



BIG LIFE
FOUNDATION

2024
IMPACT REPORT



Amboseli is one of the last places on Earth where large numbers of wildlife and people coexist on such a large scale, as they have done for thousands of years. Protecting this special ecosystem, and ensuring that its animal and human populations thrive, is our end goal. Because of you, we know we'll continue to be successful.

We have faced urgent threats before. Since our inception, we have brought together local communities, scientists and policy experts, partners and donors to stop ivory poaching in Amboseli.

Together, we've succeeded in moving the needle for Amboseli's megafauna species from a critical threat to a manageable one. We haven't lost a single elephant to poachers in our area of operation since March 2018, nor a rhino since 2016.



That success led us to focus on what is needed to protect Amboseli in the long term.

Beyond poaching, we're minimizing conflicts between people and wildlife, like keeping elephants out of farms and lions out of cow corrals. We've looked at the needs of our partner communities, broadening our education programs and expanding critical medical support to remote areas. In our approach, education and opportunity are as important as our rangers and Land Cruisers.

Recently a different, but no less dangerous threat has emerged: habitat loss.

Changes in land ownership, from large community-owned ranches to thousands of individually-owned parcels, threaten to unravel the fabric of Amboseli, fragmenting its open savannahs and leaving wildlife with nowhere to go. This threat is as dangerous as ivory poaching ever was. And in some ways, more insidious, because it involves complicated legal filings and land-use plans rather than rangers tracking poachers in the bush.

To win the fight for Amboseli's future, we support local communities who are navigating these complex and expensive processes, at their request. We sign conservation leases with landowners, to directly protect habitat at risk of disappearing. But there is much more to do. It will take resources and expertise. And it will require you, our loyal supporters.

We're here on the ground, doing what must be done to protect Amboseli. But only with your help will we continue to be successful. Thank you for being a difference maker as we fight to protect one of the last great wild places on the planet.

Richard Bonham, *Co-Founder and Executive Chairman*

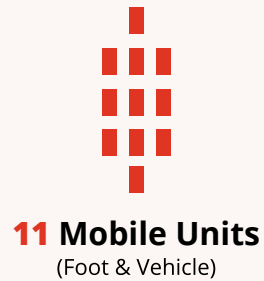
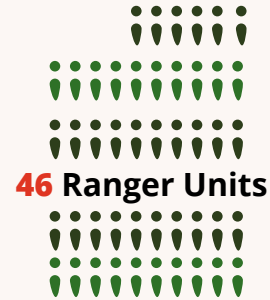
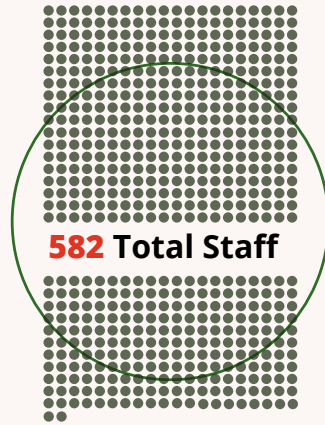
Benson Leyian, *Chief Executive Officer*

Craig Millar, *Chief Operating Officer*

Big Life Kenya

2024

OPERATIONS AT-A-GLANCE



TOTAL KILOMETERS PATROLLED

On Foot: **195,264**

By Vehicle: **446,660**

By Plane: **28,065**

WHERE WE WORK

Big Life's Area of Operation covers 2 million acres of the Greater Amboseli ecosystem in East Africa, spanning the border between Kenya and Tanzania.

With Kilimanjaro towering above it, the Amboseli ecosystem contains an incredible diversity of habitats, ranging from vast open savannahs to dense cloud forests. It supports one of the highest densities of elephants in the world, including many of the fabled last tuskers. But what makes this ecosystem special is the array of species that live here, including approximately:

Our rangers protect these vulnerable populations around the clock, as well as every other species that calls the ecosystem home. That includes people, because Amboseli is also home to approximately 200,000 human inhabitants. Maintaining peaceful co-existence between wildlife and people in an area roughly the size of Yellowstone National Park or Puerto Rico is not a simple matter, and is one of the factors that makes Amboseli so unique.

- 7,000 GIRAFFES**
- 2,000 AFRICAN ELEPHANTS**
- 250 LIONS**
- 8 EASTERN BLACK RHINOCEROS**

Explore our Area of Operation with our [NEW INTERACTIVE MAP](#)



WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED PROTECTING WILDLIFE

The Greater Amboseli ecosystem is one of the richest wildlife regions left in Africa. But the same animals that make it famous also put it in the crosshairs for wildlife crime.

Some species face greater threats than others, but Big Life’s rangers work closely with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and other field partners to protect all wildlife in our area of operation. This includes everything from stopping poachers, to mitigating human-wildlife conflict, to coordinating rescues and veterinary care for injured wildlife.

