**MEP February 2018 Report**

mara elephant project

*Collaring in the Grumeti Reserve in Tanzania with TAWIRI and the Grumeti Fund.*

**General:**

The rains have started in the Mara by the end of February and we expect more in March. The single most prominent event in February was our collaring operation in Tanzania. MEP was able to offer our collaring expertise and the Karen Blixen Camp Ree Park Safari helicopter to collar 12 elephants supported by the Grumeti Fund in Tanzania. The operation was a huge success and already the elephant movement data is illustrating their conflict issues along an expansive border with communities. This operation also gave us a chance to meet MEP's counterpart in Tanzania and learn a lot about how they manage conflict in their

area of operation. In addition, we were able to link our head of intelligence with theirs that will form a formidable team operating on both sides of the border.

**Fundraising:**
The help of MEP Trustee Richard Roberts was invaluable to MEP in securing $350,000 of unrestricted funding from an individual. The funding will allow us to deploy nine replacement collars and seven new collars in 2018, provide ranger training and development, purchase a new intelligence vehicle including running costs, and resume monthly aerial monitoring of all of our collared elephants.

Other fundraising news for this month is that we received $26,000 from an individual toward the collaring of an elephant in the western Mau Forest. This will be our third collared elephant in the Mau Forest. We also received $10,000 from an individual that will supply new uniforms for our rangers. Elephanatics donated $1,800 that they raised from their 2017 march for elephants and several other individuals donated a total of $8,000.

Overall, a great month for fundraising at Mara Elephant Project!

**Research:**
MEP presented at the Maasai Mara Science and Development Initiative on the 19th at Karen Blixen Camp and it was an opportunity to learn more about research activities in the Mara and how we can partner to better understand crucial habitats and how to protect them.

**Partnership Development:**
The new partnership with the Grumeti Fund is very promising because we'll share collar data and intelligence data as part of the collaring operation in Tanzania. This will all lead to potentially mitigating conflict together contingent upon our flight permits in Tanzania being secured.

**Security:**
We are experiencing increased elephant poaching in the Maji Moto area around Ollaro Conservancy, and continued reports of poaching in the Mau Forest. The intelligence teams are working on both sites and we deployed the rapid response unit to the Mau at the end of the month. Our intelligence team has also been working with TANAPA and the Grumeti Fund in Tanzania and has several promising leads for ivory and firearms. The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Mau Team has received all of the camping equipment from Jumia and the uniforms and sleeping bags are ready for collection. We will start basic training for this team at the MEP HQ in March and at that time we also expect to receive a vehicle from DSWT.

*The three suspects arrested in the 18 kg ivory seizure operation*.

