Protecting elephants to conserve the greater Mara ecosystem
www.maraelephantproject.org

MEP June 2018 Report

General:
The area has started to dry up and, as maize crops ripen, human-elephant conflict is on the rise in all areas of MEP operations except Isokon in the Transmara where farmers have not planted yet.

This month the intelligence team connected with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) in Naivasha who set up a successful sting operation by arresting one suspect with 12 pieces of ivory weighing 41 kg and two leopard skins.

Human-elephant conflict injuries have decreased, and we've only assisted the KWS vet with the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT) Mara Mobile Vet Unit with two treatments in the Siana area.

We were very fortunate to find elephants on several occasions in the Loita Forest due to the dense foliage. Large herds of approximately 20 to 40 individuals were coming into openings in the forest and after first sighting them from the air, we moved into position to collar one female elephant in a herd of 40 individuals on the 5th of June. The collaring operation was demanding, and the team worked well in the thick forest conditions. "Amare," the new Loita elephant has already been showing interesting movements and rarely comes out of the forested area. We have been trying to collar in Loita for some time, so this achievement is exciting!

In the Mau Forest, the DSWT MEP Mau Team has split into two teams to cover a larger area in response to the amount of illegal logging and poaching we're finding in the forest.

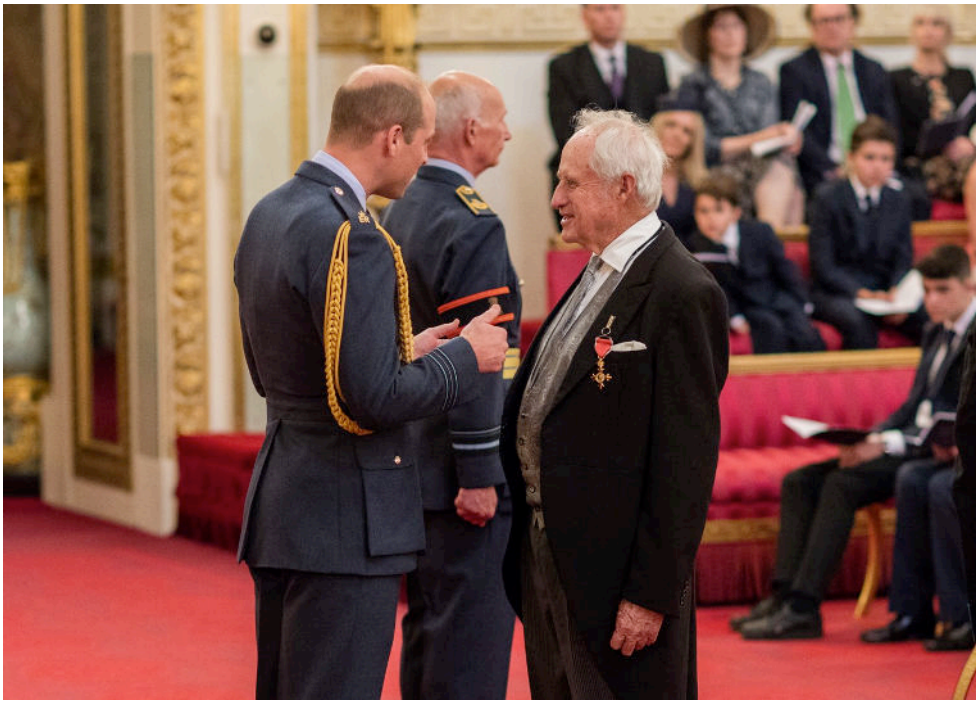
Protecting elephants to conserve the greater Mara ecosystem
www.maraelephantproject.org

Communications:
Mara Elephant Project had a very busy June with inquiries from Reuters, BBC Two, and CNN that are all interested in featuring MEP for various in-the-works projects. While we aren't sure which of these projects will pan out, what it does indicate is that MEP has raised our profile online based on all of these media outlets finding us organically.

Our Facebook and Instagram accounts have been very active in June with likes and engagements all up for the month. A very exciting development is that Ellen DeGeneres adopted one of the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT) elephants that MEP had a hand in rescuing. This proved to be really great exposure on social media as she posted on her social media channels to her millions of followers about this adoption.

