MEP July 2023 Report

For over 40 years, the Wildscreen Organization has been advancing natural world storytelling. With support from BBC Studios Natural History Unit, Nairobi hosted a 2-day Wildscreen hub event and representatives from Mara Elephant Project had honor of attending.

GENERAL

Recently, Mara Elephant Project conducted an EarthRanger training for our partners at Mara North Conservancy. EarthRanger is a conservation software that MEP uses to monitor our assets in real time and effectively manage our wildlife and habitat protection activities and impact. MEP is committed to supporting conservation managers with EarthRanger training to advance data driven conservation for the benefit of all wildlife and wild spaces in the Mara.

"From the training we were able to realize the importance of using EarthRanger. It will definitely help us to reduce paperwork and also enable us in gathering more precise and detailed reports from the field." *Raphael Kereto, Grazing Officer, Mara North Conservancy*

SECURITY, ANTI-POACHING & CONFLICT

In July, the MEP mobile ranger team received reports of two injured elephants in one day. The first, a female, had a spear wound and MEP's community rangers assisted Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) Vet Dr. Aminga from the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (SWT) Mobile Vet Unit in the successful treatment. Later that day, the team partnered again to treat a bull with an arrow wound. Both treatments were successful and required a team effort alongside personnel from Naboisho and Olare Motorogi conservancies. We shall continue monitoring these elephants as they recover.

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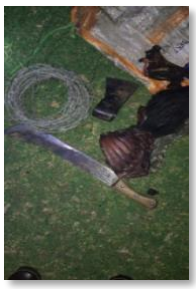
The MEP "Lima" ranger team deployed in the high conflict area of Mosiro act as conservation ambassadors within the community they call family and friends. In July, children came face-to-face with elephants while walking their route to school, a scary prospect. In response, the MEP ranger team escorted the children to and from school to ensure their safety.

On July 11, the MEP mobile ranger team received a report from the community that two bull elephants had left the conservancy and crossed into their fenced farms. The team rapidly responded and pushed the elephants back to safety using firecrackers.

In the month of July, MEP rangers continued with their elephant monitoring efforts to ensure their health, safety and movement in high conflict areas across the GME.

In July, the MEP /SWT Mau De-Snaring Unit operating in the Mau Forest arrested two suspects chopping down red cedar posts and producing charcoal. The "Alpha" team, alongside Kenya Forest Service, also destroyed four active charcoal kilns. The male and female rangers are contributing to the conservation of this critical forest, a water tower for the Mara River which is the primary water source for all life that call the Mara home.



Overall, in July, there was one ivory suspect and one bushmeat poaching suspect arrested alongside government partners, 3 kg of ivory and 2 kg of bushmeat seized, and 36 snares removed. There were 23 habitat destruction suspects arrested alongside government partners and 397 pieces of timber and 1,113 posts confiscated. MEP rangers destroyed 36 charcoal sacks and 23 kilns, they also mitigated 43 conflict incidents, by far the highest number in 2023.

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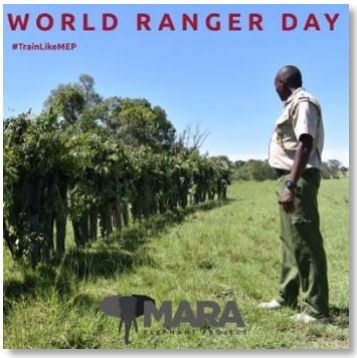
In July, MEP rangers covered a distance of 1,681 km on foot and 22,043 km by car in the GME.

HELICOPTER

On July 20, The MEP "Foxtrot" ranger team joined KWS rangers to move two bull elephants crop raiding in maize farms in the Munyas area. The elephants weren't responding to the ranger's efforts on the ground and the MEP helicopter was called in to provide aerial assistance. CEO Marc Goss piloted the helicopter and successfully moved them out of farms while rangers remained on the ground to ensure the community was safe.

Also in July, MEP CEO Marc Goss received a report of elephants in settlement areas in the Shompole area in Kajiado County. The MEP helicopter was deployed to move the elephants away from the settlements to mitigate a building conflict situation. The helicopter is a vital tool used to rapidly respond to conflict to protect both elephants and communities.

