Protect, Conserve, Inspire
Protecting elephants to conserve the greater Mara ecosystem
www.maraelephantproject.org

2018 Annual Report

Message from Trustee Chairman Colin Church:

I have been a trustee of the Mara Elephant Project since 2015 and now have the distinct pleasure of serving as its Chairman of the Board of Trustees. My predecessor, Brian Heath, presided over MEP's start from just an idea to a boots on the ground project that is making a significant impact in the greater Mara ecosystem. During Brian's service as chair, MEP increased their area of operation, reduced poaching, expanded partnerships and the elephant movement database. Brian's deep experience of the Mara guided MEP to success. MEP will continue to benefit from his knowledge as he remains a member of the board. On behalf of all of the trustees and staff I'd like to thank him for his commitment, leadership and wise counsel.

The MEP team's unwavering commitment to protecting elephants and other wildlife in the Mara is of prime importance to the region and truly a humble sight to see. I am able to announce a most important addition to the MEP team with the appointment of Dr. Jake Wall as the director of research and conservation in 2019. The MEP Board of Trustees added a new member in 2018, Brian Kearney-Grieve. Brian is the Executive Director of Sidekick Foundation, MEP's founder and continued core funder. Brian brings to the table a wealth of knowledge from his extensive NGO resume. The board voted in 2018 to appoint new auditors and is currently seeking tax exempt status from the Kenya Revenue Authority. In September, in my first step as the new chairman, I spent three days at MEP HQ with Marc visiting rangers in the field and meeting with other staff and trustees. One cannot truly understand the impact MEP is making in the Mara and equally the challenges they face daily without visiting HQ and seeing firsthand the morning commanders meeting that takes place every day in the new office, which includes a training room equipped with TV that allows real-time visualization of all MEP's assets.

As we enter a period of planned expansion into other key elephant strongholds within the greater Mara ecosystem, MEP is committed to join with other partners to support an independent Environment, Social and Economic Assessment of the entire ecosystem. It is our belief that if all players in the Mara, and most importantly the communities who live within it, are presented with an independent assessment of the value of the region, it will guide us all to develop policies and practices that maintain it as one of the world's unique human strongholds where humans and wildlife can live in harmony.

A special thanks to all our partners, supporters and donors - big and small. We could not achieve what we are without you. Please continue to support us. We are totally committed to our task.

Message from CEO Marc Goss:

As Mara Elephant Project officially ends our seventh year in operation, I reflect on how we've come such a long way from the shipping container and tent that used to be MEP's headquarters. I'm amazed and proud of the continued donor support we receive, the success we continue to see on the ground by MEP, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and Narok County Government (NCG) rangers, and the growth our organization has seen in 2018.

Our organization is successful because of our rangers and I'm continually impressed with the great success our intelligence unit has had in 2018. They have arrested, between January and December, with the help of our partners KWS and NCG, 38 ivory dealers and recovered 356 kg of ivory. Our patrol units also continue to be successful in mitigating human-elephant conflict and removing snares from the Mara ecosystem. They've removed 324 snares and responded to 203 incidents of human-elephant conflict in 2018. We continue to test the effectiveness of new mitigation techniques like flashing light fences and collar alarms into 2019. In 2018, MEP replaced two old collars that were due to expire on Kegol and Caroline. A main issue in 2018 was the durability of MEP's elephant collars which, frustratingly, led to Lucy, Nancy, Earhart and Julia's collars all dropping off and Amare's collar stopped reporting due to water damage. We've been working with our supplier to fix these issues and they have replaced the thin material with Kevlar, which seems to be holding up well on our Mau Forest elephant – Bettye.

MEP's new partner in 2018, the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (SWT), understands that where MEP rangers have a presence, all wildlife including elephants are better protected. This is why, in January, they invested in a new Mau Forest ranger unit that was tasked with removing snares, rooting out poachers and illegal logging operations and working with the bordering community to mitigate human-elephant conflict. I am extremely proud of the accomplished team MEP and SWT put together with KWS, NCG and Kenya Forest Service to protect the Mau Forest. New government and research organizations we partnered with in 2018 include the Singita Grumeti Fund and Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI), both in Tanzania. In February, I was able to offer my collaring expertise and conducted a collaring operation in Tanzania that successfully collared 12 elephants all supported by the Grumeti Fund. The operation was a huge success and we linked our head of intelligence with theirs and they've formed a formidable team operating on both sides of the border. Additionally, in September, MEP worked with TAWIRI in the Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania to collar 13 elephants to start to understand how elephants move inside this huge ecosystem. I was impressed by the expertise of the TAWIRI team and it was a pleasure to work with them.

MEP partnered with Seedballs Kenya in 2018 to help reforest the Mara in some of the areas devastated by illegal charcoal production and logging. In October, we distributed 65 kg of seed balls that were donated directly for MEP and in November we took part in an operation that distributed over one million seed balls in degraded parts of ecosystem. We also would be remiss not to mention KWS vet Dr. Limo and his team from the SWT Mara Mobile Vet Unit. Dr. Limo and company continue to be a consistent partner in the Mara to help us save elephant lives. Other exciting partnership developments in 2018 include the re-branding of our core funder, the ESCAPE Foundation to the Sidekick Foundation. They funded a film that continues to make waves here in Kenya called *MABINGWA* or *The Champions*. This movie, along with the groundbreaking research conducted by Well Told Story, illustrates and clearly explains the youth's attitude toward wildlife and conservation in Kenya. We continue to be grateful to the Sidekick Foundation that has been supporting Mara Elephant Project since the beginning.

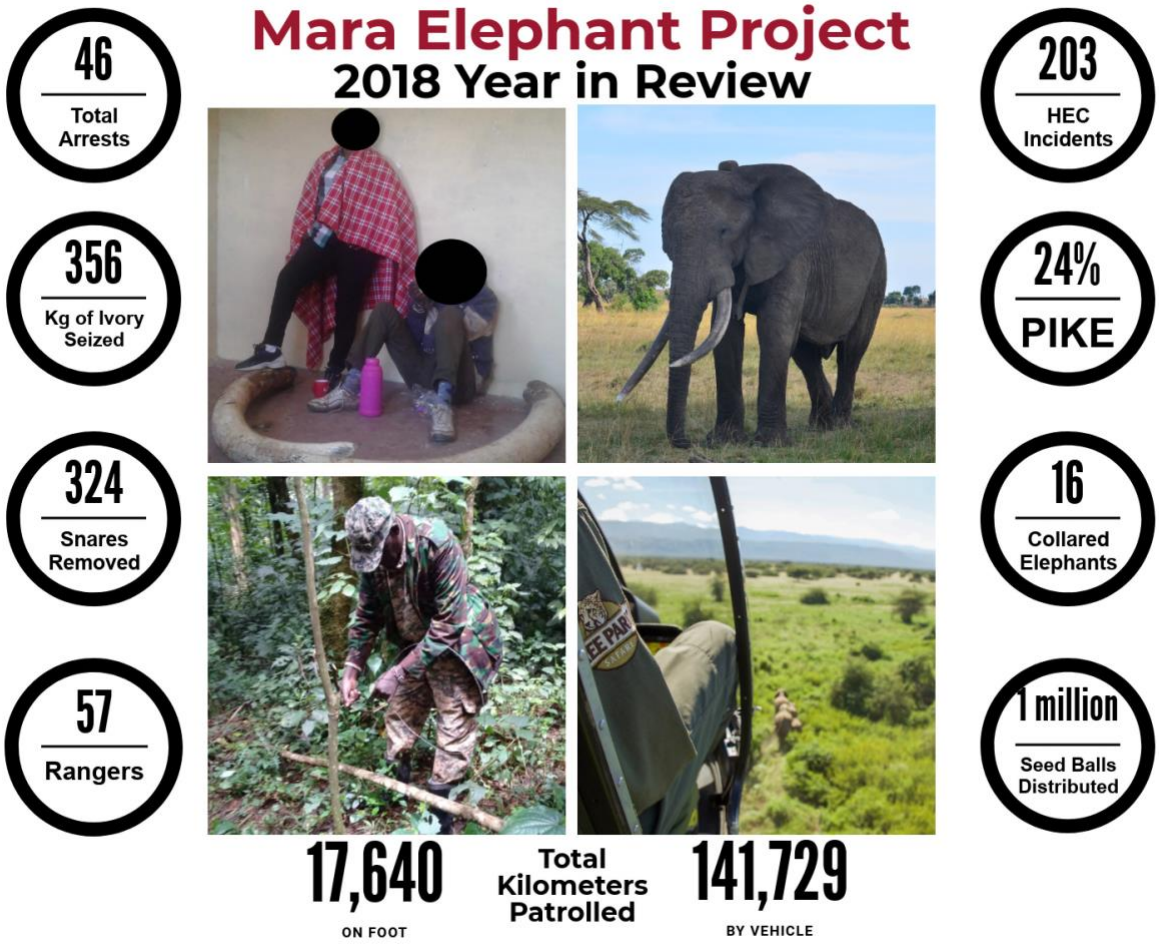
I can officially mark 2018 as the year where MEP raised the most money from organizations and individual donors. In February, we received the largest single donation ever, $350,000,

from Karen Lo. MEP also received large individual donations from many involved supporters, and we were awarded grants by the OAK Foundation, the Angama Foundation, WildAid, TUSK Trust, Bently Foundation, Eden Wildlife Trust, and Asilia Giving. I am also always humbled by the support from grassroots donors on Facebook, Instagram and in fundraising efforts by Elephanatics and the students at Crooked Creek Elementary in Indianapolis in the United States. In terms of media, MEP hosted both Reuters and BBC for series that will air in 2019. We also were featured, thanks to Brett Velicovich, on *Fox Business* and were featured twice on the popular animal website, The Dodo, as well as Wired UK. All of this was really great, but, possibly the greatest media exposure was when me and Tracking Manager Wilson Sairowua were asked to do interviews for a documentary that will air on Netflix in 2019 narrated by Sir. David Attenborough. I got to meet Sir David, who has been my hero since watching his documentary "Frogs" as a child. At 92 years old, he looked really good for his age and was as sharp and witty as he sounds on TV.