MEP celebrated World Environment Day this month and filmed the collaring operation for a new elephant in Loita Hills, which enables our supporters to see firsthand a collaring operation. We've had many visitors through MEP HQ in June as the busy tourist season arrives. Thank you to all of the camps and travel agents that are sending their visitors through the MEP HQ experience. It helps us create a special connecting between the tourists visiting the Maasai Mara and the extensive conservation efforts going on to protect its wildlife. The DSWT/MEP Mau Team continues to make an impact that our supporters are greatly identifying with online.

Finally, MEP Trustee Colin Church received an Order of the British Empire for his services to conservation, the environment and the community in Kenya. Congratulations Colin!



Mr. Colin Church OBE, receiving his OBE from Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, at Buckingham Palace.

Protecting elephants to conserve the greater Mara ecosystem
www.maraelephantproject.org

Fundraising:
MEP received a significant donation of $25,000 from an individual who has graciously supported MEP previously. MEP also received a donation of $2,000 from the winner of a tarpon fishing tournament in Florida, USA. There were no new grants submitted in June; however, the third quarter of 2018 has many opportunities for grant submissions for Mara Elephant Project.

In June, MEP continues to have very good discussions with the leaders of both the Alibaba Foundation and the Paradise International Foundation. We are exploring different areas where we can all collaborate to protect elephants and the Mara ecosystem. Additionally, we've been meeting with the Indianapolis Zoo to further explore partnerships and funding with their conservation initiatives. The executive director, communications director and director of strategic initiatives for the ESCAPE Foundation, MEP's core funder, all were graciously given a tour of the Indy Zoo's elephant park and got to meet one of their elephants from Kenya.

Seedballs Kenya just launched a fundraising initiative to help fun seedball packs for MEP rangers to distribute while out on patrol. We are very happy to participate in Seedball Kenya's mission to regenerate Kenya's forests. The TUSK Trust Safaricom Marathon took place June 30 at LEWA Wildlife Conservancy. The money raised from this marathon goes directly to MEP rangers and operations. We appreciate the support from the runners and TUSK. Also, thank you to Ashley for raising money for MEP on Facebook! So far she's at $150 of her $500 goal.

Seedballs from Seedballs Kenya being distributed.

C.E.O. Marc Goss hosted a large group of visitors to the Mara staying at Angama Mara that included the C.E.O. of Wild Aid who recently supported the protection of an elephant for three years by collaring and monitoring that elephant. He and his team received the MEP presentation from Marc and were taken to various new areas of operation to see MEP ranger stations and meet rangers while out on patrol. We appreciate Wild Aid's support and look forward to a long-term partnership with them.

Finally, MEP is happy to announce that along with the Kenya Wildlife Service, we busted a fraudulent organization called Safeguard Elephants that was posing as other elephant conservation organizations around Africa asking for donations. Donor confidence is of the upmost importance to MEP and we were pleased these crooks were brought to justice.

Research:
We expect that the first draft of the Technical Report will be ready for review in August. We are still missing some elements including ID photos of all of the elephants; however, we are working toward getting those together.

Tracking:
On the 14th of June we recovered Earhart's collar in Mosiro. The hardware failed, and we will need to re-collar in this large herd. In July we plan to collar new elephants in the Mau, Mosiro, and Nyekweri.

On the 26th collared elephant Matoba, who was collared by Grumeti in Tanzania in February was found by KWS vet Dr. Limo at the KWS research station in the Maasai Mara National Reserve. We could not identify the elephant and after reporting this to Grumeti, they confirmed it was indeed Matoba. This demonstrates the need for cross-boundary sharing of real-time data between our two organizations.

Collared elephant Matoba in Kenya.

Protecting elephants to conserve the greater Mara ecosystem
www.maraelephantproject.org

Security:

On the 23rd there was an attack on a bar in Esoit. Football fans had filled up the bar when three attackers armed with AK-47 assault rifles burst in and injured two and killed two. One of the victims fatally shot was 58-year-old KWS ranger, Mr. Samuel Okumu. Okumu had previously been attached to MEP and we had conducted a number of operations together. We are actively looking for this gang and have a lead on one of the suspects. The KWS and General Service Unit (GSU) have recovered seven illegal firearms in this portion of the Transmara already.