COMMUNICATIONS & FUNDRAISING



In July, MEP celebrated World Ranger Day. Thank you to all the participants who joined MEP rangers for the various competitions over World Ranger Day. Thanks to support from How Many Elephants, Föreningen Försvara Elefanterna, Elephanatics and many individuals, we supported nine rangers to attend advanced training with our government partner KWS. Thank you!

Mara Elephant Project Trust received $954 in support in July and Mara Elephant Project USA received $136,715.05 in support. Thank you to the Leslie L Alexander Foundation for their continued support and to the Lucy Byrd Pegau estate, her legacy supporting animal welfare will continue with MEP. Thank you to Paul & Tracy MacEachern, Sheila Swigert, Jacqueline Taylor-Smith, Ginni Keith, Rex Chamberlain, Patrick Kehoe, Dr. John and Jean Baldwin, Shazad Contractor, Judith Cook, The Susan Christine O'Neal Fund, Jes Lecourt, Sandra Muscillo, Betty Parker, Roger McNeil, Betty Smith, Evelyn Swarts, Linda Weinhold, Mary Miles and Margaret Wallace for supporting MEP in July. Finally, thank you to Kampur Travel Diaries for their generous donation to support the MEP Co-Existence Farm. There were 17 entries in The Greatest

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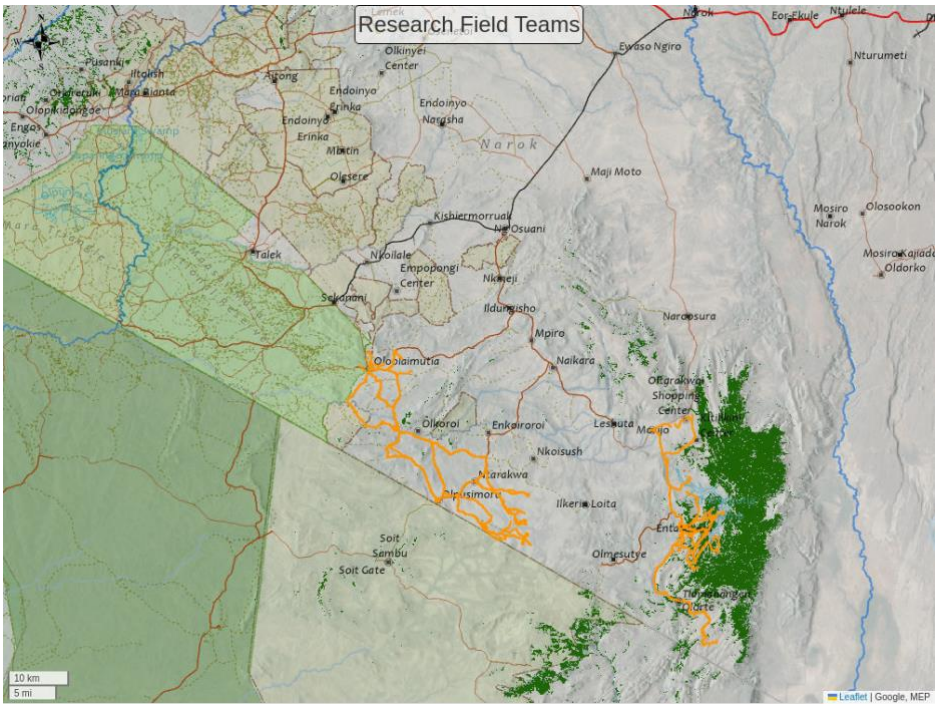
Maasai Mara photo competition in June. A special thank you to all the photographers who supported MEP. *Left: An entry from Alexia Chevron.*

RESEARCH & CONSERVATION

Director's Update

In July, the MEP long-term monitoring (LTM) team assisted KWS Vet Dr. Njoroge from the SWT Mobile Vet Unit with two elephant treatments. One on a bull known as individual 948 in the MEP database of identified individuals had a spear wound on his chest. I joined the LTM team and rangers to assist the KWS / SWT team alongside Lemek Conservancy rangers. The treatment was successful and the elephant was swiftly back on his feet. Not long after this treatment, the LTM team received a report from a tourism partner that there was an injured bull elephant in Mara North Conservancy. Once on the scene, the LTM team identified him as individual 28 in MEP's database. MEP responded with the helicopter and the LTM team to assist during the bull's treatment for two arrow wounds. The arrows were successfully removed from his torso and front leg and the injuries treated.