One of the more exciting announcements is the addition of Dr. Jake Wall as the director of research and conservation at MEP starting in 2019. We are all thrilled at MEP to have such a high caliber scientist join our organization. In 2018, MEP added Stanley Misoka to the team as our financial officer and MEP Trustee Colin Church was voted in as chairman and received an Order of the British Empire for his services to conservation, the environment and the community in Kenya. A great moment for all of MEP's rangers was when one of their own, an intelligence ranger, was awarded the first annual African Ranger Award by Paradise Foundation International. He won $3,000 and we all traveled to Cape Town, South Africa to accept the award. Each ranger was presented with the award at the ceremony with Jack Ma in attendance, which was quite special.

I cannot thank every single supporter enough for their dedication to Mara Elephant Project. This is a passion of mine and I pledge to work really hard to continue to protect elephants and their habitats, but it simply would not be possible without the unwavering support from partners like KWS, NCG, conservancies and community in the Mara, Tanzania government agencies and, of course, our donors. We will continue to keep you up to date on the day-to-day operations of MEP as we continue to protect elephants to conserve the greater Mara ecosystem.

MEP at a Glance 2018:



January	* Along with KWS arrested two suspects with 50 kg of ivory * Began partnership with SWT for the new Mau Forest De-Snaring Unit * Removed 14 giraffes from fences in Olkinyei and four in Eketoto * Re-collared Kegol in MNC
February	* Assisted the Singita Grumeti Fund in collaring 12 elephants in Tanzania * Received the single largest gift ever made to MEP from a donor thanks to Trustee Richard Roberts * Three suspects arrested by KWS based on MEP intelligence with 18 kg of ivory * 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.
March	* Two middlemen were arrested by the KWS on the Kenya/TZ border and 17 kg of ivory seized based on MEP intelligence * The intelligence team received two new Honda motorbikes for their undercover work * Kenya Forestry Service agreed to join KWS, NCG and MEP to operate as the Mau ranger unit * Collared elephant Julia in Shompole * Mau Forest collared elephant Nancy's collar drops
April	* Moved into our new MEP HQ command center in the Mara, with a briefing room, training room, dedicated offices for research, and research work stations. * MEP intelligence unit purchased a dedicated vehicle

	* The MEP intelligence unit had a notable success when they recovered 25 kg of ivory and KWS arrested two suspects near the town of Mogori * NCG Warden Patrick Gilai leads MEP ranger training for the SWT Mau team at MEP HQ * MEP collared elephant Mytene poached in the Serengeti * Pop star Ellie Goulding posted about MEP on social media to her over 14 million followers highlighting the recently announced UK ivory ban * Administrator Elvis Saayoi was welcomed to the staff
May	* KWS Vet Dr. Limo with the DSWT Mara Mobile Vet Unit treated 16 elephants with the support of MEP's helicopter and rangers * MEP collared elephant Limo was shot and required treatment, MEP rangers found the man responsible and KWS arrested him * SWT Mau De-Snaring Unit had a graduation ceremony at Emitik Forest station where over 500 people showed up to support them * MEP was featured in Wired UK with an interview with CEO Marc Goss highlighting the technology MEP is using to combat poaching and human-elephant conflict. * New HEC mitigation tool, collar activated alarms, are installed around farms * Dr. Jake Wall officially accepts his position of director of research and conservation at MEP starting in January 2019
June	* The MEP intelligence team connected with KWS in Naivasha to set up a successful sting operation by arresting one suspect with 12 pieces of ivory weighing 41 kg and two leopard skins. * Collared Amare in the Loita Forest * Split the SWT Mau De-Snaring Unit into two separate teams to cover more area in the Mau Forest * MEP Trustee Colin Church received an Order of the British Empire for his services to conservation, the environment and the community in Kenya * Recovered MEP collared elephant Earhart's collar in Mosiro after it dropped off
July	* Airlifted an orphaned baby elephant to SWT orphanage in Nairobi * Collared Bettye in the southwestern portion of the Mau Forest * KWS using MEP intelligence arrested four ivory middlemen and seized 48 kg of ivory * Intelligence team employed three new intelligence gathering sources in Tanzania * SWT Mau De-Snaring Unit removed 71 snares * Stanley Misoka joined MEP as its new Finance Officer and established a small office in Nairobi
August	* Mr. Colin Church was voted in as the new MEP Trust Chairman * Amare's collar stopped reporting in the middle of a pond in the Loita Hills * MEP hosted both Reuters and the BBC to film Marc and Wilson for 2019 series * Two suspects arrested in Migori by KWS rangers based on MEP intelligence in possession of 39 kg of ivory * One suspect arrested in Narok Olkuroto in Ewaso Ngiro by KWS rangers based on MEP intelligence in possession of 21 kg of ivory * MEP intelligence ranger won the Paradise Foundation International first-ever African Ranger Award and traveled to Cape Town along with CEO and tracking manager to accept this award
September	* MEP CEO collared 13 elephants in the Selous Game Reserve in TZ with partners TAWIRI * Hosted the Friends of MEP event in Indianapolis, IN and Drone Warrior Brett Velicovich presented * MEP's core funder changed their name from ESCAPE Foundation to Sidekick Foundation * MEP supporter Brett Velicovich was featured on Fox Business discussing MEP
October	* MEP CEO and tracking manager were interviewed for a Netflix documentary narrated by Sir David Attenborough * Rapid response unit moved to northern portion of Loita Hills to shutdown illegal logging and charcoal sites, root out poachers and mitigate HEC * Distributed 65 kg of donated seed balls in the Mara from Seedballs Kenya
November	* Added a 65" screen monitor to the MEP HQ command center which is helpful in our morning commander's briefings. * Recovered collared elephant Julia's collar that dropped

	* SWT Mau De-Snaring Unit removed 59 snares and KWS arrested four bushmeat poachers * Distributed one million seed balls in the Mara with partner Seedballs Kenya
December	* Two suspects were arrested by KWS in the Loita area based on MEP intelligence in possession of two large tusks weighing 69 kg * Received a donation from Angama Foundation from the Greatest Maasai Mara photo competition * Started accepting stock donations * Collared elephant Alina dropped her collar, but was found safe * Appointed new external auditors, PKF International

Improving Elephant Security:

The three activities that MEP engages in to improve elephant security are deploying anti-poaching patrols, rapidly responding to mitigate human-elephant conflict and monitoring collared elephants. In addition to continued successes in those three activities, MEP has also been able to continue to increase our area of operation in 2018 into the Mau Forest and Loita Hills. These two areas are under regulated with high levels of illegal logging, poaching and human-elephant conflict.

In response to this the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (SWT) and MEP established a permanent ranger unit in the Mau Forest to protect elephants and other wildlife and the habitat upon which they depend. In order to achieve this in the Mau Forest, SWT supports a team consisting of MEP, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Kenya Forestry Service (KFS) and Narok County Government (NCG) rangers all based in the Mau Forest at Emitik outpost. This team's objectives include conducting regular patrols to monitor elephants and provide rapid response to safeguard elephants and other wildlife from poaching and human-elephant conflict. These activities include taking down snares, rooting out illegal poaching and logging operations, intervening in human-elephant conflict situations and fostering positive community relations. The SWT Mau De-Snaring Unit patrols the forest based on the operational orders of MEP and areas previously covered, local intelligence, and the movement data of the two collared elephants in the area will help inform these orders. The SWT provided funding for the establishment of this team and their permanent presence is paramount to protecting the elephant population in the Mau Forest currently estimated at 652 down from 1,003 in 2005. In the first year of operation, they've had many great successes: 24 suspects arrested, 10 kilns and four poacher's camps destroyed; the recovery of 41 kg of ivory, two pit saws, two poison spears, one cross cutter, five spears, two axes, 57 sacks of charcoal; the collection of 88 illegal log posts and four skins and the shutting down of four illegal logging sites; and the removal of a total of 311 snares from the Mau Forest in 2018. In June, the unit split into two to cover a wider area of the Mau Forest and we are happy to see that SWT will continue with supporting this team's important work through 2019.

Rangers removing snares in the Mau Forest.

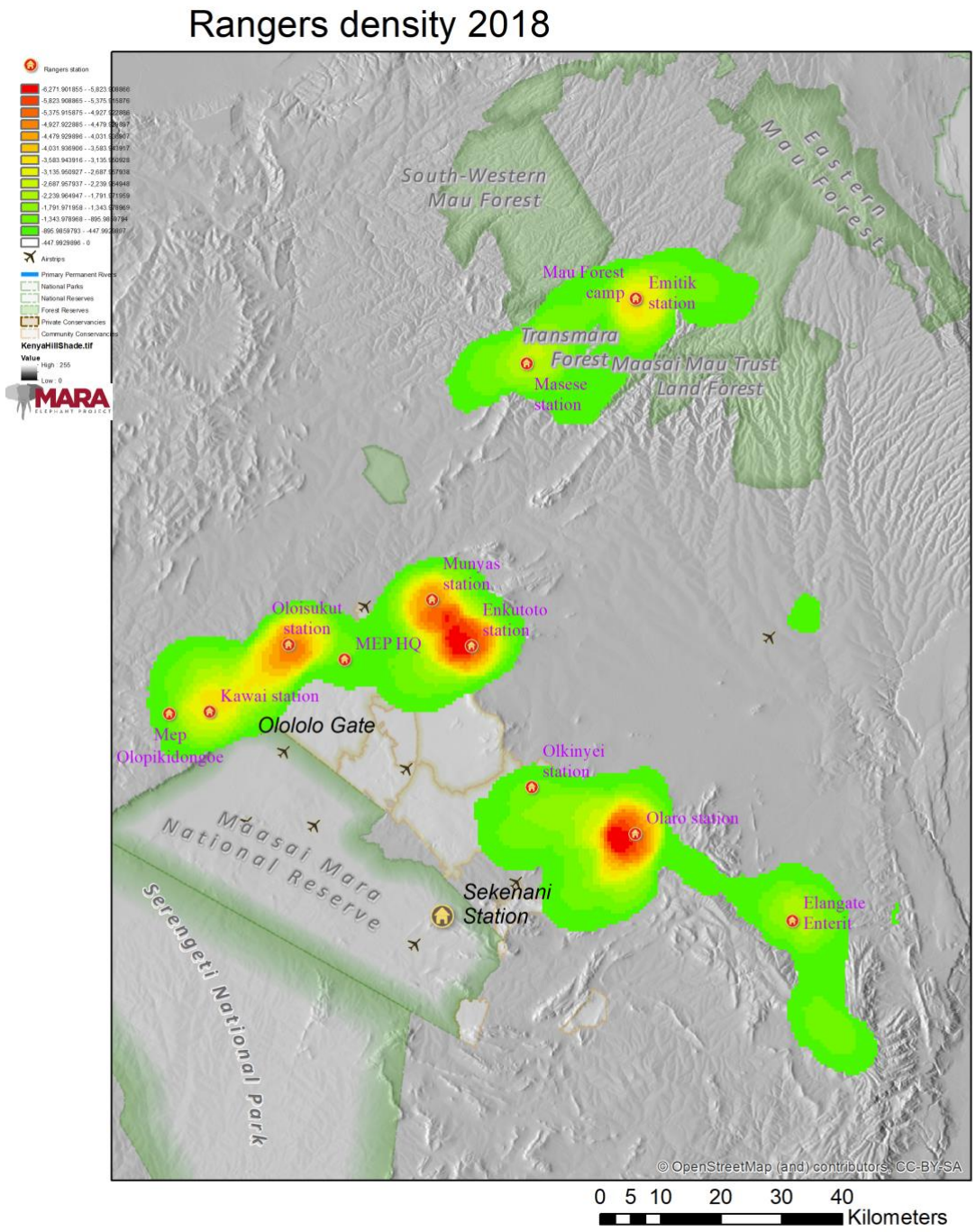
On July 15, the MEP intelligence unit with the help of the SWT Mau De-Snaring Unit recovered 37 kg of ivory and arrested two suspects.