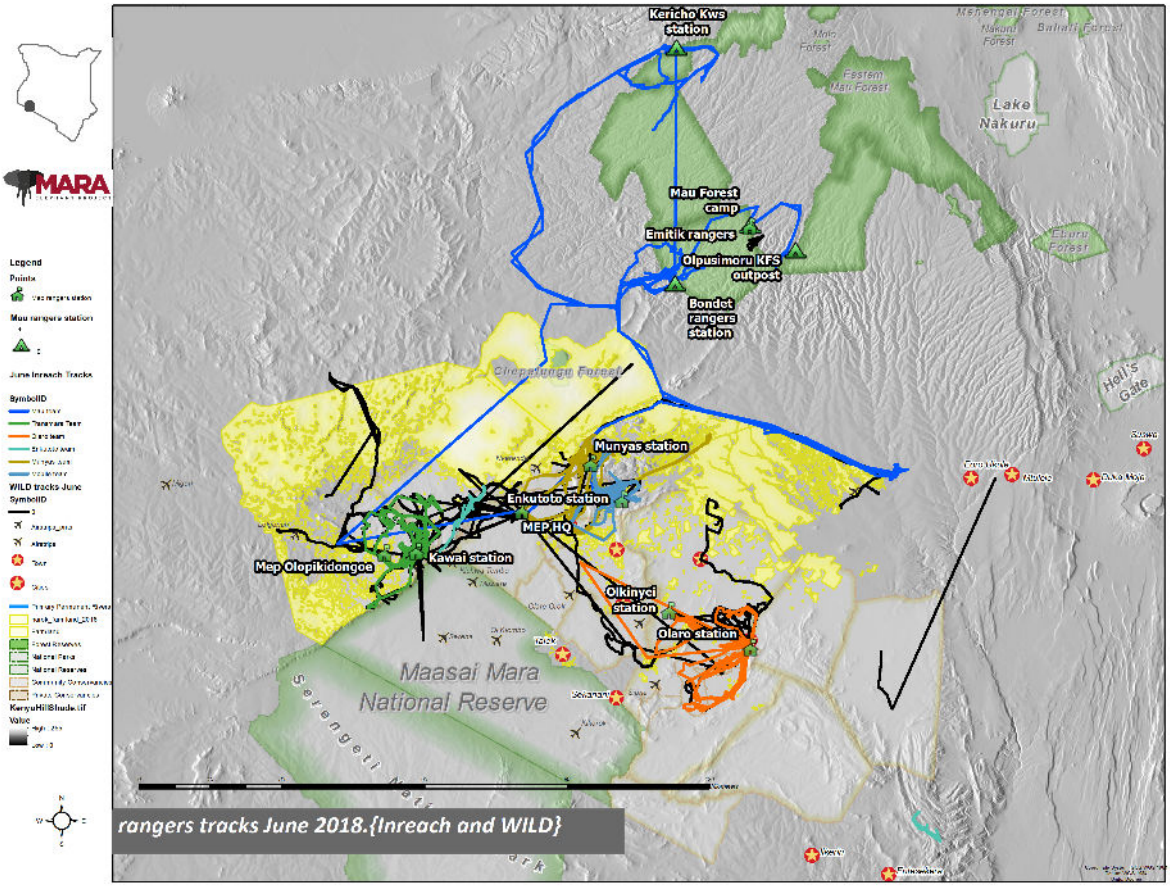
Incidents Sit REP

Dead elephant on: 31/05/2018.	Carcass was found in Mosiro area; the carcass was reported by local community to MEP and KWS Rangers. The cause of death considered as poaching raw cause spear wound. Tusk chopped out by poachers. Mike file number 17/18.
Dead elephant on: 05/06/2018.	A bull elephant was found dead in Olkinyei Conservancy; the carcass was reported by Olkinyei Conservancy rangers to KWS rangers and to MEP. The cause of death considered as conflict raw cause spear wound. Mike file number 18/18.
Ivory recovered and arrest: 07/06/18.	Three suspects arrested at Kihancha by KWS rangers and MEP intel, in possession of 5 kg of ivory. Suspect taken to Kihancha police station and booked.
Dead elephant on: 13/06/2018.	Carcass was found in Olkinyei Conservancy; the carcass was reported by Olkinyei Conservancy rangers to KWS and MEP rangers. The cause of death considered as conflict raw cause spear wound. The bull was treated twice but found dead one week after the second treatment. Mike file number 19/18.
Ivory recovered and arrest: 19/06/18.	One suspect arrested in Naivasha town by KWS rangers on MEP intel, in possession of 41 kg ivory and two leopard skins. Suspect taken to Naivasha police station and booked.
Dead elephant on: 20/06/2018.	A bull elephant was found dead in Mara Conservancy; the carcass was reported by Mara Conservancy rangers to KWS and to MEP rangers. The cause of death considered as poaching, raw cause gun shot. Tusk recovered. Mike file number 20/18.

