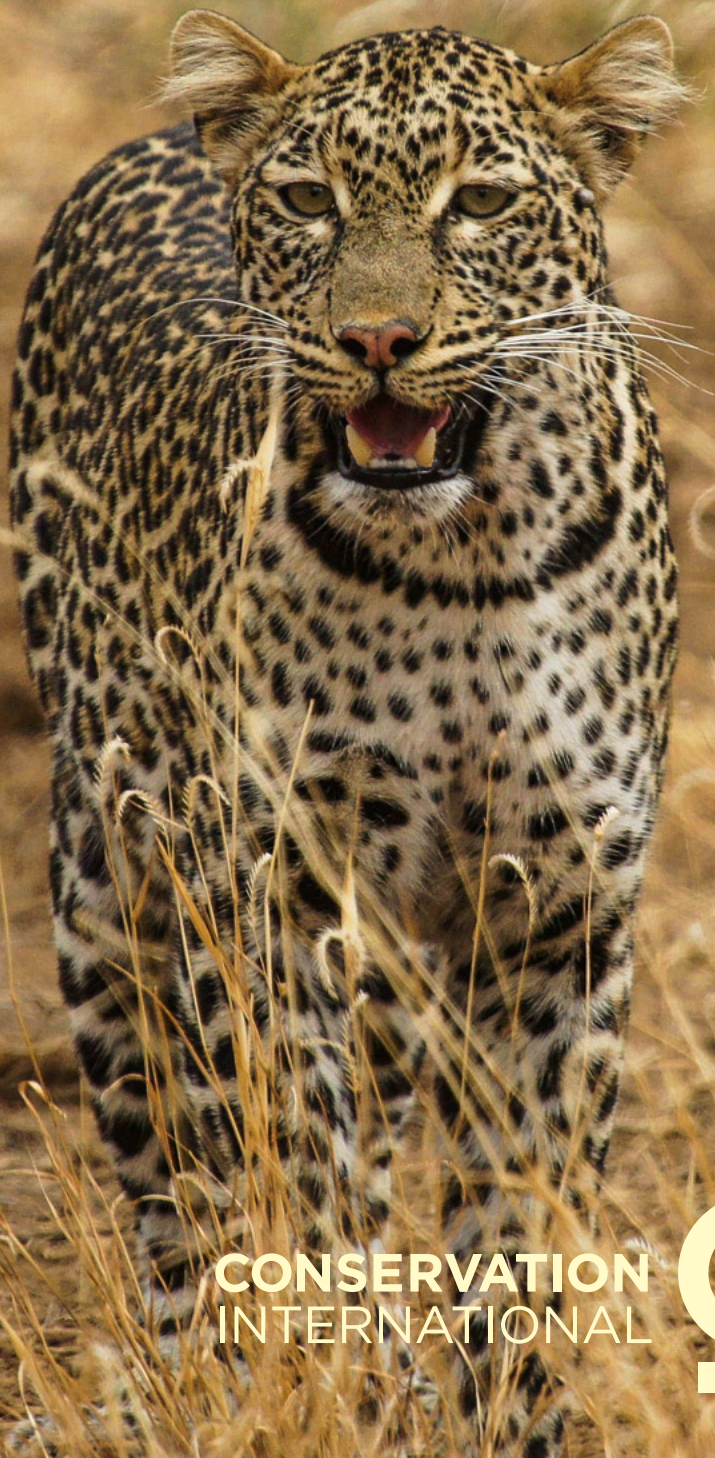


Q1 2020

Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project
Impact Report



**EVER
LAND**

CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL



Q1 2020 Summary

Implementing activities with partners on the Eastern side

Capacity building for local Group Ranch Board Members

Hiring consultants to prepare for second verification activities

Initiation of social impact analysis surveys

Continued employment of Community Rangers & issuance of Educational Bursaries



The first quarter has seen an uninterrupted continuation of critical forest and wildlife protection activities, community programs in education, and capacity building for

local community board members. Recent carbon sales have provided much-needed financial resources that the project has effectively utilized to activate its vision

of landowner-led, community-driven conservation. The project's comprehensive strategy, and the solid institutional capacity now in place, are providing a new source of stability and resilience to the landscape and communities, starting the project on a path toward durable long term success.



Implementing activities with partners on the Eastern side



Highlights

The Eastern border zone of the project area is inhabited by a large number of people, historically from the Kamba tribe (traditionally renowned as skilled honey collectors and woodcarvers), but more recently reflecting a more diverse population as a result of an influx of people via the new Mombassa highway.

