

KENYA
WILDLIFE
SERVICE



PORINI

APRIL - MAY 2012 | ISSUE NO.5



The future is safe for elephant

INSIDE

3

NEWS

Community partnerships boost conservation

5

ASK THE EXPERTS

In a struggle to survive

10

KWS CORPORATE SERVICE CHARTER

12

KNOW YOUR PARK

Nairobi National Park shines amid threats

Striving for excellence

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We welcome articles or any feedback from readers on conservation and tourism.

Please include your name, address and telephone number. Letters/articles may be edited for clarity or space.

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At Kenya Wildlife Service, we are always looking for ways to become an excellent organisation.

In our pursuit for excellence, we are in the process of enhancing our operational budget through fundraising.

An increased threat to wildlife has heightened the need to increase the number of rangers in the medium term. Within the next three to five years we intend to increase the number of rangers by 1,700 rangers to the current 3,300. With more cash, we will be able to take care of attrition, retirement, and death among others. More rangers will also enhance the enforcement of wildlife related laws.

The decision to raise our budget is further informed by the need to sharpen the skills of our staff. This year we are spending KSh100 million in training and next year, we shall increase this to KSh 120 million. Our aim is to ensure that our employees remain motivated and reasonably compensated.

In addition, as from July this year, we are going to increase employees salaries. We understand that the cost of living has sky rocketed hence the need to adjust our payroll strategy.

Part of motivating our staff also involves providing adequate housing. To realise this, we want to spend approximately KSh400million shillings every year for the next eight years in constructing more houses. Over five years ago, KWS did have any funds to address housing needs. The fact that we have moved to KSh400 million is a big leap and if we can sustain this for the next eight years, our staff will be adequately housed.

The other area where we want to increase our spending is in undertaking various community projects. Working with communities is vital for the success in wildlife conservation bearing in mind that wildlife move between wildlife protected and community areas.

Within the last seven years, we have increased our spending on communities from KSh5million to KSh160 million. As we



KWS is training community scouts to enhance community participation in wildlife conservation.

aim at aggressively open up community conservancies, we are already training scouts and given some startup capital to some conservancies.

We want to win over communities through collaborations. Right now, we have one million hectares of community land which has been converted to conservancies. We believe the potential is much higher, probably even ten times higher. However, to achieve this calls for much more investment in community areas so that the government will not have to buy land but will instead collaborate with communities to enhance wildlife management and conservation.

As we undertake these strides, we are also focusing our attention on conserving wetland areas. Kenya has lost a lot of wetlands to human activities most notably through cultivation. This has destroyed water sources. Moving forward, KWS want to develop strategies to strengthen management and conservation of wetlands in collaboration with the communities.

In conclusion, we want to enhance our capacity to undertake sophisticated scientific research which will in turn inform our decision making in addition to streamlining the wildlife industry in Kenya and making all stakeholders compliant.

We are optimistic that the budget for KWS should double in the next three to five years. Our current budget is KSh7billion and by 2017 we hope to operate within a 15billion shillings budget. That, we believe, is consistent with our ambition. ■

Ruma becomes new rhino sanctuary

Article by: **PATRICK OMONDI**

Twenty one black rhinos have been successfully reintroduced into Ruma National Park in Western Kenya making Ruma the newest Rhino Sanctuary in Kenya. Ten of the rhinos were sourced from Mugie Rhino Sanctuary, in Northern Kenya where insecurity has led the Government to destock it of all her rhinos while the remaining eleven rhinos were sourced from Solio Ranch, Central Kenya.

These founder numbers of rhino in Ruma will be kept safe and let to breed



to increase in numbers for restocking other areas in future. The Introduction of rhinos in this region is envisaged to also

enhance and unlock tourism potential in the region.

The translocation of the rhinos was carried out by the Kenya Wildlife at a cost of Kshs 6 million.

Kenya's National black rhino populations currently stand at 620 from a low 380 in 1985. The current Kenya rhino conservation and management strategy envisage managing and conserving the black rhino as a flagship species to reach a total of 750 by 2016 with a vision of 2000 black rhinos in their natural habitat. ■

Simple steps towards conservation

Wildlife and environmental conservation is a duty to each one of us.

Here are some simple steps that you can take to conserve wildlife.

- Share what you know about the environment and what can be done to help save endangered species to your friends and family.

- Do not buy products made from wild animals and exotic hard woods! If people do not buy products made from wild animals, the people who hunt and trap wild animals will have to stop making the products. Products made from exotic hard woods often come from the rainforest that is home to

many endangered animals. Ask if you are not sure what a product is made of and where it comes from.

- Do not buy live animals that have been taken from the wild. When even one animal is taken from the wild it encourages trappers to catch more. This includes all animals: mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, fish, and even insects. If you would like an exotic animal for a pet, ask the seller if it was bred in captivity and have them show you proof.
- Work with and support environmental organizations. You can support organizations through donations of money, materials, and your time.
- Plant a tree. Trees provide shelter and food to animals. Trees also help fight global warming caused by the greenhouse effect, hold together soil, create shade, and make the world a more beautiful place. ■



Avoid buying products made from wild animals and exotic hard woods!