A kiln being destroyed in the Mau Forest in December.

Additionally, in the Loita Hills area of the Mara ecosystem, MEP re-deployed rangers from the core rapid response unit away from conflict hotspots during the low conflict seasons in 2018. Our intelligence unit gathered information that there was an active poaching ring operating in Mosiro, which prompted the rapid response unit to be deployed to this area. Once on the ground, they found some very discouraging evidence that poaching was actively happening in this area and had been for some time. An elephant carcass estimated to be a month old was found without tusks. Additionally, the animals were all very skittish and though they found elephant tracks, there was no evidence of elephants stopping to eat or drink, meaning they were aware they were under threat. Due to this high-risk situation, MEP CEO deployed the rapid response unit into this northern section of the Loita Hills to monitor the elephants, shutdown illegal logging sites, root out poachers, and help mitigate human-elephant conflict and better relations with the bordering community. The rapid response unit had success in shutting down illegal logging operations, confiscating posts, arresting loggers, monitoring elephants and mitigating human-elephant conflict while they were operating in this area; however, the case for a permanent team is solid.

Four suspects arrested in Loita on October 19 by KWS and MEP rangers, in possession of 500 posts.

An elephant carcass estimated to be about one month old being investigated by the MEP rapid response unit in Loita.



This map shows the total ranger density for 2018, red being areas that were more heavily patrolled. MEP rangers patrolled a total of 17,640 kilometers on foot 141,729 kilometers in their patrol vehicles.

Anti-Poaching:

This year MEP along with our government partners KWS and NCG arrested a total of 46 people; 26 ivory middlemen, 12 bushmeat poachers and eight people for illegal logging. In 2018, MEP rangers seized 356 kg of elephant ivory. Though elephant ivory is still being sought after, elephant deaths as a result of poaching in the Mara are down from 2017. The most concerning trend in 2018 in regard to poaching in the Mara is bushmeat poaching. Snares are strands of wire usually strung up between two tree trunks low to the ground. They are often used to catch zebra and wildebeest, so they can be sold illegally for bushmeat. This is a very common form of poaching in the Mara and one MEP patrol units often run into. In 2018, MEP ranger units removed 324 snares in our area of operation, the most coming from the SWT Mau De-Snaring Unit operating in the Mau Forest.

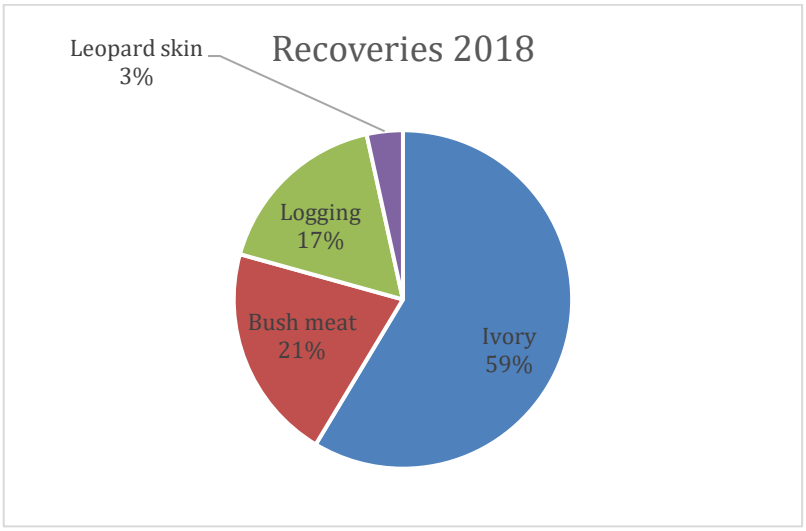
In November, the helicopter was directly responsible for finding and disrupting a commercial bushmeat operation near Naroosura. MEP's CEO was returning to the Mara from a board meeting in Nairobi and spotted poachers butchering two zebras in an open field. Though they ran, the culprit's phone was turned over to the Kenya Police and now the whole bushmeat network is being investigated based on orders and mpesa payments found on the phone that were coming from Nyahururu and Nairobi.

Unfortunately, one of MEP's collared large bull elephants, Mytene, was poached on April 10 on the border of the Serengeti National Park and Loliondo in the Ngorongoro district. MEP received an immobility alert on the Save The Elephants (STE) tracking system for Mytene's collar that allowed us to alert our partners at the Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA). MEP sent Mytene's location coordinates to TANAPA rangers who then responded and found him already deceased from a spear wound to the side of his head. Luckily, Mytene's tusks were still in place, which we believe is due to the quick response of the TANAPA rangers and MEP's elephant collar that may have scared the poachers away. Since he was a large bull, Mytene's

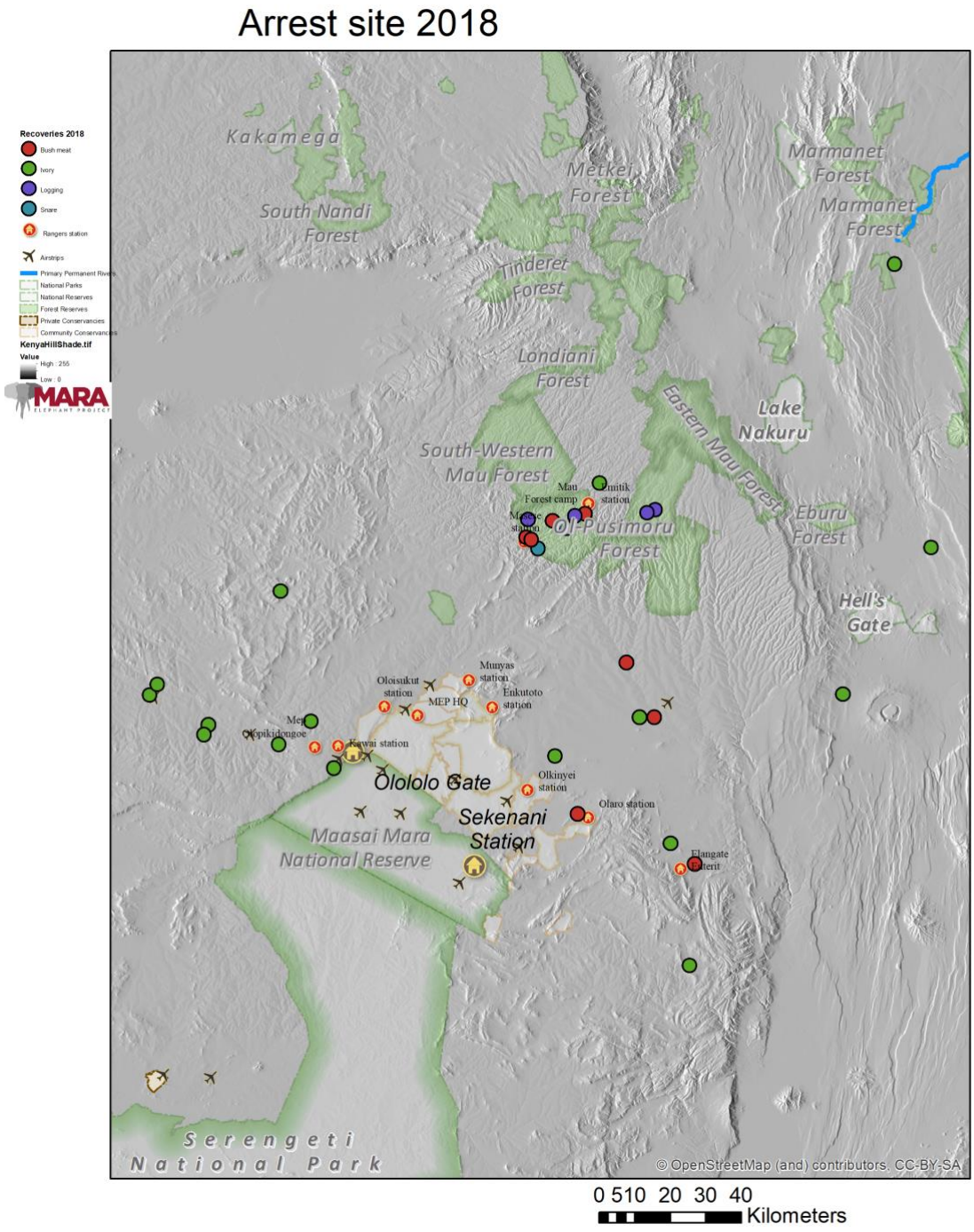
tusks weighed 79 kg (174 lbs.) total meaning these poachers would have gotten a large pay day from this one bull's tusks.