While technically outside the project area, this group is critical to the long term success of the project: As small scale farmers of mainly subsistence crops, they face significant livelihoods challenges including access to water, vulnerability to drought, poor agricultural practices, low levels of education, and few schools. These issues in turn put tremendous pressure on the land, forests, wildlife and water resources inside the project area.

Recognizing the importance of the Eastern communities, the project's Board decided to allocate a share of project proceeds equal to that received by the project's trustee organizations - notwithstanding the fact that they are outside the project area. In 2018 the project surveyed these communities, conducting 40 meetings over large area in a logistically challenging and expensive undertaking. Based on priority needs identified through this work, the project developed a plan for delivery of benefits for eastern communities.

Key priorities include bursaries for school children, provision of water tanks, training of women's groups in bee-keeping, and provision of hives and equipment. The program will include extensive outreach and communications linking benefits to conservation. Kenya Wildlife Service will also undertake research on human wildlife conflict and bushmeat poaching to better inform future interventions and community attitudes.



Capacity building for local Group Ranch Board Members

The central innovation of the Chyulu Hills project is to implement a model of a member-based conservation dividend, in which the financial benefits of conservation – achieved through carbon credit sales – are directly realized by the landowners and key stakeholders in the area. Proving out this model will have significant impact in persuading communities that it is profitable to balance sustainable use, wildlife, cattle, and other enterprise – and provide a critical contrast to traditional Kenyan tourist lodges, where communities typically receive no financial benefits from wildlife conservation.

A key piece of this approach is to build up the management capacity of the Chyulu Hills Community Trust group ranch offices, so they can effectively administer the member dividends. Activities such as creating formal registers of group members, establishing accounting systems for the ranch, and so forth are critical pieces of that capacity.

In Q1, carbon funds from recent sales were utilized to provide training and capacity building support for trustees of four of the Local Community Group Ranch members. The trustees received 4 Dell laptops and computer literacy training. These are needed first steps in the long-term, ongoing process of building Group Ranch institutional capacity, one of the linchpins of durable market-based conservation.

Planning for second verification activities

In preparation of the project's second verification, new consultants have been selected to assist in completing all the steps for the project to again qualify for Gold level standards under the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) and Climate Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards, and in conformity with the optional Climate Change Adaptation Benefits, Exceptional Community Benefits, and Exceptional Biodiversity Benefits CCB Criteria.

The consultants will provide coordination and guidance for project staff and partners for development of the Project Monitoring Report and activities that will support such development, including technical analysis for emissions reduction calculations, soil and tree sampling, biodiversity monitoring, and social impact analysis.



Continued employment of community rangers & issuance of educational bursaries

One of the Group Ranch members, Big Life Foundation, has utilized proceeds from recent carbon sales to add 4 new Community Rangers and 5 Water Rangers.

A new Ranger's base and team have been created and equipped to address a specific threat from encroachment in an area of the national park. The rangers conduct daily anti-poaching and security patrols in that area of the park.

New "water" rangers have been hired to monitor community water resources and protect them against theft and vandalism.

Funds have also been set aside to offer school bursaries for the bright needy students within the group ranches for one year as well as assist in the repairs of schools whose infrastructure became dilapidated due to wear and tear and the recent heavy rains.





Mitigating human wildlife conflict

Chyulu Hills Conservation Trust Group member Sheldrick Wildlife Trust continues with their construction of two stretches of elephant exclusion fencing. They have spent many helicopter hours, including this quarter, pushing elephants out of farms and back into either Kibwezi Forest or the National Park. Having completed a fence along the entire stretch of the Eastern Side of the project

area, elephants are still able to walk around the Northern most extent of the fence. One of the two sections being completed is thought to be the only place where elephants are still able to “get around” so we are expecting a dramatic decrease if not elimination of human wildlife conflict in this area once it is complete in less than a month.

Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has improved security along the fence by hiring a full-time employee to patrol the fence by motorcycle, managing the fence maintenance crews, and using the crews to report breaches and information regarding illegal activities within the Park.



Challenges



Restoring the Forest

Major threats to parts of the project area include expansion of subsistence agriculture and settlement, as well as unsustainable exploitive practices, such as charcoal burning and timber harvesting, leading to deforestation.

Restoring damaged and degraded ecosystems within the project area is a critical part of the project's overall conservation strategy. A pilot project through the Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust is demonstrating the feasibility of wetland restoration. Wetlands are especially important for maintaining the hydrology of the Chyulu Hills, which is a critical water source for the entire region. This project includes setting up tree nurseries to grow trees for wetland restoration and for replanting degraded areas of the upland forest.