Movements (orange tracks) of MEP's two field assistants during July. All of our field assistants are working on mapping fences, roads and landcover ground-truthing points using motorbikes and our TerraChart app. They recorded 34 km of fences and 11 LCC points in July.

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MEP Co-Existence Farm

General Update

The Enkutoto area where the farm is located has continued to experience dry conditions as this month, we had zero rainfall. There was low crop predation which can be associated with the remaining high number of non-palatable crops being grown on the farm. The following crops will no longer be grown in the farm after they have surpassed the required five re-plant times: butternut squash, sweet potatoes, cabbage, spinach and sunflowers and will be replaced by cassava, castor plant, sage, groundnut and sugarcane.

Recently planted French lavender.

Tree tomato drying up.

Hippo captured by camera trap.

This month, we started working with school conservation clubs to educate and empower students on conservation issues. Five primary schools were identified, and a plan of activities were set for the remaining part of 2023, two meetings have already been carried out, one to explain the work MEP is doing and its importance to conservation and the second we gathered the young learners together on World Ranger Day to learn about the importance of rangers and get career motivation.

Co-Existence Farm SITREP: *July 2023*

Date Time	Plot ID	Type of crop	Detail
2023_07_11	1-5.1	Chili	A few crops have been stepped by the hippos who passed inside the chili plot
2023_07_11	1-9.2	Aloe Vera	Two aloe Vera crops were uprooted
	4-6.2		The plot was stepped by elephant but predation was observed
2023_07_11	8-2.1	Goose Berry	Hippos eat a few stalks of gooseberry plant
2023_07_23	9-6.1	Yams	Elephants passed by the plot uprooting a row of the crop
2023_07_23	4-11.1	Chili	A total of 1.5kgs of chili was harvested in this plot and was taken to MEP HQ
2023_07_23	10-4.1	Onion	Total of 5kgs of onion was harvested

Climate Report

Table 2: 1 MEP's Co-Existence Farm Rainfall Recording July 2023

No rainfall recorded for the month of July.

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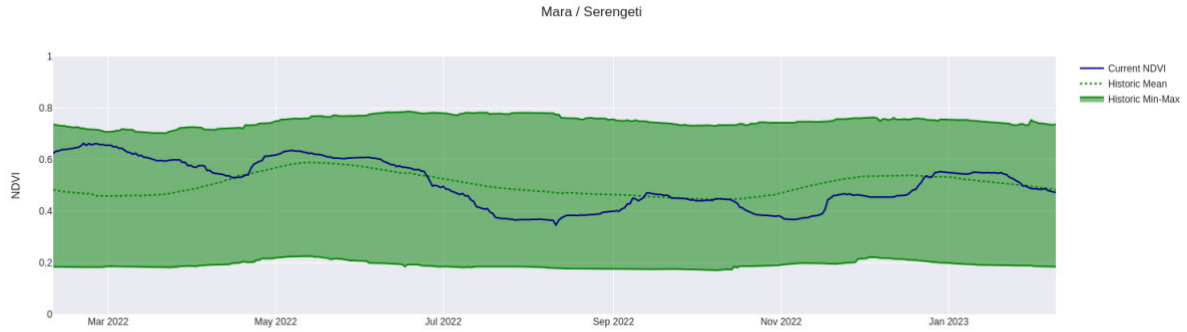
Tracking Manager Report

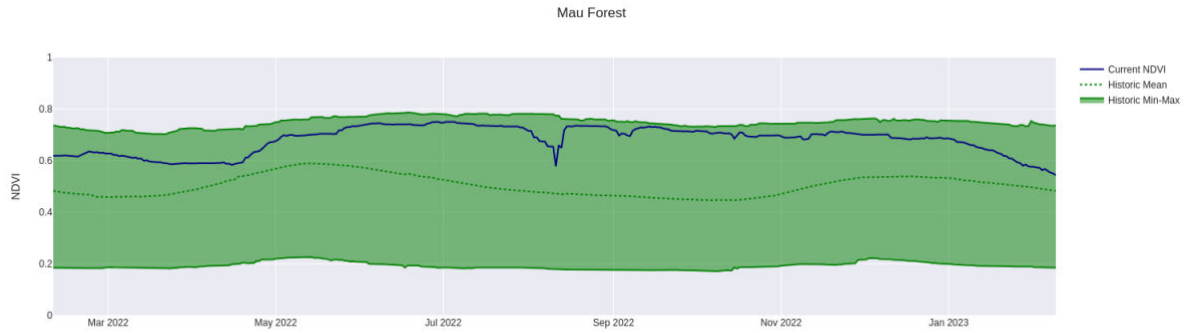
Collared elephants Kiambi and Polaris monitored in July.