Mytene's carcass found on April 10.

Two suspects arrested and 69 kg of ivory seized on December 23.



This chart shows the total percentage of confiscations in 2018 by item.



This map shows the arrest sites for 2018.

Mitigating Human-Elephant Conflict:

In 2018, MEP ranger units responded to 203 human-elephant conflict incidents and deployed several new mitigation techniques and technologies. One such method that is new for MEP and has exciting potential are flashing light fences. MEP got the idea from predator conservation organizations that were using them with great success around bomas to keep cattle safe from lions. The device is essentially a system of light bulbs that flash intermittently that simulate the movement of a person around a boma and thereby deter predators. Since these fences were proven so effective at keeping predators away from farm animals, MEP thought they'd be equally as effective in keeping elephants out of crops. The fences involve using solar panels and lights all connected with cables and stuck on top of posts that are secured around the crops. The flashing lights are all solar powered, so they are able to recharge during the day to be used primarily at night when the majority of crop raiding occurs. The new flashing light fence is a cheap and effective mitigation tool and can be installed by MEP rangers. Community members also help with installation and their only task after installation is to ensure the lights don't get stolen, which they've reported is a much easier task than keeping elephants out of their farms. The whole solar light kit includes eight bulbs that cover 100 meters costing just $300. MEP has started with five total units that allowed us to install 500 meters of fencing in the Transmara for just $1,500.

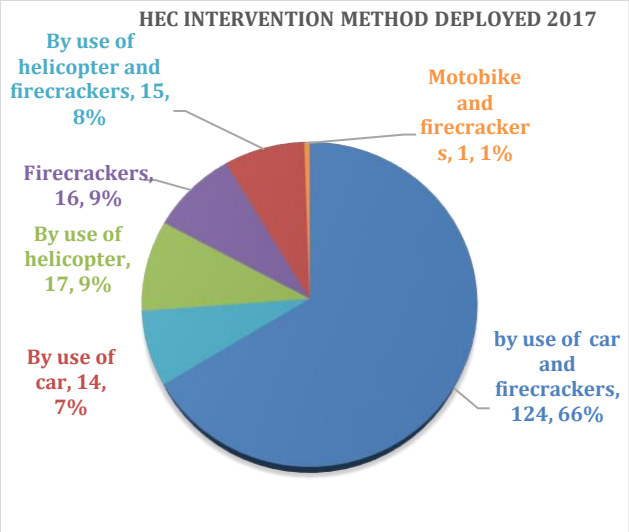
A flashing light fence being installed around a farm in an HEC hotspot in March.

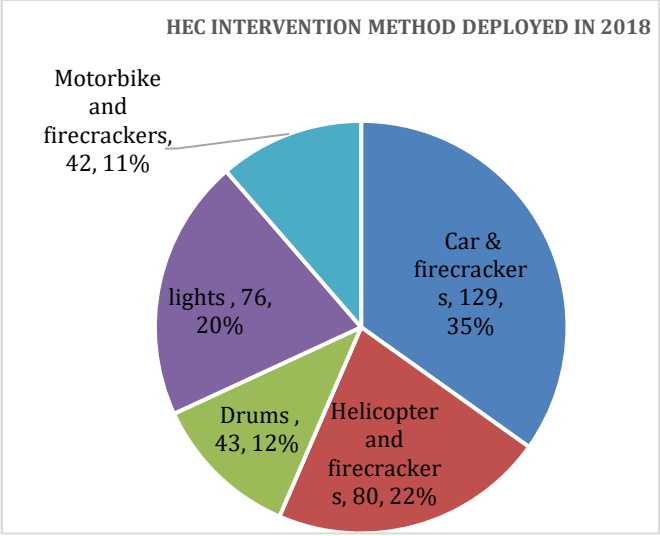
Another new mitigation technology is called an ElephantShield system. It was developed to automatically trigger a loud alarm to alert farmers as elephants enter crops. How it works is that the system picks up a radio frequency from a GPS collar on a MEP collared elephant that then triggers the flashing lights and sirens as the animal approaches. These alarm systems are solar powered and trigger to make a loud alarm sound when the VHF beacon in the elephant collar gets near which not only alarms the elephants to hopefully leave the area but also alerts the community who might be asleep. The system is self-contained with a solar panel for charging and can be positioned at high risk farms to assist farmers with HEC mitigation.

While MEP's first line of defense is always our ground ranger units, the Karen Blixen Camp Ree Park Safari helicopter continues to be a vital asset in mitigating human-elephant conflict. Since 2015, over 145 hours of the helicopter flying time has been used in mitigation efforts. In 2018, of the 203 human-elephant conflict incidents MEP responded to, we flew the helicopter 23.70 hours to mitigate HEC situations. One such incident in October found a herd of elephants trying to cross the Mara River into Mara North Conservancy as an angry mob was attacking them with spears and arrows. The helicopter was instrumental in protecting the herd from the crowd and guiding them to safety. We can confidently say that the helicopter directly saved this herd from being killed by the community. After safely bringing them back across the river the KWS veterinarian pulled 20 arrows out of three elephants.

A photo from the helicopter of the elephant herd being moved out of farms back into the conservancy while an angry mob was following closely behind.

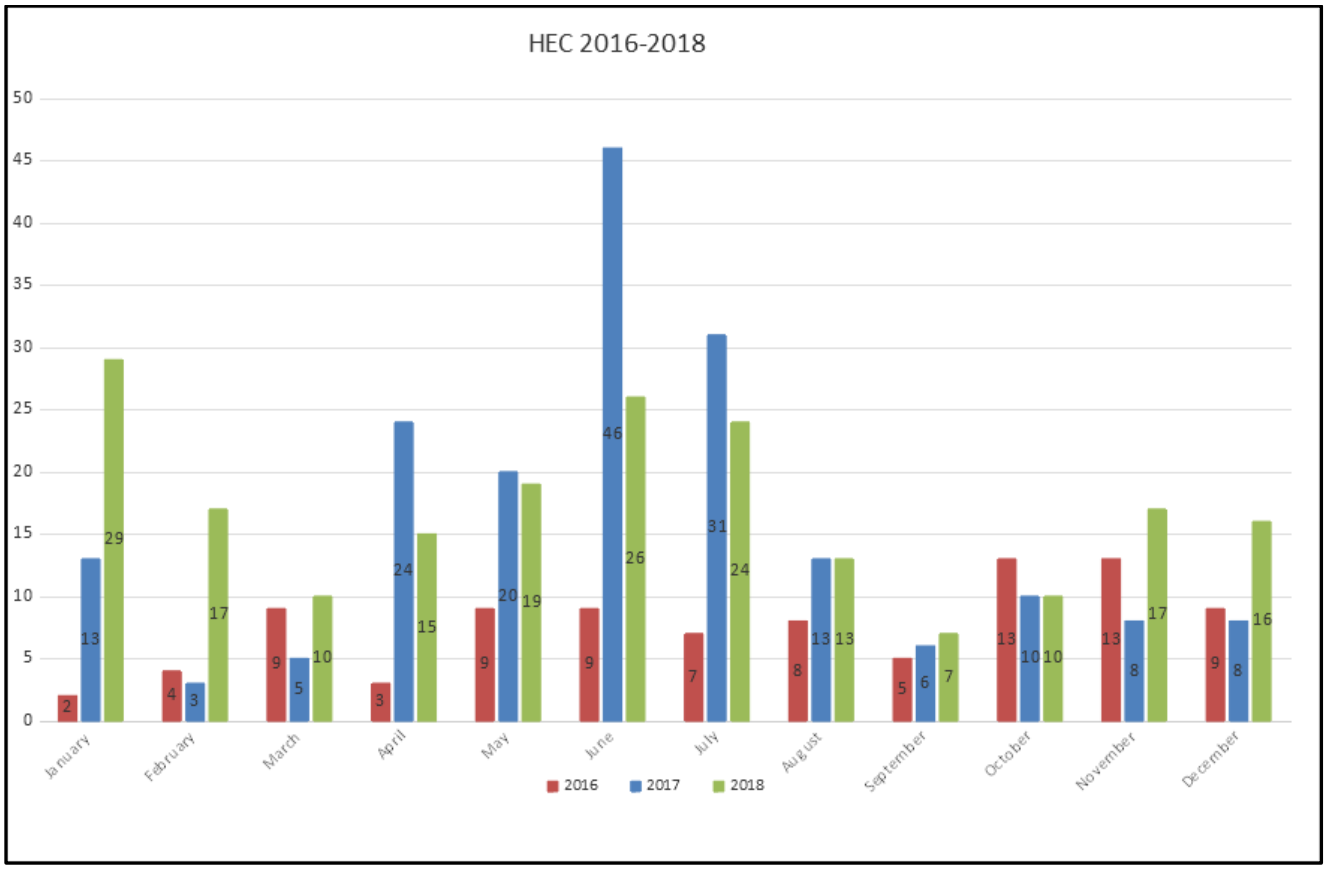
The 20 arrows pulled from elephants on one day in October.





The charts above illustrate the tools used to mitigate conflict in 2017 and 2018 respectively.

A spotlight on an elephant crop raiding at night. In November, MEP rangers were responding almost nightly in some areas.



Tracking Elephants:

In 2018, MEP successfully re-collared elephants Kegol and Caroline, both had collar batteries that were expiring. In addition to these operations, MEP successfully collared new elephants Julia in Shampole in March and Bettye in the Mau Forest in July. We secured funding from a private donor to collar Julia and partnered with SORALO to share the tracking data generated from Julia's collar to help in monitoring her and her family group of five that was part of a mega herd of over 100 elephants in the Shompole swamp. Quickly after her collaring, the tracking data was indicating conflict in surrounding farms at night that Julia and other herds were raiding which informed MEP's ranger unit deployment. Bettye, a female in a family group of five in the Mau, was collared to replace elephant Nancy in the Mau Forest whose collar dropped.