As a result of these efforts, many threatened wildlife populations have increased significantly since we started operations in the ecosystem.

BECAUSE OF YOU, OUR RANGERS ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING:

0
Rhinos Poached
Since 2016

0
Elephants Poached
Since 2018

9
Elephants Treated
for Injuries

41
Wildlife Rescues

448
Poaching Tools or
Weapons Seized

676 KG
of Ivory Confiscated

1,205 KG
of Bushmeat
Confiscated

299
Suspects Arrested
in 158 Incidents

42
Bushmeat Poachers
Arrested in 23
Incidents

63
Suspects Arrested
in 31 Incidents of
Trophy Possession

**LEARN
MORE
about our
Wildlife
Protection
programs**



WILDLIFE PROTECTION HIGHLIGHT NEW TRACKER DOGS

In August, we welcomed two new puppies to our Tracker Dog Unit: Holmes and Watson. The two Belgian Malinois have undergone intensive training and will join our team in Kenya in 2025. They'll replace our retired tracker dogs, Bonnie and Clyde, who did nearly 9 years of incredible service.

The dogs work with a team of handlers led by one of our most senior rangers: Sergeant Mutinda Ndivo. Their direct impact is obvious: when a crime is committed they track and apprehend suspects, achieving results that no human or machine is otherwise capable of. It's an invaluable deterrent for would-be poachers.

Their indirect impact is subtler and comes in the form of the support they provide to local communities. This varies from recovering stolen items to finding children lost in the bush, all of which creates community goodwill and support for wildlife conservation.

Because of you, Detectives Holmes and Watson will soon be cracking cases across the Greater Amboseli ecosystem.



CONFLICT MITIGATION HIGHLIGHT MAASAI OLYMPICS

We ended the year on a high note with the 6th biennial Maasai Olympics Finals.

The idea of the Maasai Olympics was hatched in 2008 when the Menye Layiok, or Maasai "cultural fathers," approached Big Life to create a sports competition based on traditional warrior skills to replace the long-held tradition of hunting lions as a mark of bravery and prestige.

The events showcase traditional warrior skills and include sprint and distance running races, club-throwing for accuracy, spear/javelin throwing for distance, and the famous Maasai high jump from a standing position. The women's 100m and 1,500m events have also become an increasingly competitive part of the day's program.

Mbirikani was the overall winner for the 5th time and walked away with a prized breeding bull and a trophy.

Special thanks to our main event sponsors for making the day a success: Charles and Judy Tate, Chester Zoo, Play for Nature / Parc Animalier d'Auvergne, Angama Amboseli and WWF Kenya.



WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED MITIGATING CONFLICT

Living near charismatic megafauna might sound wonderful, but reality often paints a very different picture.

From elephants raiding crops to lions preying on livestock, the human residents of Amboseli are often at great personal risk of lost income, injury, or even death due to living in close proximity to wildlife.

If local communities are to support conservation, then conservation must also support those local communities, and that includes mitigating the impacts of human-wildlife conflict whenever possible.

Big Life's pragmatic solutions focus on economic realities and are based on decades of experience. Our interventions span everything from electric fencing to keep elephants out of farms to compensating livestock owners for losses to apex predators like lions, among others.

BECAUSE OF YOU, OUR TEAM ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING:

53
Crop Raids by Elephants Prevented

100 KM
of Electric Crop-Protection
Fencing Maintained

1
Retaliatory Elephant Hunt Stopped

3
Retaliatory
Lion Hunts Stopped

\$77,599
Compensation Paid
to Livestock Owners

LEARN MORE
about our Human-
Wildlife Conflict
Mitigation programs

WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED PROTECTING HABITAT

There's no point fighting to save wildlife if there's no space left for animals to live. If animals cannot move freely to find food and water, they die. It's that simple.

Land subdivision has left Amboseli at risk of losing its open, wild spaces. The future of the ecosystem is threatened by land sales, haphazard fencing, and unsustainable land conversion.

Areas critical for wildlife need to be protected urgently – once they're gone, they're gone.

In addition to enforcing environmental protection laws, we're working with local communities on long-term solutions that integrate land-use planning and conservation leases to protect wildlife movement corridors and open rangelands necessary for wildlife and livestock grazing. These voluntary agreements are a win-win: landowners earn an income from keeping their lands unfenced and open for wildlife, while ensuring ongoing access for their own livestock.

Done right, we can keep Amboseli a sanctuary for wildlife, while preserving the Maasai way of life, but we can only do it with your help.