Patrol Details:

Rangers patrol report	Kawai/Partakila	Olopikidongoe	Munyas	Enkutoto	Mau team	Intel team	Ollaro	
Hours on patrol per month	178	101	133	117	77	56	125	787
Distance walked per month (Foot)	331	87	103	153	67	227	216	1184
NO.of target points visited per month	18	21	22	15	9	6	15	106
No.of elephants sighted per month	23	28	160	177	8	13	303	712
Days of WILD data submited	21	23	24	26	22	15	25	156
Days of WILD data Missing	9	7	6	4	8	15	5	54
No.of qualities photos submited	14	18	17	15	11	7	23	105
No.of incident per month	4	0	15	17	1	0	6	43
HEC	1	0	9	10	0	0	3	23
POACHING	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
ANIMAL MORTALITY	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	4

PROPERTY DESTRUCTION	1	0	6	7	0	0	0	14
ILLEGAL HUMAN ACTIVITIES	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
No.of poachers caught per month	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
No. of snares recovered per month	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4
All issued equipment present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0
Condition of equipment	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	0
Distance covered by vehicle	2980	2145	889	No Vehicle	2883	2330	2589	13816
Distance covered by motorbike	3211	445	0	1210			1123	5989
Vehicle breakages during the month	KCB 033Y.Replace gear box sychorinizer	KBV 359 R.good condition	KCA 640Z.Good condition		KCP 123 R good condtion	KCM 122A.Good condition	KBR 807 K. Good condition	
Motorbike breakages during the month	KMEK 894G.good condition	KMEH 975V.Good condition	_	KMDN 034W good condition			KMDN 052W Good condition.	



June ranger patrol effort.

Human wildlife conflict:

MEP rangers continue filling out MEP HEC forms and mitigation forms and bringing them to MEP HQ at the end of the month for data to be entered into DAS. This month there is an increase in the human-elephant conflict cases in the Lemek and Munyas area. In Lemek and

Munyas, elephants destroyed maize farms, but MEP rangers were able to put flashing light fences in a few farms and also put the new base lighting system with alarms than can trigger when collared elephants are nearby to scare them and awake the farmer to respond. We are still characterizing the efficacy of these systems.

Two carcasses were reported in Olkinyei Conservancy, the cause of death was conflict.

HEC Sit Rep:

