MEP January 2018 Report

mara elephant project

Willie Roberts in his uniform as Honorary Warden for Maasai Mara.

General:

In January the rains have continued, and the Mara is looking fabulous. We began the year with a notable joint operation that resulted in an ivory recovery and arrest of two middlemen. The MEP intelligence team was following a gang they suspected for eight days and on the 23rd of January MEP and Kenya Wildlife Service undercover rangers arrested two individuals with 50 kg of elephant ivory. While interviewing the suspects it became evident that the tusks came from Olkeri Loita on the Kenya/Tanzania border.

It's important that we share with you, the forefather for wildlife conservation in the Maasai Mara passed away on the 26th of January. Mr. Willie Roberts came to the Mara in 1980 planning on farming sunflower and maize, but after seeing a gap in the protection of wildlife he soon became a full-time conservationist and naturalist. It wasn't long before Willie was designated an Honorary Warden for the Maasai Mara and in 1993 he singlehandedly brokered a deal with the Paramount Chief Ole Ntutu and Former Kenyan President Arap Moi to make the first conservancy named Ol Choro Oiroua Group Ranch. That same year the High Court of Kenya decreed that all of the group ranches surrounding the Maasai Mara National Reserve could collect tourism revenue independently of the Narok County Government and this was the birth of the Mara conservancies as it is today. Willie worked hard to make Olchoro a world-class conservancy putting in infrastructure for rangers, and wildlife management that included importing six white rhinos, not seen in the Mara for some time, from South Africa. Willie was an entrepreneur and saw the huge potential this magnificent area had for tourism, so, he founded Willie's Camp. Willie's son, Richard Roberts, MEP co-founder and trustee, continued his father's legacy in the Mara with Richard's Camp, a luxury camp that remains one of the most successful in the Mara. On the 12th the whole MEP team gathered at HQ to observe a minute of silence in remembrance of Willie Roberts. Go well Mzee and know we will be working hard to continue your legacy.

We are very happy to report that the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT) and MEP partnership has started in the Mau Forest and this newly named DSWT Mau De-Snaring Team has already started having success in removing drop spears, snares and arresting poachers and illegal loggers. MEP Kenya Trustees held a meeting on the 22nd of January where MEP C.E.O. Marc Goss presented the 2018 operational plan, discussed general business and set meeting dates for 2018.

Collecting the Bongo Surveillance Team in the Mau Forest after a week-long trek through bongo country.

Research:
We have printed the maps on A0 size paper which Dr. Jake Wall made during his time here in December. The laminated maps have already proved very useful in gathering people around a table to talk about elephant movements. We will be investigating the possibility of teaching all rangers to use the Elephant Voices Ele App for identifying elephants and recording them in the Elephant Voices database. Dr. Joyce Poole has identified 1,200 individual elephants in the Mara and we plan to continue to add to this valuable piece of work.

Security:
The patrol teams in the Olkinyei and Eketoto areas have been experiencing a high level of wildlife caught in fences. In January alone, they removed 14 giraffes from fences in Olkinyei and four in Eketoto. The new DSWT Mau De-Snaring Team has already had success and arrested one suspect with a yellow backed duiker he killed in a snare.

DSWT Mau Rapid Response Team pictured with one suspect who killed a yellow backed duiker.

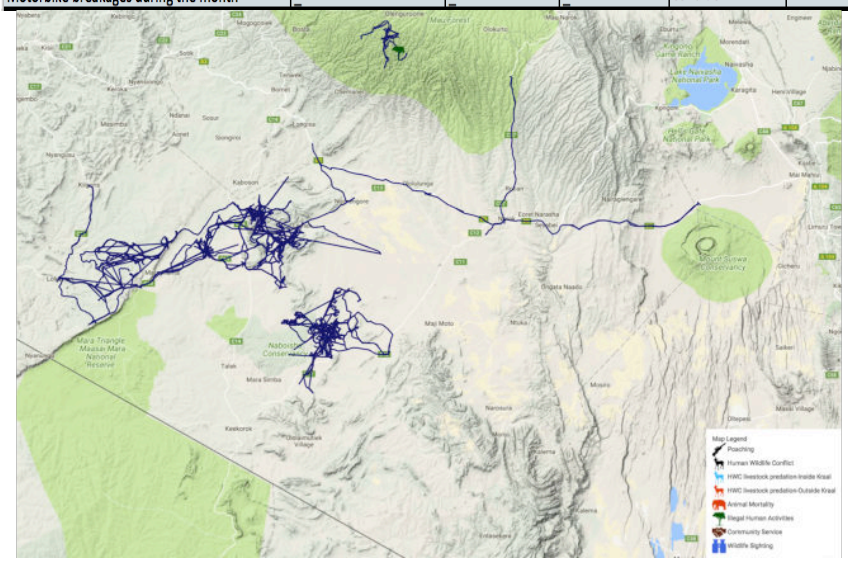
50 kg of ivory recovered, and two suspects arrested in the Maji Moto area.

