MARA PREDATOR CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

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KENYA WILDLIFE TRUST

QUARTER 1 REPORT | 2024

KWT
KENYA WILDLIFE TRUST

OVERARCHING GOALS

FOSTERING HARMONY

To help community members and landowners understand and appreciate the role of predators in the ecosystem

SCIENCE-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS

To ensure that key stakeholders in the Greater Mara Ecosystem consistently utilise sound scientific information to inform conservation strategies

THRIVING PREDATORS, THRIVING ECOSYSTEM

To support stable, healthy predator populations in the Greater Mara Ecosystem by providing scientific evidence for conservation action

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mara Predator Conservation Programme (MPCP) is dedicated to safeguarding predators within the Mara Ecosystem through research and community engagement initiatives aimed at fostering tolerance and coexistence.

In the first quarter of 2024, significant efforts were directed towards completing and analysing the intensive monitoring dataset from 2023, with the final outcomes documented in a separate report. Additionally, five collars were deployed on adult females to mitigate conflicts between livestock and lions. Although no cheetah births were recorded during this period, it is anticipated that Kweli will have produced a litter by the quarter's end. Notably, two adult male cheetahs were reported missing from ***Ripoi Conservancy***, while a new adult male was observed in ***Ol Kinyei Conservancy***. Regrettably, two lions fell victim to conflicts, while others disappeared without a trace of the cause. MPCP was privileged to participate in a crucial emergency meeting on human-lion conflicts convened by the chief park warden of the **National Reserve** and **Governor's Camp Collection**, underscoring the pressing need to address escalating conflicts and explore viable solutions.

We continued utilizing the **Earth Ranger** platform, a comprehensive system designed to gather, consolidate, and present data related to collared predators and other pertinent information outlined by the project's goals. This platform effectively tracks the movements and habitat patterns of collared animals across the terrain. Additionally, Earth Ranger was employed to manage conflict data

reported by Lion Ambassadors and utilised the Ecoscope tool within the Earth Ranger platform to analyse conflict reports from Lion Ambassadors in communal areas during the reporting quarter.

The first interactive meetings between guides and conservancy rangers were held at ***Olare Motorogi Conservancy*** in January and ***Naboisho Conservancy*** in March. The main objectives of these meetings were to enhance collaboration in reporting predator-related issues, gather feedback, identify potential candidates for lion collaring, and emphasize the importance of lion collaring in supporting real-time conservation efforts. Participant feedback was collected to improve predator monitoring and research efforts, fostering collaboration and community engagement in conservation. Plans include organising more meetings with guides and rangers across different conservancies, including sessions with the newly formed ***Anti Cheetah Harassment Unit (ACHU)*** in MMNR.

In its efforts to engage communities in conservation, the MPCP team conducted a human-predator conflict resolution baraza at Olare Orok village where a 10-member conflict response committee was formed, and strategies put in place to address future conflicts. In addition, the team carried out this year's Asilia '***Twende Porini***' with 16 children from four schools and organized game drives for 250 members of its Wildlife clubs. Under the ***'Ufugaji Hifadhi'*** programme, the team in collaboration with other stakeholders organized the first-ever mass livestock vaccination in the Mara Ecosystem where ***108,594 cattle*** were vaccinated against ***Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP)*** and ***61,901 sheep*** inoculated against ***Bluetongue*** disease.

CONTENTS

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Design & Layout: Felixie Kipng'etich.

RESEARCH UPDATE

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Lion Updates

Collared lion updates

Conserving key predator populations like lions is essential for ecological balance and biodiversity conservation. Understanding the dynamics of livestock depredation from both predator and human perspectives, as well as the adaptive capacities of predators in response to habitat alterations and human activities, is vital for effective management and conservation.

The Mara Predator Conservation Program (MPCP) has made significant strides in advancing predator ecology through satellite GPS collars, which track and monitor lions. By expanding its collaring program, MPCP aims to implement real-time conservation measures while gathering essential data. Satellite GPS collars are indispensable for spatiotemporal monitoring, providing precise information crucial for shaping immediate and long-term conservation strategies. As MPCP navigates complex predator-human interactions and habitat dynamics, these collars serve as pivotal assets in safeguarding iconic species and their ecosystems.

During this year's first quarter, MPCP deployed five collars while one collar successfully dropped off a male lion. We now have a total of eight active collars, all on adult females.