No.	DATE	REGION	LAT	LONG	Property Damage	Crop Damage	Action operation details	Mitigation action
1	25 May 2018	Enkutoto	-1.034132	35.340268	Fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Motorbike, firecrackers
2	01 June 2018	Munyas	-1.454348	35.50519	None	maize	Remove from farm	firecrackers, lights,motorbikes,fire and drum
3	02 June 2018	Ekutoto	-1.221327	35.92213	none	Maize	Remove from farm	firecrackers, lights,fire and drum
4	02 June 2018	Kawai	-1.122617	34.343261	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Motobike & firecrackers
5	03 June 2018	Munyas	-1.116498	35.362689	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Car,drums,lights and firecrackers
6	03 June 2018	Enkutoto	1.23574	35.882852	None	None	Remove from settlement	Firecrackers, lights,motorbikes,fire and drum
7	03 June 2018	Munyas	-1.221327	35.92213	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Firecrackers, lights,motorbikes,fire and drum
8	04 June 2018	Munyas	-1.124906	35.312484	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Firecrackers, lights,motorbikes,fire and drum
9	06 June 2018	Olaro	-1.488585	35.574556	Fence	None	Remove from fenced area	Firecrakcers and helicopter
10	06 June 2018	Enkutoto	-1.124321	35.319927	None	Maize	Stop from entering farm	Motobike & firecrackers
11	06 June 2018	Munyas	1.23658	35.877059	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Firecrackers, lights,motorbikes,fire and drum
12	10 June 2018	munyas	1.23574	35.882852	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Firecrackers, lights,fire and motorbike
13	10 June 2018	Enkutoto	-1.236638	35.890525	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Firecrackers, lights,fire and motorbike
14	10 June 2018	Enkutoto	-1.247319	35.949003	none	none	Stop from entering settlement	Firecrackers, lights,fire and motorbike
15	12 June 2018	Enkutoto	-1.468033	35.579339	None	Maize	Stop from entering settlement	car& firecrackers
16	15 June 2018	Olaro	1.236187	35.895109	None	None	Stop from entering settlement	Firecrakers ,helicopter and vehicle
17	16 June 2018	Olaro	1.254669	35.981878	Fence	None	Remove from fenced area	Firecrackers, blanks and vehicle
18	16 June 2018	Olaro	1.23658	35.877059	fence	none	Remove from fenced area	Firecrackers, blanks and vehicle
19	17 June 2018	Munyas	1.05327	35.307581	None	Maize	Stop from entering farm	Helicopter and firecrackers
20	17 June 2018	Lemek	-1.118383	35.355557	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Firecrackers, lights,motorbikes,fire and drum
21	18 June 2018	munyas	1.254669	35.981878	none	none	Remove from farm	Helicopter and firecrackers
22	18 June 2018	munyas	1.236187	35.895109	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Firecrackers, lights,motorbikes,fire and drum
23	18 June 2018	Maji Moto	-1.305427	35.662151	Fence	None	Remove from fenced area	By use of Helicopter and firecrakers
24	21 June 2018	Enkutoto	-1.244449	35.909249	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Motobike & firecrackers
25	23 June 2018	Aitong	-1.128456	35.319853	fence	None	Remove from fenced area	Helicopter and firecrackers
26	23 June 2018	Enkutoto	-1.250589	35.885137	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Motobike & firecrackers
27	24 June 2018	Enkutoto	-1.485937	35.58066	fence	maize	Remove from farm	Motobike & firecrackers
28	25 June 2018	Ngosuani	-1.236638	35.890525	fence	Maize	Remove from farm	Motobike & firecrackers

Poaching:

Including the Naivasha success the Intel team and KWS also managed to arrest three suspects at Kihancha in possession of 5 kg of ivory. Suspects were taken to Kihancha police station and booked. One elephant was poached in Transmara and a second in Mosiro. The tusks from the Transmara incident were recovered, but the one in Mosiro poachers, had hacked out the tusks.

Helicopter:
Yet again, the Robinson R44 continues to impress. This month it was deployed to collar in the Loita Forest. We visited villages for local intelligence around the forest, ferried in ground teams to the collaring site, darted a female and followed her until she went to sleep, and then perched in a tiny clearing while we dropped single team members off at the collaring site. I was extremely impressed by the performance at high altitude and maneuverability in the forest.

Landing pad in a small clearing in Loita waiting for the weather to clear.

Date	Hours	Mission
1/6/18	6.0	Rhino charge carcass, loita recce, olarro treatment
3/6/18	4.0	Loita Recce and treating Olarro
4/6/18	5.0	Loita Collaring attempt no 1
5/6/18	3.0	Loita Collaring
7/6/18	2.0	Second possible loita carcass recce
8/6/18	2.0	HEC Near Ollaro in Siana
14/6/18	2.0	Recovering collar from Suswa
16/6/18	1.0	Checking crops in Transmara
17/6/18	1.0	HEC in Munyas
18/6/18	1.0	HEC in Maji Moto
18/6/18	1.0	HEC Munyas Evening
19/6/18	1.0	Looking for baby elephant in Loita
20/6/18	1.0	Flight with Wild Aid patrol monitoring of collared elephants
22/6/18	1.0	Collect Richard for meeting with Paradise and brief Brian H
23/6/18	0.5	HEC Near Aitong
25/6/18	1.0	To nairobi for 100hr service
29/6/19	1.0	Return to Mara

	33.5	

Staff:

This month we recruited a finance officer who will be station in Nairobi to run our Nairobi operations. We held three rounds of interviews and Stanley Misoka was the best qualified and had the most experience working with NGO finances. Stanley will report for work on the 16th of July. We welcome Stanley to the team and look forward to working together.