Several species of seeds and wildlings were collected from the Chyulu Cloud Forest including, *Erythrina abyssinica*, *Ficus sycamorus*, *Kigelia africana*, *Croton megalocarpus* and *Vangueria apiculata*. Since then, the Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust team has been carefully maintaining the nursery and moving germinated seeds into individual seedling pots before planting them into the larger containers. In March, the team built a new seedbed and transplanted 300 seedlings into plots. Forest plots suitable for restoration are being prepared and 986 seedlings have been translocated into these.

The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust is also mobilizing their tree nursery to produce about 80,000 tree seedlings this year.





Resilience in the face of Covid-19

The outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic has proven to be a challenge in implementing specific project activities, especially those involving gatherings (such as survey data collection).

Stringent measures have been taken by all the partners to ensure the health and safety of the staff and communities, in line with the strict guidelines issued by the Government of Kenya. The social distancing directive has led to the partners requesting that their staff work from home, impacting numerous activities, including the recruitment of firefighting trainers and procurement of firefighting equipment for Big Life Foundation.

COVID-19 is also introducing new pressures in the landscape, with local communities finding themselves in economically desperate situations. Notwithstanding this, the project has retained a strong presence across the landscape with no diminution of benefits to the communities or job losses.

The project's impact on stakeholders extends, crucially, to the Kenya Wildlife Service. With revenues decimated already, the project has been able to contribute \$200,000 directly to the KWS, and to receive additional grants totaling approximately \$250,000 because of KWS's participation in the REDD+ project.

The benefits of conservation are flowing uninterrupted to all of the project's stakeholders.