Recording Patrols

MEP has been busy in the Transmara responding to conflict. The Olopikidongoe has responded to 25 conflict incidents alone. This ranger team has been chasing elephants out of farms nearly every night and large herds of elephants have been seen coming out of the Nyakweri Forest. This period we did not have a collared elephant in the area after Lucy's collar dropped. Our rangers have been working hard to make sure we record zero elephant deaths related to conflict. Rangers have been filling out MEP HEC forms and mitigation forms and bringing them to HQ at the end of the month for the data to be entered into DAS. In the month of January, MEP rangers covered a distance of 872 km on foot; 2,727 km by car and 676 km on motorbike. The Munyas team covered the largest distance on foot this month at 337 km. These tracks will help to award the best team each quarter and there's much improvement compared to last month on kilometers covered on foot.

Patrol Details:

Rangers patrol report	Kawai/Partakila	Olopikidongoe	Munyas	Enkutoto	Mau team	Olkinyei	
Hours on patrol per month	98	45	187	52	99	9	490
Distance walked per month (Foot)	174	84.7	337	185.6	55.9	35.5	872.7
NO.of target points visited per month	10	10	1	3	2	1	27
No.of elephants sighted per month	120	96	16	45	0	176	453
Days of WILD data submited	27	30	30	20	11	7	125
Days of WILD data Missing	3	0	0	10	19	23	55
No.of qualities photos submited	0	0	1	0	2	5	8
No.of incident per month	15	18	1	3	0	0	37
HEC	11	16	0	0	0	0	27
POACHING	1	0	0	0		0	1
ANIMAL MORTALITY	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
PROPERTY DESTRUCTION	2	2	0	2		0	6
ILLEGAL HUMAN ACTIVITIES	1	0	1	1		0	3
No.of poachers caught per month	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
No. of snares recovered per month	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
All issued equipment present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0
Condition of equipent	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	0
Distance covered by vehicle	490.7	1760	225	32.8		218.7	2727.2
Distance covered by motorbike	0	0	0	473		203.9	676.9
Vehicle breakages during the month	KBV 359R welding,	KCB 033Y Windscreen replace.	Good condition	Suzuki		KBR 359R Good condition	
Motorbike breakages during the month	_	_	_	KMDN 034W good condition		KMDN 052W Good condition.	



Wildlife Sightings

In this period rangers recorded 453 elephants. The team which recorded the most sightings was Olkinyei Conservancy with 170 elephants recorded this month. They also sent in good photographic evidence of the herd.

Incidents sitrep

Ivory recovered and arrest: 2/1/18.	One suspect arrested at Oloolaimutia area by the KWS and MEP rangers with 2 kg ivory. Suspect taken to Narok Police station and booked.
Dead elephant on: 23/1/2018.	A dead elephant was found in Naboisho conservancy; the carcass was reported by Naboisho conservancy scouts to MEP. The cause of death considered as unknown. Tusks were recovered and handed over to the KWS Ewuaso Ngiro station. Mike file number 1/18.
Ivory recovered and arrest: 23/1/18.	Two suspects arrested at Maji Moto by MEP and KWS rangers, in possession of 50 kg ivory. Suspect handed over to KWS Ewuaso Ngiro station, later taken to Narok Police station and booked.

Staff:

This month MEP hired a new field administrator that will be assisting Tracking Manager Wilson Sairowua. On the 12th we held a general staff meeting at the MEP HQ. At this meeting we shared some of the important developments coming up in 2018 and awarded the team of the quarter to the Munyas team.

HEC:

This month we have experienced an increase in HEC from eight incidents in December 2017 to 30 incidents in January 2018. This is a reflection of the ripening maize farms in the Transmara area. In the Munyas area, farmers have just started planting so we expect to see more conflict in this area starting in April.

