



Recommendations to politicians

- Create policies on ownership and control by communities over wildlife
- Review policies for compensation of human and livestock loss
- Define boundaries clearly between group ranches and trust lands
- Enhance veterinary services to reduce transmission of diseases from wildlife
- Create a favourable environment for financial services (e.g. credit) to be provided to pastoralists
- Allow livestock into Government Reserves during prolonged droughts

Naibunga Conservancy Trust



Prepared by members of the Naibunga Conservancy Trust in preparation for the IGAD Members of Parliament Tour, funded by IDRC and co-organised by IUCN, IGAD, ARLMP and CEMIRIDE.

The Members of Parliament Tour is part of a larger project 'Conservation as Core Assets for Livelihoods in Eastern Africa' funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The objective of this projects is to enhance knowledge on the contribution of biodiversity conservation to livelihoods and to assist communities to demonstrate to politicians and senior policy makers on this importance.

Naibunga Conservancy Trust

The Naibunga Conservancy Trust (NCT) is a community initiative collectively owned and managed by nine group ranches in Laikipia North district. The group ranches have set aside a total of 43,000 acres of land as a conservation area. Naibunga is a Maasai word connoting either connectedness or collective responsibility and it was chosen as a rallying call for the nine ranches that joined.

The decision to start the conservancy was made in order to be able to live with the wildlife and in order to help manage problems with neighbouring land users. The conservancy was started in 2003 and addressed a series of cross cutting issues including cattle rustling, poaching, insecurity, and water and livestock movements. The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) and the Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF) gave support to register the conservancy. The conservancy joined the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) in 2007 because of ongoing insecurity.



What is conservation in Naibunga?

Conservation is the better utilisation of human and natural resources. It means a better coexistence between humans and wildlife, protection of endangered species, letting wildlife move freely without hazards and integrating of both livestock and wildlife management. The Naibunga community conserves a variety of natural resources, including springs, wildlife, land, culture and forest resources. Conservation is for the community – for the present and future generations – and for Kenya and the rest of the world.

Benefits from conservation initiatives

The community has benefited from conservation by regaining lost wildlife and vegetation species, through recovery of natural resources and healing of the land. People have benefited from the development of Eco Lodges (which earn foreign exchange), from visits by tourists, and from a range of employment opportunities. They have also benefited from school bursary funds, and through improvements in security as a result of the improved communication network.

Conservation has also led to the rehabilitation and renovation of stalled projects, capacity building for the community through exposure tours, and increased interaction with other stakeholders. As a result of the conservation work, attitudes towards wildlife have improved and the children of the community can view wildlife locally without having to travel far to see them.

Further benefits could come if there was greater compensation for wildlife attacks and damage, more efforts to reduce livestock mortality, and greater emphasis on grazing management plans. Benefits could also come from reducing human/wildlife/livestock conflict by increasing water sources. Furthermore, the community could benefit from increased income from tourists, through sustained wildlife conservation, and through motivation of school leavers to train in tourism.



How does conservation support or compete with your livelihood?

Conservation has supported education and medical care, improved access to water, preservation of medicinal plants, improved grazing management plans, income generating activities through women's empowerment, and greater awareness of the importance of conservation.

However, conservation can also restrict access to grazing areas and can lead to the destruction of water sources by wildlife. It can also lead to greater conflict as the neighbouring communities invade the conservation areas. It also leads to increased predation of livestock, without compensation, and greater livestock disease incidence when in contact with wildlife.

Lessons learned

Wildlife is beneficial to livelihoods, and through conservation we can also benefit from our rich culture: for example by developing business in beaded artefacts. It has also helped to diversify our livelihoods. Particular successes have been the improvement in vegetation and the more harmonious coexistence between wildlife and humans. We have increased wildlife numbers, higher honey production as a result of the vegetation improvement, and we have both existing and upcoming eco lodges. We have also improved the education of our children through the availability of bursaries.