Forest Impacts



1,622 km

patrolled in conservancies

24

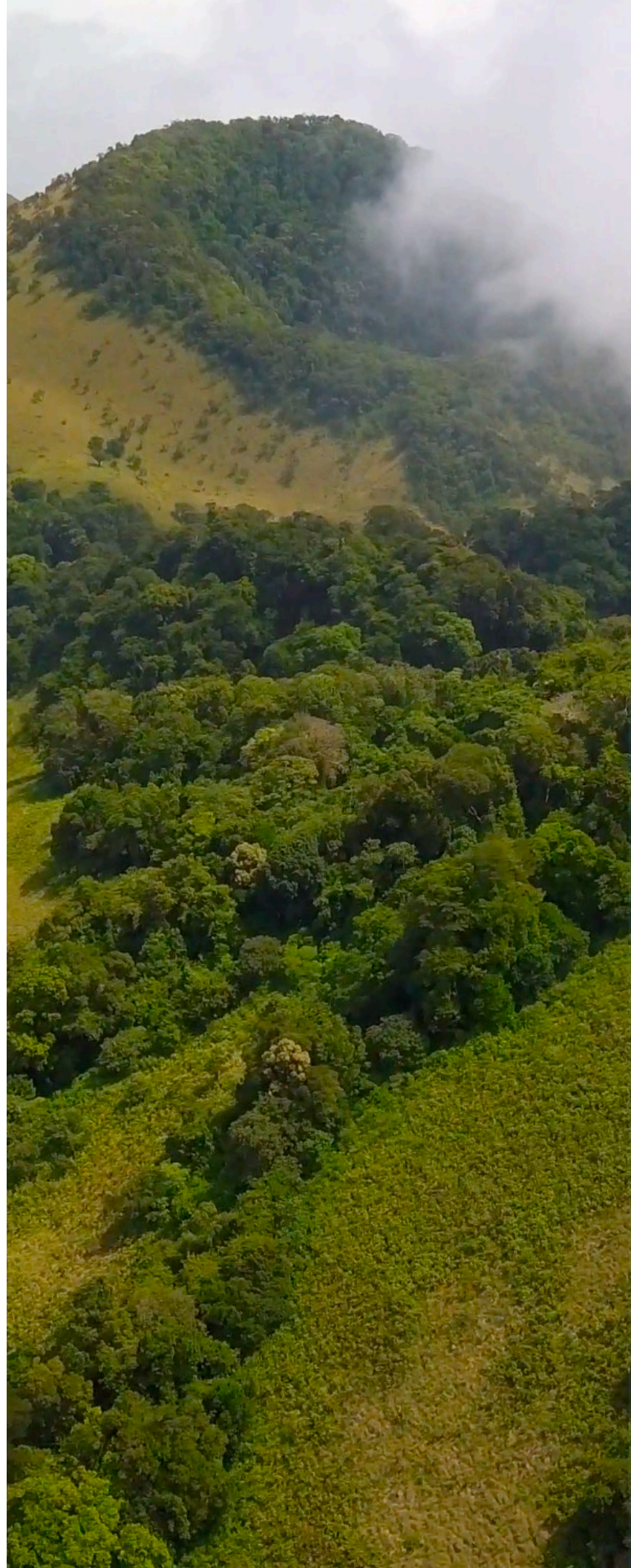
REDD+ rangers to
patrol forests

24

arrests for habitat destruction

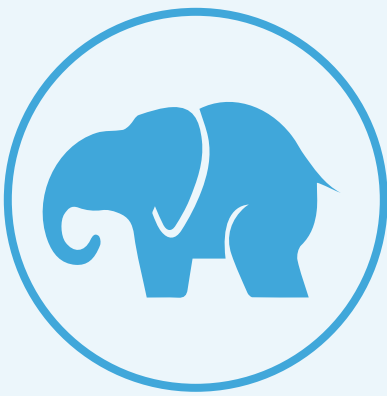
1 million

acres protected area



Impact Over Time

Wildlife Impacts



Over **300** rangers

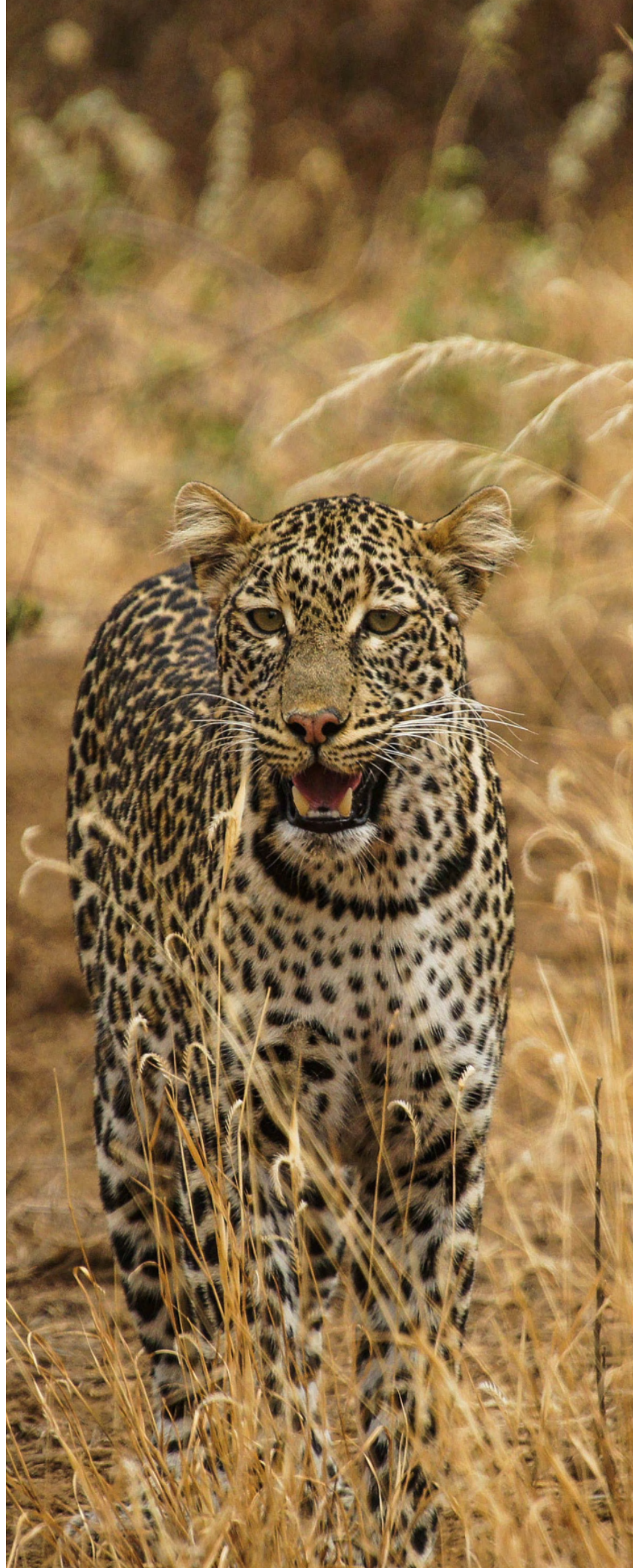
120,430
km patrolled

57 wildlife-related arrests

Zero elephant mortalities

8 Lion retaliatory hunts prevented

Approx **\$137,000** compensation for
depredation incidents to herders



Impact Over Time

Community Impacts



25 schools supported

Over **320** scholarships awarded

Over **9,000** students supported

79 teacher's salaries paid

13 women's groups supported



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