BECAUSE OF YOU, OUR TEAM ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING:

- 93,804** Acres Protected with Conservation Leases
- 14,546** Acres of Active Rangeland Restoration
- 153** Suspects Arrested in 73 Incidents of Habitat Destruction
- 3,574** Landowners Benefited from Lease Payments
- 68,029** Anti-Erosion Bunds Installed
- 2,669 KG** Illegally Harvested Sandalwood Confiscated

LEARN MORE
about our Habitat
Protection programs





HABITAT PROTECTION HIGHLIGHT SECURING NAIRRABALA

Amboseli National Park is an oasis, home to lifegiving springs and swamps that sustain animals during the dry seasons. But it's too small to support all of Amboseli's animals on a permanent basis, especially elephants. Their home ranges extend far beyond its unfenced boundaries.

When animals leave the park, they migrate through favored corridors. One of the most important of these is the Nairrabala corridor, a vast area which borders Amboseli National Park to the north. Almost 40% the size of the park itself, it is used by wildlife to access key feeding grounds.

Because of you, we were able to protect Nairrabala by signing 20-year conservation leases with 1,696 landowners, securing 35,616 acres of habitat. These leases provide income for local landowners while restricting fencing and other forms of unsustainable development, keeping it open for elephants and other animals to continue to move through safely. You've also enabled us to deploy 10 rangers to this area to keep it safe, with a new ranger vehicle.

There are more areas like Nairrabala that need protection to keep the ecosystem interconnected. Thank **YOU** for helping us achieve our mission of keeping Amboseli protected and open as the landscape changes.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT HIGHLIGHT 3,000 SCHOLARSHIPS IN 24 YEARS

Ask anyone living in the Greater Amboseli ecosystem what the most important conservation-related benefit that they receive from Big Life is, and the answer is nearly unanimous: education.

2024 marked nearly 3,000 scholarships awarded to more than 2,000 children living within our area of operation since the year 2000.

Many of the students we sponsor go on to graduate from college or university. In 2024 alone, 14 of our scholarship recipients finished their tertiary-level schooling in everything from pharmaceuticals to engineering, social work, accounting, community health, and even wildlife management.

While some of these graduates will come back to Amboseli to support their communities directly, all will carry the message that conservation provides direct and meaningful benefits.



WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

The local Maasai people are not separate from their environment. They are an intrinsic part of the Greater Amboseli ecosystem.



And that makes them our most critical partners, because if they do not benefit from our programs to protect wildlife and habitat, then our efforts will be in vain.

Our programs are designed to protect nature while supporting community development needs, not only through our employment of rangers and field staff, but also through conservation lease payments, tourism revenue, and by funding education and healthcare. While the latter two may not seem connected to conservation, they're two of our most impactful program areas.

BECAUSE OF YOU, WE ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING:

835
Long-Term
Scholarships Awarded
(348 boys // 487 girls)

3,885
Students Reached with
Conservation Lessons

8
Teacher Salaries Paid

444
Medical Backpack
Outreaches

56,819
Community Health
Volunteer Household
Visits

20,368
Immunizations
Administered

11,884
Family Planning
Services Provided

14,895
People Receiving
Primary Healthcare

11
Human Search
and Rescue
Incidents
Supported

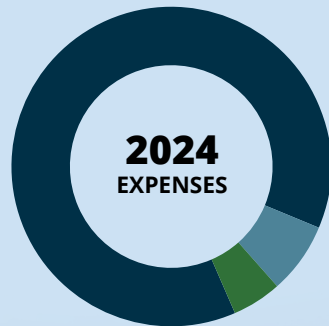
8
Emergency
Hospital Transports

LEARN MORE
about our Community
Support programs

HOW WE DO IT YOUR SUPPORT

None of the work outlined in this report would be possible without **YOU**, our supporters.

We work hard to maximize every penny of your contributions. Last year, 85 cents out of every dollar went directly towards our mission, protecting wildlife



- **\$5,470,074**
Programs 85%
- **\$516,952**
Fundraising 8%
- **\$420,843**
General/Admin 7%

BE A DIFFERENCE MAKER.

Learn more about how you can support our programs, including legacy planning, stock donations, IRA charitable contributions, and more

[CLICK HERE](#)

To see our audited financials and tax filings

[CLICK HERE](#)

We could not implement any of our programs without the support of our Field, Corporate, Tourism, and Zoo Partners.

To see the full list of our partners

[CLICK HERE](#)

Lastly, to all of our Board of Directors and staff members, all of whom invest considerable amounts of time, resources, expertise, in-kind donations, and financial contributions towards achieving our mission: **THANK YOU.**

To see a full list of our team members

[CLICK HERE](#)

IN MEMORIAM



Tom Hill

Co-Founder, Board Member, Treasurer, & Friend

We will think of you every time a lion roars.



Big Life Foundation USA | 1715 North Heron Drive | Ridgefield, WA 98642 | USA | biglife.org

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