No.	DATE	REGION	Damage	Crop	mitigation action
1	03/01/2018	Kawai	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
2	04/01/2018	Olopikidongoe	fence	Maize farm	by use of car& firecrackers
3	05/01/2018	Partakila	fence	Maize farm	by use of car& firecrackers
4	06/01/2018	Kilae	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
5	07/01/2018	Partakila	fence	Maize farm	by use of firecrakers,drums ,car ansd lightds
6	08/01/2018	Olosheti	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,firecrackers,and light
7	08/01/2018	Partakila	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
8	08/01/2018	Olopikidongoe	fence	Maize farm	by use of car& firecrackers
9	09/01/2018	Olopikidongoe	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
10	09/01/2018	Olopikidongoe	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
11	09/01/2018	Olepolos	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
12	13/01/2018	Olosheti	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
13	14/01/2018	Olopikidongoe	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
14	14/01/2018	Olmekenyu	fence	Maize farm	by use of car& firecrackers
15	14/01/2018	Olmekenyu	fence	Maize farm	by use of car& firecrackers
16	15/01/2018	Trasmara	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
17	17/01/2018	Olepolos	Fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
18	18/01/2018	Olopikidongoe	fence	Maize farm	by use of car , drums,light and fire crackers

19	18/01/2018	olepolos	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,firecrackers
20	19/01/2018	Olmekenyu	fence	Maize farm	by use of firecrakers,drums ,car ansd lightds
21	19/01/2018	Olosheti	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,firecrackers,and light
22	20/01/2018	Partakila	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,firecrackers and light
23	20/01/2018	Trasmara	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,firecrackers and light
24	21/01/2018	Olopikidongoe	fence	Maize farm	by use of firecrakers,drums ,car ansd lightds
25	22/01/2018	Olmekenyu	fence	Maize farm	by use of car , drums,light and fire crackers
26	23/01/2018	Olopikidongoe	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
27	24/01/2018	Olosheti	fence	Maize farm	by use of car,drums,lights and firecrackers
28	25/01/2018	Isokon	Kraal	Maize farm	by use of car& firecrackers

Elephant Tracking:

On the 24th of December Ndorre dropped her collar in the Shompole area near Magadi. We will need to recollar her in the next couple months. On the 29th we re-collared Kegol in the Mara North Conservancy. Kegol had some trouble getting up and we suspect his old age and large tusks are making it difficult for him to get up after being put to sleep. This will be the last time we collar him.

Helicopter:

This month we have been able to assist the Bongo Surveillance Project team by strategically mapping their patrol route in the Mau Forest and by collecting them in the helicopter once they had completed their mission.

Date	Time	Amount	Mission	Allocation
1/2/18	0.9	$360	Deploy intel team to Maji Moto	MEP
1/2/18	1.1	$440	EMS flight to Nairobi for William Hofemyer	MEP
1/3/18	1	$400	Retrun Mara	MEP
1/6/18	2.1	$840	Meeting Mau Team and Monitoring Wilber and Nancy	MEP
1/9/18	3.1	$1,240	Chivi Kenyorra out of Settlement area	MEP
1/11/18	1.9	$760	Meet kericho BSP team and find LZs in the forest	BSP
13/1/18	1.6	$640	Search for Chiri Collar	MEP
15/1/18	1.1	$440	Attempted treatment of injured elephant Pardamat	MEP
16/1/18	1.9	$760	Meet AWF (Chair+CEO) tour southern Ele Corridor	MEP
16/1/18	1.7	$680	Chivi Olchoda out of fences	MEP
18/1/18	2	$800	DSWT Retrun Mara Mau team MoU meeting	MEP
22/1/18	1	$400	50hr service nairobi	MEP
24/1/18	1	$400	Return Mara	MEP
25/1/18	1	$400	Conservation Capital Grazing area MNC and Paradamat	MMWCA
25/1/18	1	$400	Meeting with Jeffery Wuu about Chinese	MEP
28/1/18	2	$800	Collect BSP team from mau forest and ferry to forest edge	BSP
29/1/18	2	$800	Ferry Vet back and forth for Kegol Collaring	MEP
29/1/18	1	$400	Ferry collaring guests	Suzie
30/1/18	1	$400	Ferry Jeffery Wuu to Back up team	MEP
	28.4	$11,360		

On the 6th His Holiness Acharya Purshottam Priyadasji Swamishree Mararaj visited MEP for a second time to bless the new office.

On the 27th Suzie Fehsenfeld with a group of doctors from AmPath visited MEP after planning the new Harry Dyer Burn Center at Eldoret Hospital.