Kegol being re-collared with the help of MEP partner, KWS Vet Dr. Limo.

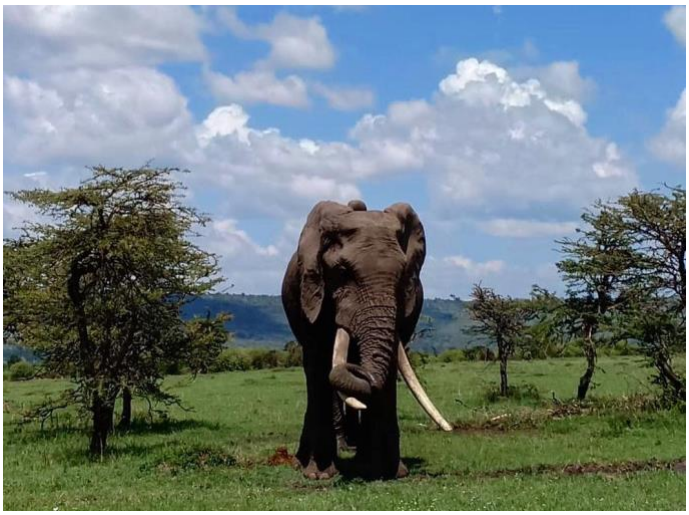
MEP collared elephant Julia.

In the middle of July, Kenya Wildlife Service implemented a temporary ban on all veterinarian interventions that are considered non-emergencies. This was in response to a terrible incident involving the death of 11 rhinos after they were translocated from Nairobi and Nakuru National Parks to Tsavo National Park. This decree put the MEP collaring operations on hold until further notice. An unforeseeable issue for MEP in 2018 has been the durability of MEP's elephant collars from our manufacturer. The durability of the original belting material stood up well to the elephant's wear and tear. Unfortunately, in late 2017, the manufacturer switched to using a thinner belt material that has proved to be significantly weaker than previously manufactured. Frustratingly, in 2018, Nancy, Earhart, Alina and Julia all had collars that dropped due to the durability issues and Amare's collar stopped reporting due to water

damage. We've since replaced the thin material with Kevlar, which seems to be holding up well on our Mau Forest elephant Bettye.

MEP CEO with Julia's collar that dropped in November.

MEP ranger units continue to be major source for monitoring MEP's collared elephants. The helicopter due to the high cost suspended monthly aerial monitoring flights and moved to quarterly. At the end of 2018, MEP had 16 collared elephants that were being monitored remotely 24 hours a day. A total of 30 collared elephants are needed in the Mara ecosystem to provide the spatial coverage necessary to assist operational protection and safety of the elephants either from poaching or human-elephant conflict, and because 30 individuals provides a statistically viable sample for understanding elephant range extent, identifying corridors and assessing the connectivity and changes in elephant movement across the landscape.



Kegol spotted in December and photographed by a MEP ranger while out on patrol.

Helicopter:

The Karen Blixen Camp Ree Park Safari helicopter continues to be an invaluable tool in supporting ranger units on the ground and increasing our area of operation while decreasing our rapid response time. In 2018, the MEP helicopter flew for 249.40 total hours. The helicopter has been used in both the Mau Forest and Loita Hills to ensure ranger safety, root out poachers, reconnaissance, mitigate human-elephant conflict and ensure safe collaring operations in densely forested conditions.

MEP Tracking Manager Wilson Sairowua with the MEP helicopter in the Mau Forest to transport an injured MEP ranger in November.

In 2018, MEP responded to 203 HEC incidents and the number of HEC related elephant deaths were 12 and an essential part to keep this number low is the helicopter, which enables us to respond rapidly to human-elephant conflict situations. The MEP helicopter was flown 23.70

total hours in 2018 in response to HEC. The rise in human-elephant conflict has also seen a rise in elephant medical interventions needed as a result of arrow or spear wounds sustained during an interaction with people. While the KWS Vet Dr. Limo from the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Mara Mobile Vet Unit does the treatment, MEP provides both aerial and ground support to Dr. Limo's team ensuring the elephant treatment is safe for personnel and the animal being treated. Additionally, locating an injured elephant from the air improves response time to treat the injured elephant and can often spot an injury in otherwise impossible circumstances like thick vegetation. The MEP helicopter ensures that we are saving more elephants faster. The MEP helicopter flew 38.20 hours in support of these operations.

An elephant treatment in Olarro Conservancy on October 14 with partners SWT Mara Mobile Vet Unit and KWS Vet Dr. Limo.

MEP's helicopter is not only used for the treatment of elephants, but also is used for assistance with other wildlife living in the Mara. The helicopter has been used to gather information on the critically endangered mountain bongo antelope living in the Mau Forest, it's been used to assist with treatments of lions, giraffes, buffalo and rhino as well as to investigate the cause of death

of various other wildlife and to complete well-being checks on the endangered black rhino. The MEP helicopter flew 7.9 hours in support of other wildlife.

Marc flying the R44 helicopter with partner KWS to monitor black rhino in the National Reserve in November.

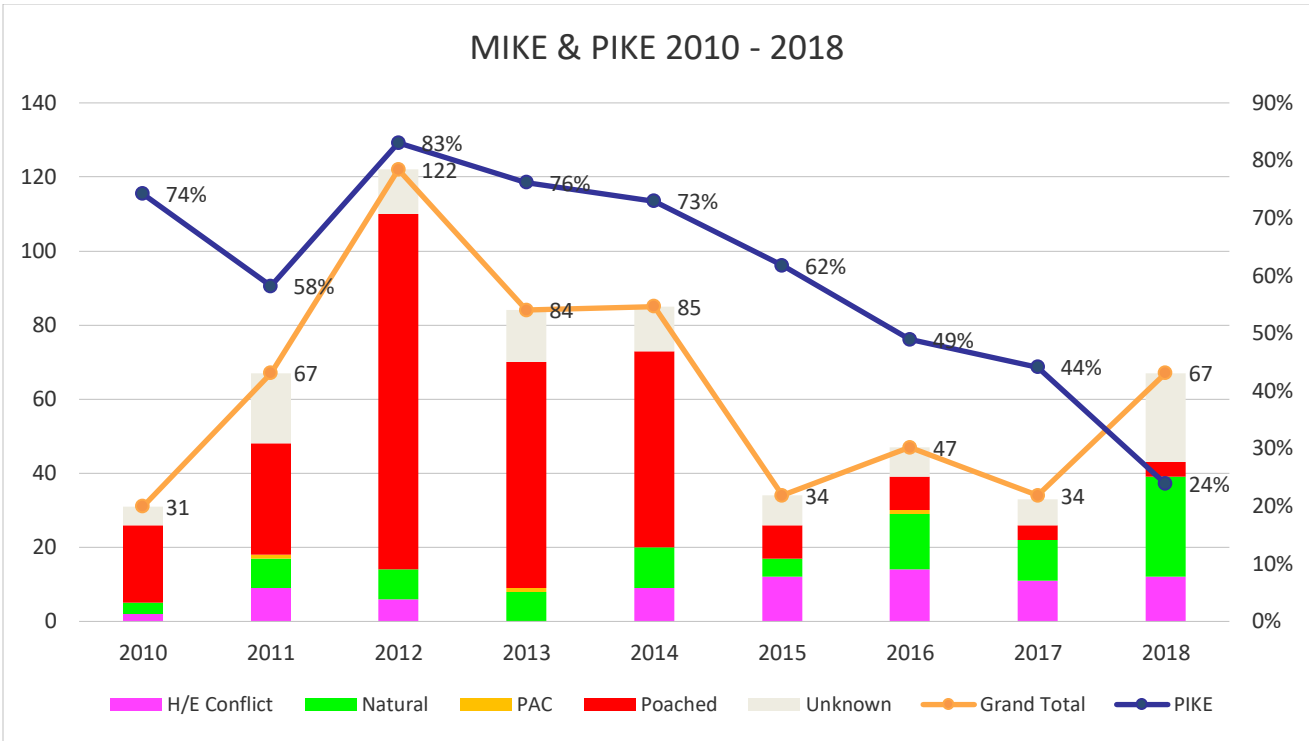
Monitoring collared elephant Julia and her herd using the MEP helicopter. The helicopter flew 14.60 hours to monitor elephants in 2018.

The July 4 elephant baby rescue airlifting the baby to SWT Orphanage in Nairobi.

Developing the Evidence Base:
MIKE Data:

MEP continues to collect and analyze the monitoring of illegal killing of elephants (MIKE) data in the greater Mara ecosystem. MEP is happy to report that the percentage of illegally killed elephants (PIKE) has been reduced from 44% in 2017 to 24% in 2018. This represents a reduction in the number of illegally killed elephants due to poaching from seven in 2017 to four in 2018. While the number of illegally killed elephants due to human-elephant conflict held steady between 2017 and 2018, the unknown causes of death did increase from seven to 24 increasing the total number of dead elephants from 34 in 2017 to 67 in 2018. Unknown elephant deaths are elephant carcasses that for various reasons cannot be categorized. Some of the reasons for not being able to attribute a cause of death might include no outward sign of a wound, tusks remain intact or the carcass is simply too deteriorated or compromised from scavengers to determine a cause of death. MEP along with our government partners KWS and NCG are taking steps to ensure that unknown elephant deaths decrease in 2019. Wildlife Traxx Consultancy held two forensic crime scene training courses for the Mara's rangers with the objective to enhance the prosecution of wildlife crimes through the forensic crime scene training of first responders. The training will also ensure that the collection of crime scene evidence will help the KWS Wildlife Forensic and Genetics Laboratory determine a cause of death.

The harmonization of MIKE data is extremely important for all organizations working in the Mara to accurately report the number of illegally killed elephants and the cause of death. MIKE data is harmonized quarterly in a meeting between KWS, NCG, conservancies and organizations like MEP to ensure that all elephant deaths are accurately categorized.



