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NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION TANZANIA

Tanzania is endowed with abundant natural resources and has prioritized protecting its rich biodiversity by designating 31 percent of its land area under protection. However, many Tanzanians continue to live in poverty, with the majority of the poor living in rural areas. Seventy-five percent of Tanzania's rural population relies directly on natural resources to sustain their livelihood, making stewardship of natural resources a fundamental priority for continued stability and growth.

Biodiversity, particularly in relation to iconic wild animals such as giraffes, elephants, and lions, is important for the national economy, as wildlife-based tourism comprises approximately nine percent of Tanzania's gross domestic product and 25 percent of its foreign exchange earnings. In Tanzania, population growth, environmental mismanagement, commercial agricultural expansion, and climate change also combine to threaten biodiversity and rural livelihoods alike.

Recognizing that the drivers of poverty and biodiversity loss are linked, USAID partners with the government and people of Tanzania to improve environmental governance and management at a landscape scale, including building the nation's capacity to reduce wildlife trafficking. This strategy involves developing and implementing key national environmental policies while supporting community-based conservation initiatives.

PHOTO CREDIT: DANIEL HAYDUK/USAID

NRM OVERVIEW

FUNDING LEVEL

- \$5 million in FY 2020

MAJOR PARTNERS

- Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism
- Division of Wildlife
- Tanzania Forest Service
- Tanzania National Parks
- Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority
- District Councils
- Wildlife Conservation Society
- The Jane Goodall Institute
- The Nature Conservancy
- U.S. Department of the Interior

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Targeted landscapes:

- Maasai Steppe landscape in northern Tanzania
- Gombe – Masito – Ugalla landscape in western Tanzania
- Greater Ruaha landscape in southern Tanzania

CONTACT

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CHALLENGES

USAID uses an integrated approach to landscape management at the community and policy levels, targeting critical ecosystems with an emphasis on connectivity between protected areas. While sound policies exist in sectors related to natural resource management, these are hampered at the implementation stage by poor quality data, analysis, and implementation—partly as a result of weak institutional capacity at central and local levels. Natural resource management practices for livelihoods are often unsustainable and inefficient, forcing local villagers to overexploit their resources in order to survive. Finally, poaching of wildlife has also escalated as a threat to functioning ecosystems and the tourism industry.

IMPACT

- **Major policy reform achieved:** USAID-supported efforts have been directly responsible for major policy developments and their approval by the Government of Tanzania. This includes the Human Wildlife Conflict Strategy, Tanzania Wildlife Corridor Assessment Prioritization and Action Plan, Environmental Management Act, Wildlife Conservation Act, wildlife management area regulations, and the National Integrated Coastal Environmental Management Strategy.
- **Governance structures developed and supported:** Natural resource management initiatives have built capacity among the National Environment Management Council, Wildlife Management Area Support Unit, Vice President's Office–Strategic Objective Team Secretariat, Community Wildlife Management Area Consortium, and community-based organizations.
- **Landscape-scale conservation efforts realized:** USAID-supported policy reforms allowed an additional eleven million hectares of biologically significant land to be brought under improved management for conservation, sustainable agriculture, and other land uses over the past 16 years.
- **Livelihoods improved:** Community-based conservation programs in wildlife management areas empower local people to manage protected areas, with affected communities earning over \$6 million from private investors. In the last decade, over 480,000 people have received a direct increase in economic benefits through sustainable natural resource management and conservation.
- **Wildlife crime reduced:** With U.S. government interagency support, USAID efforts to train and equip game scouts in high-risk areas have contributed to a 50 percent reduction in elephant poaching since 2015. This was supported by community-level initiatives to reduce incentives to engage in poaching.