**Incidents sitrep**

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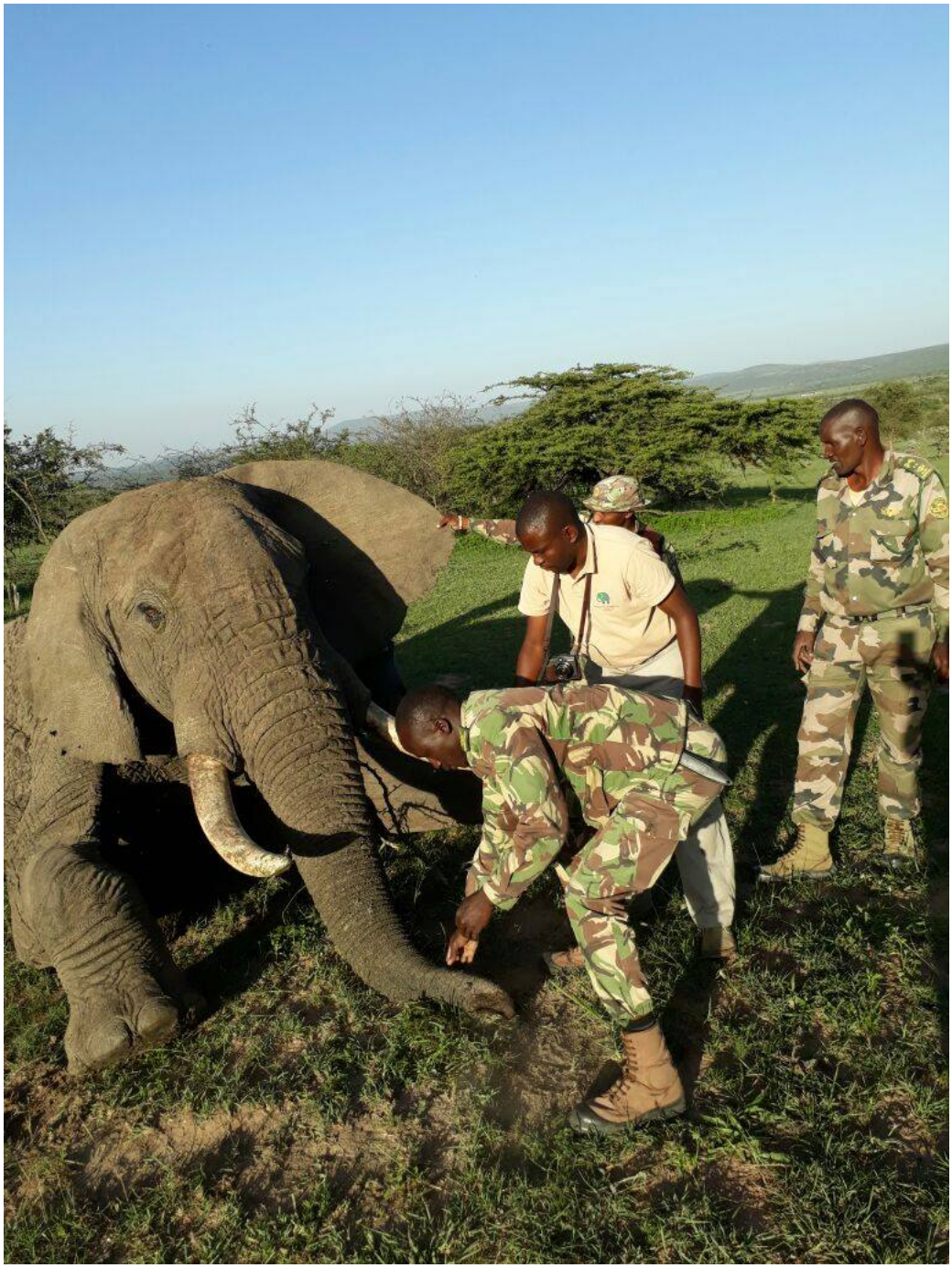
|---|---|
| **Dead elephant on: 2/2/2018** | A dead elephant was reported by MEP aerial monitoring in Olaro Conservancy. The elephant has been monitored by Olaro rangers and report to KWS for treatment. MEP helicopter was deployed to assist KWS and Olaro to treat the elephant. After successful darting numerous wound were found similarly to be from bullets in the body of the elephant and unfortunately the desired outcome could not be achieved. Tusks were removed and handed over to the KWS Ewuaso Ngiro station. Mike file number 2/18. |
| **Dead elephant on: 8/2/2018.** | A baby elephant was found dead in Olaro Conservancy; the carcass was reported by local community to the Olaro Conservancy rangers and to MEP. The cause of death considered as unknown. Mike file number 3/18. |
| **Ivory Recovery and Arrest on 28/2/18** | We arrested three suspects with 18 kg of ivory in the Oldonyo Narasha area. The suspects were intercepted by MEP intel and the operation was conducted by a joint MEP/KWS team. |



*An injured elephant in Olaro Conservancy where the MEP helicopter was deployed to assist KWS and Olaro to treat the elephant. Unfortunately, during treatment the elephant succumbed to its wounds.*

**Recording patrols:**

We were able to acquire four Garmin in-reach devices. These devises send location points every two minutes via satellite to our office via DAS. They also give us real time data of the ranger's position, and allow rangers to send 40 free messages per month and unlimited pre-set messages. We trained all rangers at MEP HQ on how to use the devices. The Olkinyei team, Transmara team, Mau team and the mobile team all were issued these devices.

MEP rangers continue to fill out the MEP HEC forms and mitigation forms that they bring back to HQ at the end of the month for data to be entered into DAS.

**Patrol Details:**

| Issue | Reason | Possible fix | MGT |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vehicle odometers are not reading the same KM's as WILD. WILD is recording fewer KMS. | WILD recording on a straight line and sometimes not recording properly. while vehicle correct km's. | For this month kilometers covered by vehicles are recorded but not from the wild since vehicle odometers are not reading the same KM's as WILD. | Record vehicle Odometers but not WILD km's. |
| WILD alter figures covered in kilometers either by increasing, decreasing or recording a total 0.<br><br>You cannot view rangers patrol tracks on WILD back-end. | This might be cause by switching off the location during patrol and using use of Wi-Fi or cellular network while you do have access to both. | Advice rangers to switch on location while starting patrol.<br>Use GPS only or device to be able to pick correct position.<br><br>They are working on this and hopefully will be solve. | Issue warning to rangers continually cheat the system<br><br>Push Strathmore and PREPARED on issues with software. |