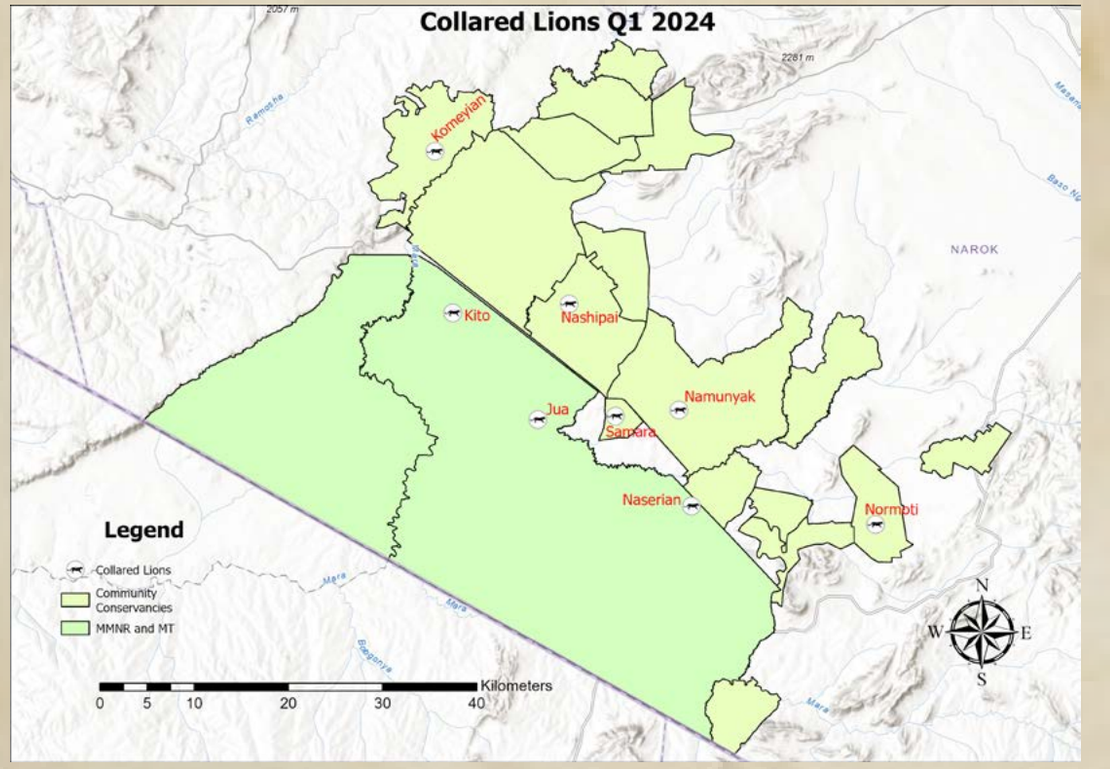

Figure 1: The current eight active MPCP collars

New collars

Nashipai

The first lion that was fitted with a collar was one of the older females from the Engoayanai pride, and at 17 years old, she is one of the oldest lionesses in the Mara. During the time of collar deployment, Nashipai and her pride were far from their core territory, in the northern part of Motorogi in Olare-Motorogi Conservancy (OMC), where the Isekete pride has their territory. The pride has been moving between OMC and Mara North Conservancy and has also visited the adjacent community lands. Their vast movements away from their normal ranging areas may be driven by resource availability or territorial dynamics within the pride, and this could expose Nashipai and her pride members to heightened vulnerability and potential conflicts with humans. Given her old age, she is also more prone to predate on livestock.

Samara

The second lion that was collared was a female from the Fig Tree Breakaway pride, which most people now refer to as the Fig Tree pride. The original Fig Tree pride has all but one vanished and it is now only this breakaway group that remains. The pride was pushed away from residing full-time in the Talek area of the National Reserve by the Serena-Rongai pride, but luckily the Fig Tree pride found a new home in Olerai Conservancy and the southern part of Naboisho Conservancy. They still spend time in the National Reserve but are vulnerable to conflicts when they transverse the community land moving between the protected areas.

Kito

Kito, one of the oldest females of the Marsh Pride, was the third lion to be collared. Kito was collared due to the increased conflicts within the Musiara area of the Reserve, owing mainly to nightly cattle intrusions. The section warden of Musiara is now able to know the real-time movements of the pride and can act proactively in his efforts to mitigate potential conflict situations.

Naserian

A fourth collar was deployed on Naserian, who is a member of the KWS Pride, also known as the Sarova or Kisinja Pride. This is the second time we collar this pride, and it was guided by the events that followed deploying the first collar, where a herder killed the collared individual in retaliation for attacking cattle. Besides leaving the National Reserve and spilling onto community lands, the KWS pride has been targeting cattle that illegally venture into the National Reserve at night for grazing activities.