Collecting Data:
Analyzing Data and Producing the Scientific Evidence Base:

In 2018, MEP focused on advancing our research objectives. As a conservation organization the main focus has been boots on the ground, operational support of the elephants and communities in the Mara. The next step for our organization is to focus on long-term research to better support our operational orders. This is why in May, MEP got confirmation that Dr. Jake Wall accepted the position of director of research and conservation at MEP starting in January 2019. He will be responsible for: developing and maintaining MEP's core research strategy; developing research partnerships with other organizations, academics and universities; liaising with key conservation partners such as KWS, Save the Elephants, Mara Predator Programme, SWT and other relevant partners on research priorities; and exploring research/conservation funding options and assist the CEO in funding applications.

The results of the research will be used to develop reports and position papers to influence and guide management of the ecosystem. All outputs will be shared with MEP's target audiences and key partners aimed at raising awareness, facilitating more immediate input and action, informing and influencing policy and practice and developing closer working relationships with key partners. Dr. Wall is an architect of EarthRanger, a system to track elephants in real-time to help protect them against ivory poaching and to study their movement patterns and conservation in the context of the rapid expansion of the human-footprint across Africa. Jake was previously the Geospatial Scientific Advisor to Save the Elephants and works with Vulcan to incorporate other real-time data such as vehicle tracking into the tracking system. We are all thrilled at MEP to have such a high caliber scientist join our organization.

In 2018, Jake volunteered his time and talents to MEP and in April, he spent two weeks at MEP and went through in detail the data catalogue with Tracking Manager Wilson Sairowua and set a number of tasks for the team to complete. Already we have new map outputs to show our areas of operation, MIKE and are now producing HEC and arrest maps. All of these maps and all of this data are vital tools for our organization when meeting government authorities, other conservation organizations, donors and visitors. We are also able to print these maps on A0 size paper that proved to be very useful in gathering people around a table to talk about elephant movements. In October, Jake spent a week at MEP HQ and worked closely with the team on a number of research related items. More specifically on the research work plan for 2019, checking data sets, data collection and planning future collection.

In April, Mr. Ryan Wilkie was attached to MEP for five months from Save The Elephants. His main goal during his time at MEP was to gather the data needed to produce the MEP Technical Report on all of MEP's 48 collared elephants. In August, Ryan under the guidance of Jake Wall completed the first draft of the Technical Report and went off to start his PhD at University of Edinburgh. MEP also hosted Nathan Hahn for two months in 2018 to start his data collection for his PhD with Colorado State University in George Wittmeyer's lab. Nathan focused on HEC mitigation characterization and partnered with MEP to conduct a number of drone training packages for Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) and Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA) while he worked for RESOLVE.

Community Engagement and Conservation Education:

Mara Elephant Project partnered with Seedballs Kenya in 2018 to help reforest the Mara in some of the areas devastated by illegal charcoal production and logging. Many generous donors gave MEP seed balls to distribute via the helicopter and to send along with MEP rangers units to use while out on patrol. In addition to this distribution of over 65 kg of seed balls, on November 28, MEP along with the Seedballs Kenya distributed one million seed balls along with the community's help in an area of the Mara hard hit by charcoal production. This is a community engagement project that was very beneficial to the habitat upon which elephants depend.

MEP rangers distributing seed balls while out on patrol in October.

Other community engagement activities include the support of a little girl who was injured in 2017 by an elephant. When MEP received the call, rangers rushed to the girl's location in Olkinyei and were first on the scene to administer first aid and move the herd of elephants away from the scene and airlift her to the hospital for treatment. Now, one year later in 2018, MEP Tracking Manager Wilson Sairowua started giving a percentage of his MEP salary to pay for the girl's school fees at boarding school as well as her books and uniform. In August, he went to go visit Seema at Kishermoruak Primary School and she was a happy healthy little girl doing well in school. While we're committed to protecting elephants, one key component to be successful with this mission is to also protect the people that live alongside the elephants.

Wilson visiting the little girl at her school in August. MEP also collared Lempiris in response to this HEC incident and Wilson was able to show the girl his movements and how MEP is monitoring his actions.

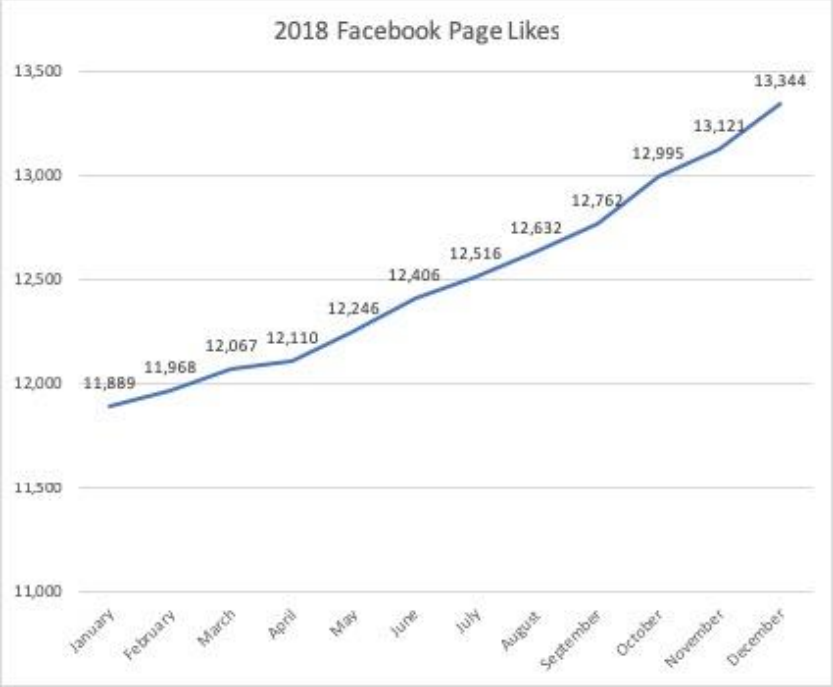
Informing Policy and Building Support:

MEP has been engaging with the KWS on a provincial and national level in Kenya to ensure that MEP is in compliance with and adding to the National Elephant Action Plan (NEAP). The NEAP framework was developed by IUCN and detailed in the "Conservation and Management Strategy for the Elephant in Kenya 2012-2021" authored by KWS. MEP believes it is critical to fit-in and contribute to the national elephant strategy plan and as such MEP has identified its key roles in delivering against the strategy. MEP is also part of the Area Elephant Management Committee that meets quarterly to report on developments in our areas of operation, share ideas and align with the NEAP objectives. The other committee members include Kenya Forestry Service officers, Kenya Wildlife Service officers from Ramoi NP, Maasai Mara, Transmara, Baringo, the elephant program, county governments and key NGO partners. MEP aligns with a number of the NEAP objectives which defines our mandate in elephant conservation. Sharing these with our government partners and working together to achieve them is an important part of informing policy and building support.

Communications Strategy:

In 2018, MEP looked to raise our brand awareness and profile with an international audience in hopes of seeing a correlation between our communications and fundraising efforts. In 2018, MEP re-designed our original logo of the front facing elephant to incorporate more dimension. We believe our logo is unique and synonymies with Mara Elephant Project, which is why keeping the original design and just improving slightly on it was important for brand awareness.

On social media, MEP continued to increase our exposure with mentions from celebrities like pop star Ellie Goulding who posted about MEP on Instagram and Facebook to her over 14 million followers highlighting the recently announced UK ivory ban. Additionally, Ellen DeGeneres adopted one of the SWT elephants that MEP had a hand in rescuing which proved to be really great exposure on social media. Overall, on Facebook, MEP on January 1 had 11,833 likes and on December 31 ended 2018 with 13,344, an increase of 1,511. On Instagram we started 2018 with 1,410 followers and ended 2018 with 5,315, an increase of 3,905 followers. According to the NGO Technology Report, a small NGO on average has 8,722 likes on Facebook and 1,837 follows on Instagram. So, MEP in 2018 had now surpassed that benchmark on Instagram. MEP sent out the first email to 836 supporters in April and ended 2018 with 1,036 emails on the list, an increase of 200.



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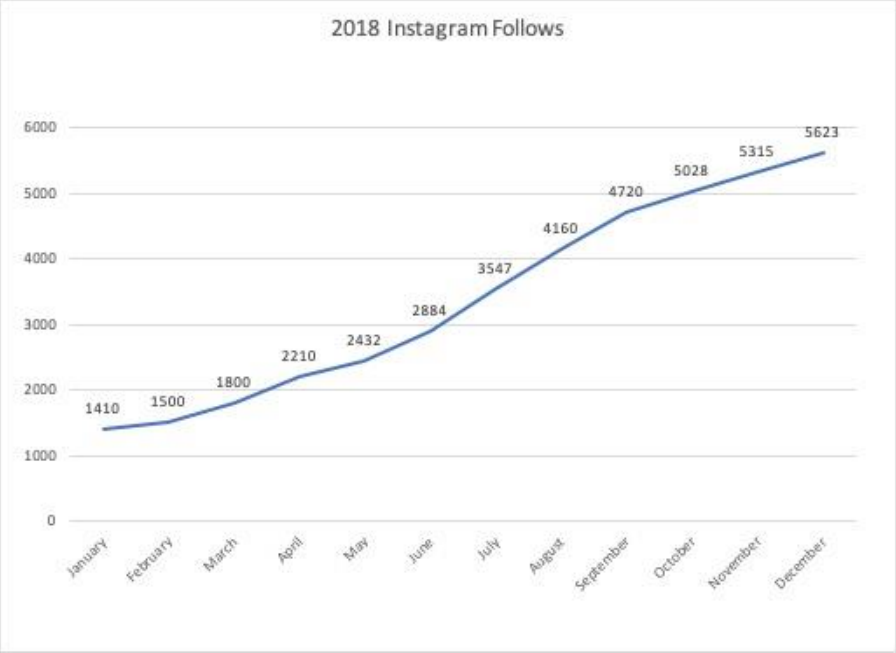

In 2018, MEP began with 1,410 followers on Instagram and ended with 5,315, an increase of 3,905 followers.