ENVIRONMENT: NDVI

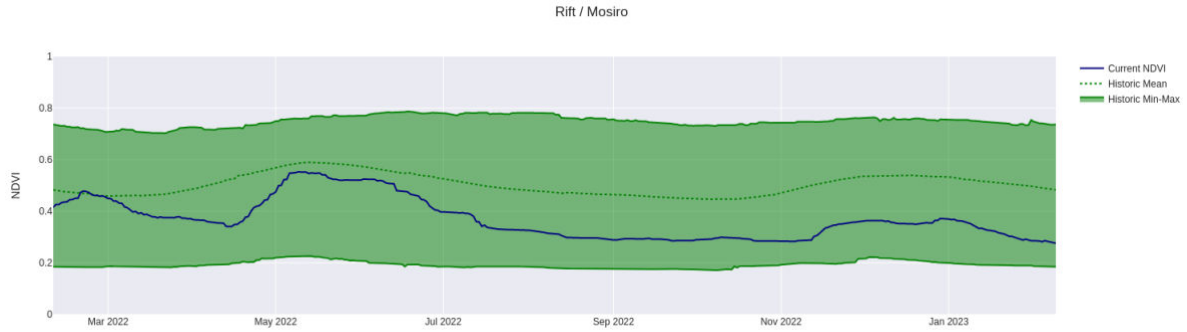
Greater Mara Ecosystem (GME)



Mau Forest



Rift Valley / Mosiro



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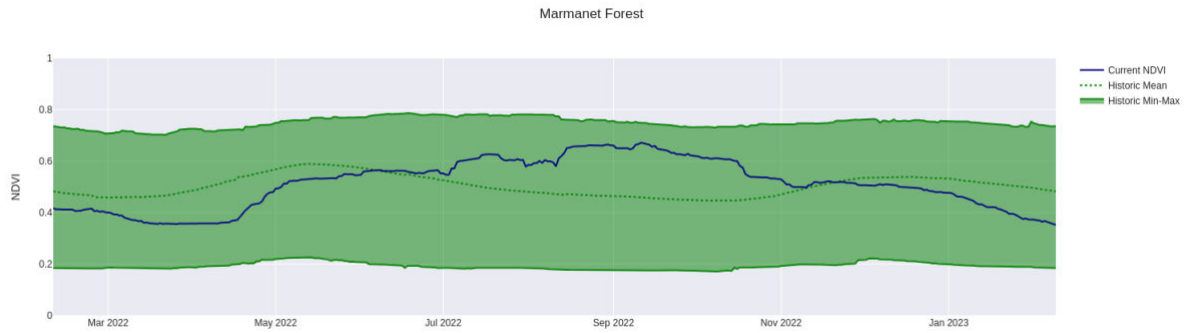
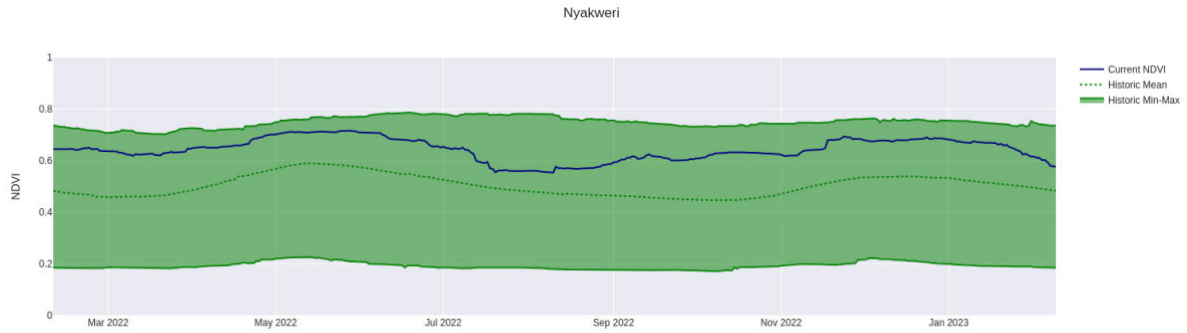
Marmanet Forest



Nyakweri Forest



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