For the month of February, MEP rangers managed to cover a distance of 1169 km on foot; 11,247 km by car and 654 km on motorbike. The Munyas team covered the largest distance on foot this month at 321 km.

| Rangers patrol report | Kawai/Partakila | Olopikidongoe | Munyas | Enkutoto | Mau team | Olkinyei | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hours on patrol per month | 93 | 54 | 163 | 64 | 80 | 74 | 528 |
| Distance walked per month (Foot) | 168 | 96 | 321 | 178 | 160 | 246 | 1169 |
| NO.of target points visited per month | 8 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 35 |
| No.of elephants sighted per month | 33 | 55 | 12 | 26 | 2 | 180 | 308 |
| Days of WILD data submited | 25 | 29 | 28 | 21 | 22 | 20 | 145 |
| Days of WILD data Missing | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 24 |
| No.of qualities photos submited | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| No.of incident per month | 14 | 15 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 2 | 41 |
| HEC | 6 | 7 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 17 |
| POACHING | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 |
| ANIMAL MORTALITY | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| PROPERTY DESTRUCTION | 6 | 7 | 0 | 4 | | 0 | 17 |
| ILLEGAL HUMAN ACTIVITIES | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| No.of poachers caught per month | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 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 | 3121 | 4604 | 1680 | 32.8 | | 1810 | 11247.8 |
| Distance covered by motorbike | 0 | 0 | 0 | 473 | | 181 | 654 |
| Vehicle breakages during the month | KBV 359R welding | KCB 033Y good condition | KCA 640Z Good condition | | | KBR 359R body cabin repair | |
| Motorbike breakages during the month | _ | _ | _ | KMDN 034W good condition | | KMDN 052W Good condition. | |

**Wildlife sightings**

In this period rangers recorded 308 elephants. The team, which recorded the most sightings, was Olkinyei Conservancy that recorded 180 elephants this month and sent good photographic evidence of the herd.

**Recording Incidents**
For the month of February Transmara teams recorded 16 HEC incidents, Olkinyei team recorded two carcasses in Olaro Conservancy. (Please see incident report)
**Human wildlife conflicts.**
We continue to experience some conflict this month but we have recorded a drop in incidents since January. We deployed a new HEC mitigation tool called solar powered flashing lights. These lights can be charged while in the field and provide a bright flashing light that is a deterrent for elephants. We installed them around one big farm in the Olopikidongoe area, the worst conflict site, and the lights worked very well and can be attributed for a decrease in conflict in the area. Transmara responded to 16 conflict incidents this month.

**Elephant Tracking:**
On the 21st and 22nd we attempted to deploy a replacement collar for elephant Lucy in the Nyekweri Forest. We were unsuccessful due to the thick forest and the elephant's skittish behavior. In March, we plan to deploy collars in the western portion of the Mau Forest and the Ngurumani area near the Tanzania border in Magadi. We will now be able to resume the aerial patrols of all the elephants after receiving the funding from Karen Lo.

**Helicopter:**
This month we have been able to support the Grumeti collaring project and conduct aerial patrols of the reserve. In March KWS will complete the 700 hour service.

| Date | Mission | Allocation |
|---|---|---|
| 1/2/18 | Attempted treatment of injured elephant in Ollaro | MEP |
| 2/2/18 | Olkiombo ferry for forensic teacher Seinna Williams | MEP |
| 4/2/18 | Donor relations flight for Space for Giants board member | MEP |
| 6/2/18 | Kericho with Jesper | Marc Goss |
| 7/2/18 | Return Mara from Kericho | Marc Goss |
| 8/2/18 | Nairobi via Shompole meeting with Guy Western 50 hr | MEP |
| 9/2/18 | Mara From Nairobi | MEP |
| 11/2/18 | Crop inspection Transmara | MEP |
| 11/2/18 | Ferry Bosco to Dr. Limo after getting attacked by croc | Marc Goss |
| 15/2/18 | Collect General Declaration book from Olkiombo | MEP |
| 16/2/18 | To Nairobi for SA engineer to inspect | MEP |
| 21/2/18 | Back to Mara and Lucy attempted collaring | MEP |
| 22/2/18 | To Grumeti Via Rusinga and Musoma and collaring 1 ele | GF |
| 23/2/18 | Collaring in Grumeti | GF |
| 25/2/18 | Collaring and patrol monitoring Grumeti | GF |
| 26/2/18 | Collaring in Grumeti | GF |
| 27/2/18 | Collaring and patrol monitoring | GF |
| Totals | | |

*The DSWT Mau Forest team's tents set up at the KFS station on the edge of the forest.*