MEP's media profile also rose when in May we were featured on The Dodo's Facebook page with MEP tagged for an elephant treatment video that received 1 million views, 3,160 shares and 25,000 likes. MEP was also featured in Wired UK with an interview with CEO Marc Goss highlighting the technology MEP is using to combat poaching and human-elephant conflict. MEP supporter Brett Velicovich was featured on *Fox Busine*ss talking about his time at MEP and his quick appearance on that show generated over $600 in donations for MEP on that day. In August, MEP hosted both Reuters and the BBC to film CEO Marc Goss and MEP operations. Each of these series has the potential to reach thousands of people and will air in early 2019. Finally, in October, MEP CEO and tracking manager were asked to interview for a Netflix documentary coming out in 2019 narrated by Sir. David Attenborough.

The MEP website continues to be a great place for supporters and partners to find out more information about our organization. In 2018, MEP published 90 blogs and had over 37,000 page views on maraelephantproject.org. The top three locations for traffic include the USA, Kenya and the UK and in 2019 MEP will continue producing original content for our website to maintain the level of transparency with our donors we're strived for in 2018.

The increase in exposure for MEP has been wonderful for our organization from not only a fundraising standpoint but it directly contributes to partnership development and overall brand awareness. That being said, we would be remiss not to mention that while the increase has been great, there have been downsides to more exposure that have left the organization reassessing our approach in 2019 and taking steps to getting a local voice in place and training secured for our key staff members on media training.

Sidekick Foundation:

On March 14, Kenya was asked to stand up and acknowledge that the youth attitudes towards conservation and wildlife need to be addressed, but on their own terms. Mara Elephant Project's core funder, the Sidekick Foundation commissioned Well Told Story to gather data on youth attitudes toward wildlife and conservation in Kenya. The groundbreaking research found that young Kenyans feel detached from wildlife and conservation. These findings have immense implications that can guide the authorities and conservation organizations as they work to conserve natural resources including wildlife for the economic and social benefit of future generations. In order to better illustrate the research findings, the ESCAPE Foundation commissioned the film, *MABINGWA/The Champions* that follows the lives of four young people (Omar, Evans, Saitoti and John) from four corners of Kenya, exploring their relationship to nature and what barriers they face to appreciate and benefit from natural resources and to engage in conservation. The film was premiered for 180 people, mostly from Kenya, with only standing room available. The launch of Sidekick Foundation's *MABINGWA* film was a good marketing opportunity for MEP. Additionally, we were able to benefit from an extensive email list collected at the event, bringing our email list up to over 800, which is a vast improvement! Thank you to MEP Trustees Beatrice and Moses for helping push the MEP agenda at that event.

Many MEP staff and supporters attended the launch of MABINGWA including CEO Marc Goss and Trustees Beatrice Karanja, Moses Kamau and Trey Fehsenfeld.

In September, it was an active month for Mara Elephant Project's core funder, the ESCAPE Foundation. They have officially changed their name to the Sidekick Foundation and though their focus remains the same, they are looking to capture more appropriately their belief in fulfilling their role as the sidekick to the next generation of conservation heroes. Sidekick's first official business was to host a MEP supporter event in Indianapolis, IN in September at the home of MEP and Sidekick founder, Fred & Suzie Fehsenfeld. This event was a combined effort to say 'thank you' to our supporters for the last six years. MEP Trustee Trey Fehsenfeld welcomed all present and Marc thanked all those present for their support and provided an update on the activities and achievements of MEP. We appreciate our partners support at this event including Drone Warrior Brett Velicovich who gave a wonderful demonstration of how drones can be used in the Mara to mitigate human-elephant conflict. We'd also like to thank the Indianapolis Zoo who showed the MEP team great hospitality during the week of the Indianapolis Prize as well as Endangered Species Chocolate and Elephant Cooperation for joining us for a fun night!

Marc presenting at the MEP supporter event in September.

Conservancy Support:

The grant to Mara North Conservancy (MNC) which started in 2016 is near completion except the resettlement aspect which has taken longer than expected. This year MNC moved 12 settlements at a cost of $34,064 which means of the $73,859 carried over from 2017 there is a balance in the resettlement account of $34,604. We hope that MNC will be able to complete the

resettlement plan in 2019. MEP continues to get the monthly occupancy breakdown from each camp to fulfill the transparency component of this grant. The occupancy levels are high which means that the tourism partners in MNC are collecting more revenue than they have to pay to maintain their basic leases. This is a great place to be for them as it means they are able to increase payments, increase the size of the leased land and provide management with more funding to better protect the conservancy. MNC has also started a cattle management plan and we are excited to see where this goes in 2019. Being the largest community conservancy in the Mara if this plan works then it could very well have a knock-on effect in the other conservancies.

Organizational Development:

MEP has continued to expand its partnerships, a key focus of the organization as we continue to grow and develop. In 2018, we added new partners like the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, Kenya Forestry Service, Seedballs Kenya, Tawari and the Singita Grumeti Fund.

We have increased the capacity of the organization with the successful establishment of the new ranger unit in the Mau, the appointment of new finance officer, Stanley Misoka, who is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and a new administrator, Elvis Saayoi, to replace Wilson Sairowua who was promoted to Tracking Manager. We have also established a small office in Nairobi to support the financial and logistics operations of the organization and which the finance officer works from. A key objective of MEP has been to increase our internal capacity to undertake research and we are pleased that Dr. Jake Wall has accepted the position of director of research and conservation starting in January 2019. This will significantly increase our internal capacity to analyze the data being collected, both to better inform our operations and the decisions of key stakeholders in the ecosystem.

MEP's Strategy 2018-2021 requires a significant increase in the funding if we are to implement all of the elements of the strategy. While good progress has been made in 2018, MEP will continue to adopt a pragmatic approach to growth and will only expand into new areas once funding is secured for existing operations. In support of our efforts to increase the funds we are able to raise; we have applied for tax exempt status with the Kenya Revenue Authority and expect to have a final decision during the course of 2019.

Staff Development:

- 17 new rangers underwent a month-long ranger training course held at MEP
- Two rangers attended training on wildlife poisoning and response

Governance:

In 2018, the MEP Board of Trustees continued to meet on a quarterly basis. Colin Church was elected as the new Chairman at the AGM, replacing Brian Heath who continues to serve on the board. Brian Kearney-Grieve, who previously served as a special advisor to the board, joined the board in 2018. Key priorities for the continuing development of the board in 2019 include the recruitment of at least two new board members and completing the review of all board policies.

Board Structure:
Chairman: Colin Church
Vice Chairman: Moses Kamau
Secretary: Marc Goss
Treasurer: Brian Kearney-Grieve

Committees:
Audit and Risk: Marc Goss, Richard Roberts, Brian Heath, and Brian Kearney-Grieve
Fundraising and Communications: Beatrice Karanja, Trey Fehsenfeld, Claire Bolles and Richard Roberts
Governance: Moses Kamau, Colin Church

Management:
Marc Goss: CEO
Wilson Sairowua: Tracking Manager
James Ekiru: Senior Warden
Claire Bolles: Communications Director

Operational Plan and Budget for 2019:

Drawing on the MEP Strategy 2018 -2021 and associated budget, the operational plan and budget for 2019 was submitted by the CEO to the board for review and adoption at the November board meeting. The operational plan seeks to maintain and increase the level of activity under each area of the existing operations and, funding permitting, implement a phased expansion into the Loita Hills and Serengeti. In addition, we are seeking to increase our research capacity and level of community engagement during the course of 2019.

Funding and Finances:

In 2018, Mara Elephant Project's total donations from foundations and individuals, apart from our core funders, almost doubled from 2017 and not only did MEP's funding increase in 2018, but our funding base continues to diversify with 461 donors in 2018 versus the 118 in 2017. There is a direct link in 2018 between MEP's increased efforts to communicate with our donors and supporters, host them in the Mara and build personal relationships and the number of donors and amount donated to MEP.

Mara Elephant Project was incredibly grateful to be the recipient of a very generous grant of from Karen Lo, received in February 2018 to support the core operations of the organization. The increased ability for MEP to have successes with recoveries and arrests were a direct result of the funds granted to MEP by Karen. Rapid response to poaching and conflict with well-equipped and well-trained rangers is key to success. This grant supported anti-poaching, human-elephant conflict and intelligence operations with direct support for: equipment and vehicle purchases, ranger salaries, food rations for the combined MEP, KWS and NCG rangers, conflict mitigation tools, helicopter running time, vehicle running costs, and intelligence operations costs. MEP also continues to be successful because of the core support from the Sidekick Foundation (formerly ESCAPE Foundation) whose donation for MEP in 2018 ensures

other donations can go directly to the frontline of operations. Other major individual donors in 2018 include Kerry Dineen, Sue Anschutz Rodgers, Bart & Amy Peterson, M.A. and Jim Rogers and Rita Cabases all continue to support MEP's core operations.

MEP through our core funder, the Sidekick Foundation, has a grant from Google that pays for the Google AdGrants account directing traffic to MEP's website. This was a significant enough grant that starting February 1 in response to new complicated specifications set out by Google, Sidekick hired a consultant to manage the account thus ensuring the grant's good standing. In 2018, MEP was able to secure funding for the protection of three elephants for a three-year period with the collaring, monitoring and data collection of that elephant. Julia, collared in the Shompole area, was funded by a guest of Richard's Camp and we'd like to acknowledge their contribution along with Tropic Air in helping us secure this. Additionally, WildAid supported MEP's collaring program when Angama Mara hosted a group and introduced them to MEP.

MEP received a grant from TUSK Trust in 2018 in support of our work. The money was used to re-collar Caroline and Kegol as well as purchase two motorbikes that have allowed MEP rangers to map fences in the ecosystem to help MEP create virtual geo-fences, which helps with human-elephant conflict mitigation. Grants like this one from TUSK make a difference and allow MEP to protect elephants and the communities that live alongside them. MEP was also approved for a grant by the Bently Foundation to support ranger training and equipment. We received core support from the JE Fehsenfeld Foundation and MEP was successful in the application to the OAK Foundation who have confirmed a core support grant for the next four years.

