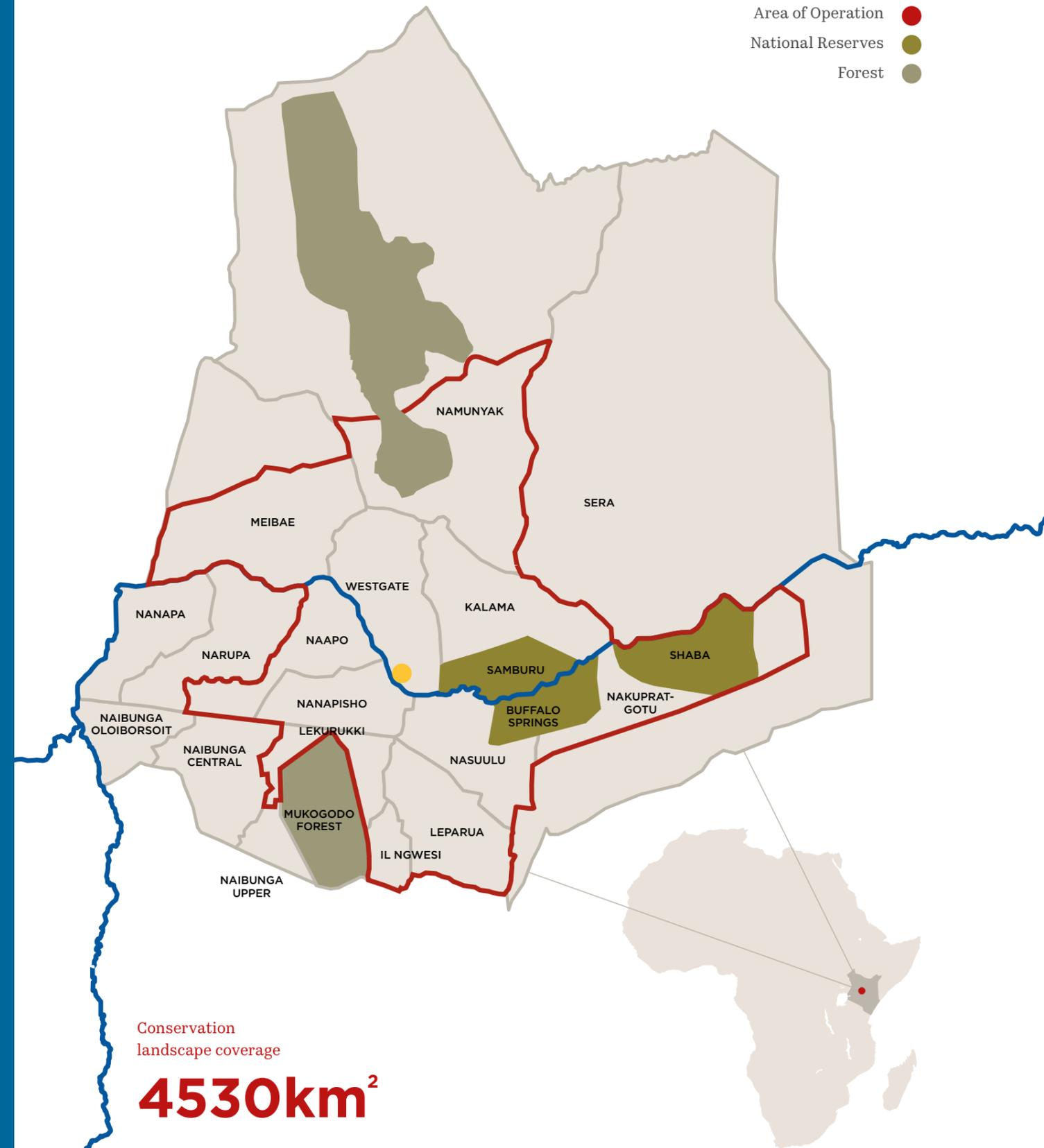
FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL AID TO ANIMALS

ALL EWASO FORUM MEMBERS

ENDANGERED WILDLIFE TRUST

EWASO LIONS LANDSCAPE

- Ewaso Lions Camp ●
- Ewaso Nyiro River ●
- Community Conservancies ●
- Area of Operation ●
- National Reserves ●
- Forest ●



Conservation landscape coverage

4530km²



Ewaso Lions

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