Facebook's launch of Facebook Fundraisers has been a great initiative for MEP. In 2018, we raised over $7,000 and had 216 people donate on Facebook Fundraisers alone, which is up seven-fold on 2017. This grassroots type effort is always heartwarming to see. MEP celebrated #GivingTuesday by asking supporters to #KeepMEPFlying by donating money to helicopter flying time in 2019. We're happy to report that a total of 67 people donated to our Facebook Fundraiser and we raised almost $4,000. MEP's donate page has received more visits in 2018 since the launch of the updated website in 2016. These visits have resulted in 210 people donating via PayPal and raising just over $33,000 for MEP.

Elephanatics, a Canadian elephant advocacy group, continues to be a great supporter of MEP by donating twice in 2018. Crooked Creek Elementary School students in Indianapolis, USA raised $2,000 for MEP through their Global Marketplace in February. MEP attended the award ceremony thrown by the Angama Foundation for the Greatest Maasai Mara photography competition. We were presented with a check for almost $4,000 from the Angama Foundation, as one of five beneficiaries of the competition and we had 140 entries in 2018, the most of any organization.

In May 2018, it was announced that a MEP intelligence ranger won $3,000 and was awarded the first annual 2018 Ranger Award from the Paradise Foundation International. In August, he along with MEP CEO and tracking manager traveled to Cape Town to accept this award. MEP CEO Marc Goss also visited Karsten Ree in Denmark the first week of October and we are

pleased to announce that Karsten has committed to helping MEP navigate the purchase of a new helicopter in 2019. His continued support of our program is unmatched, and we cannot thank him enough for giving us the use of this vital tool.

Finally, in 2018, MEP received the Guide Star Platinum seal of approval, the highest transparency seal they give out and Guide Star is the number one charitable reporting organization that is internationally recognized. Additionally, Mara Elephant Project through our 501(c)3 the Sidekick Foundation, Inc. is now set up to receive stock donations. Please see the donate page for more information.

Foundations, Companies and Organizations:

Amy and Bart Peterson Foundation
Asilia Charitable Foundation
Bently Foundation
Bessemer National Gift Trust
Crooked Creek Elementary School
Elephantics
EDI Clothing
Fund Raising Strategies Inc
Hubbard Family Foundation
Indigo Safaris LLC
James and Mary Anne Rogers Gift Fund
J E Fehsenfeld Family Foundation
Klaus Tiedge Photography
MET Foundation Inc
Near InfraRed Sauna UK
Oak Foundation
Sidekick Foundation
Sheldrick Wildlife Trust
Taylor Family Foundation
The Heather James Foundation
The McCormick Family Foundation
Tracks Trust
Tusk Trust
WildAid
Reilly Family Foundation
Bentley Family Fund

Individuals:

Ingrid Agren
Norman Alberts
Amilcar Alfaro
John Anderson
Marianne Andersson
Fifi Ane
Sue Anschutz Rodgers
Katerine B Appel
Kelly Asson
Mary Atkinson
Yasmine Austria
Kyle Baartman
Susan Babcock
Eric Badofsky
John Baldwin
Giulio Balestra
Irene Barrelet
Christopher Bartlett
Joy Bate
Avery Bazan
Jay Beason
John Beebe
Virginia Belanger
Terence Belfor
Benedict Berger
Elisa Bertorelli
Lynda Biggar
Michael Birch
Cornelius & Angela Bliss
Lisa Bogle
Jayne Bonard
Frederik Børrild
Craig & Stephanie Brater
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Christine Brunetti
Beverly Buckley
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Laura Derderian
John Dillow
Virginia Doser
Rachel Drew
Clare Dyas
Dan Kruser Eilat
Chantelle Ferreira
May Flower
Caroline Fossey
Kari Gabehart
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Donna Gilbert
Katie Gould
Quintin Gravatt
Rocco Grieco
Alberto Guerrero
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Olivia Heiberg
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Brooke Isbell
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Tijana Jirecek
Felix Kamau
Bill Keleher
Alexandra Kershaw
Rosemary Kinyanjui
Hannah Knight
Nicholas Lapham
Nancy Law-Paredes
Peter Lemon
Emma Lindwall
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Sarah Janus
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Barbara Johnson
Brian Kearney-Grieve
Deserai Kent
David Killebrew
Clifford Knight
Catherine Langham
Larry Laverty
Arnaud Legrand
David Lewis
David Lloyd
Alla Lvovich
Annabelle Teleki Malcho
Stephanie Manley

Simon Manni
Marika Maritz
Alex Mason
Vanessa McCabe
Margaret McCormick
Denise McLaughlin
Peter Melinder
Stephen Mills
Nelly Morales
Paul Mustarde
Mark Natt
Dina Ni-Dornhoefer
Jennifer O'Brien
Carla Oliveira
Karen Overton
Cindy & Steve Patterson
April Piela-Shannon
Jacob Plasse
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Lara Ray
Gwen Reuben
David Robbins
Kevin Roberts
Nick and Jo Rutigliano
Rhonda Sanderson
Frank Schaer
Lesa Seales
Sean Shadmand
Michael Sheerr
Alfalfa Shupert
Dennis Simmons
Rajiv Sood
Reine Steel
Suzanne Svendsen Kosman
Daniel Szasz
Jade Nicole Taylor
Deborah Thompson
Jon Trebing
Hiromi Usui
Michael VanKley
Tayler Vomacka
Melissa Whitehead
Suzanne Wilson

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Steve Matlin
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Georgina McHugh
Sarah Megna
Stephanie Merten
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Catherine Moses
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Megan Tasker-Dunn
Lauren Thomason
Stefan Thuresson
Sara Tuvell
Jake Van Winkle
Vicki Vinopal Williams
Anja Wesik
Jo Williams
David Wood

Wendy Wood	Shelley Wujcikowski	Leslie Yale
Stephanie Yvonne	Anna Zagorodna	

To all our funders and supporters, we are thankful for their belief in the work of MEP.

Key Highlights from the MEP Accounts:

In the financial year 2018, Mara Elephant Project Trusts' total donations received and funds available for core operations increased by 30.60% to $826,837 from $633,168 in 2017. This represents the trust bestowed by our donors and supporters in our work. New core support grants were received from Karen Lo, the first tranche of a four-year grant from Oak Foundation along with continued support from the Sidekick Foundation. Donations received from all of our donors for core operations aided in MEP's anti-poaching patrols; elephant collaring & monitoring; rapid response units which are vital in mitigating human-elephant conflict; intelligence operations; training and equipping rangers; rangers salaries and food rations; replacing and buying new vehicles; vehicle running costs; and helicopter operations among other vital operational items.

Total expenditure recorded in 2018 was $732,625, an increase of 15.79% from the 2017 total expenditure of $632,709. This highlights our expanded operations as well as our efforts to efficiently utilize donor funds. Administrative expenses represented 15.97% of the total expenditure in 2018, while 84.03% was utilized for core frontline operations. The surplus before tax ($94,212) recorded in FY 2018 was attributable to restricted funding received in advance for the continued use of the helicopter provided by the Karen Blixen Camp Trust. The helicopter is used for several reasons: human-elephant conflict mitigation; elephant collaring operations; aerial monitoring of MEP collared elephants; intelligence gathering and anti-poaching operations; elephant treatments; and emergency medical transport.

Stanley Misoka joined MEP in July as part of MEP increasing its internal capacity and professionalism. He is a Certified Public Accountant with experience in accounting, budgeting and grant financial management. He's previously worked at NGOs Heifer International, Amref Health Africa and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. Since joining, Stanley has developed a new chart of accounts for the organization, implemented new financial software and overseen the appoint of PKF International as the new external auditors of MEP. As part of the process of applying for tax exempt status, MEP commissioned external tax consultants to undertake a full tax audit of the organization so as to ensure that MEP was fully tax compliant. This audit was completed, and we are pleased to report that MEP is fully compliant with all tax requirements. A key focus in 2019 will be reviewing all financial processes so as to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose as MEP continues to grow in size and complexity.

Summary Financial Accounts:

Mara Elephant Project Trust

Annual report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2018

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	Notes	2018 USD	2018 Kshs	2017 USD	2017 Kshs
Income					
Restricted grant income	4	265,560	27,046,277	385,362	39,692,541
Other income	5	476,460	48,525,590	221,588	22,823,267
Transfer from capital grant	6	49,375	5,028,629	26,217	2,700,375
Release on disposal	6	35,441	3,609,562	-	-
		826,837	84,210,058	633,168	65,216,183
Expenditure					
Administrative expenses	7	(116,989)	(11,914,842)	(149,145)	(15,361,978)
Other operating expenses	8	(615,636)	(62,700,152)	(483,564)	(49,807,037)
Total expenditure		(732,625)	(74,614,994)	(632,709)	(65,169,015)
Surplus before tax		94,212	9,595,064	459	47,168
Tax		(926)	(94,313)	-	-
Surplus for the year		93,286	9,500,751	459	47,168

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	Notes	2018 USD	2018 Kshs	2017 USD	2017 Kshs
FUND BALANCE					
Capital reserve		10	1,000	10	1,000
General funds		214,224	22,006,694	138,114	14,225,668
Capital fund	9	145,536	14,912,524	78,185	8,053,125
Translation reserve		-	(369,274)	-	-
		359,770	36,550,945	216,308	22,279,793
REPRESENTED BY					
ASSETS					
Non-current assets					
Property and equipment	10	142,561	14,430,546	76,895	7,920,125
Intangible assets	11	3,861	391,770	1,291	133,000
		146,422	14,822,316	78,186	8,053,125
Current assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	12	305,502	31,114,151	169,385	17,446,631
Trade and other receivables	13	20,129	2,050,075	39	4,000
Grant receivable	14	138,628	14,118,713	-	-
		464,259	47,282,939	169,424	17,450,631
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	15	50,570	5,150,334	31,302	3,223,963
Deferred income	16	200,000	20,369,220	-	-
Tax payable		341	34,757	-	-
		250,911	25,554,311	31,302	3,223,963
Net current assets		213,348	21,728,628	138,122	14,226,668
		359,770	36,550,945	216,308	22,279,793

*The above financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards for Small and Medium-sized Entities (IFRS for SMEs).