Normoti

The fifth and final collar that was deployed was on a female from the newly renamed Ripoi Conservancy (formerly Olarro South Conservancy). Normoti is part of the Normasi pride who we have sparse information on. The pride experienced many challenges after the collapse of the former Olarro South Conservancy due to livestock invasions. When we resumed our monitoring activities after the opening of Ripoi Conservancy we encountered three adult females and three young sub-adults. Collaring a pride female will enable us to address our knowledge gap and mitigate potential human-lion conflicts stemming from depredation incidents.

Old collars

Jua

Jua, a member of the Topi Pride, was collared towards the end of November. While Jua and her pride were previously associated with the Topi plains, they have currently shifted their location to the area between Double Cross and the Talek River (Figure 2). Despite not venturing onto community lands, Jua and her pride regularly encounter substantial numbers of livestock during their nightly excursions into the National Reserve for grazing. The Topi pride has, at times, preyed on cattle, but the local community is well-informed about the presence of the collar. This awareness, coupled with the vigilance of our team and the rangers, is believed to be a deterrent, potentially preventing any retaliatory actions from the community.

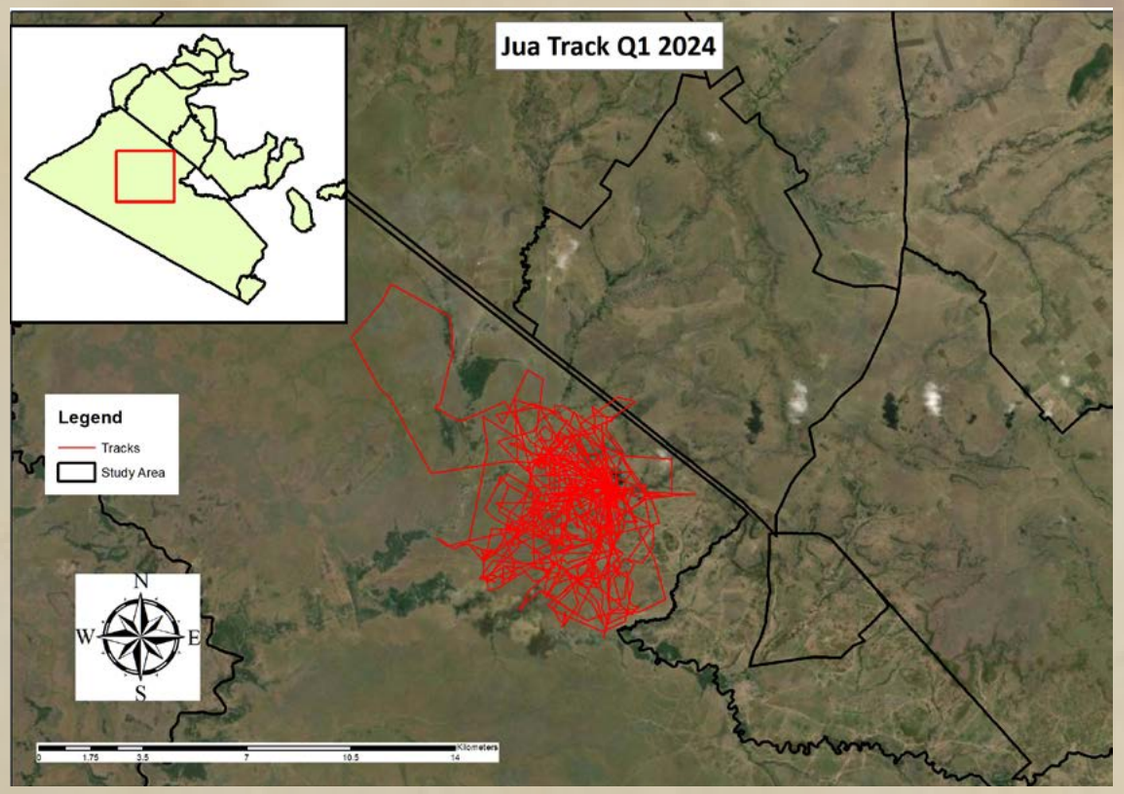

Figure 2. Jua's Q1 movements displayed by her tracks in red.

Komeyian

Komeyian has been wearing a collar since November 2022. She continues to range within Oloisukut Conservancy between the Mara River and the settlements on Oloolulo escarpment (Figure 3). The conservancy ranger team continues to monitor her real-time movements, enabling them to avert any potential human-lion conflict.

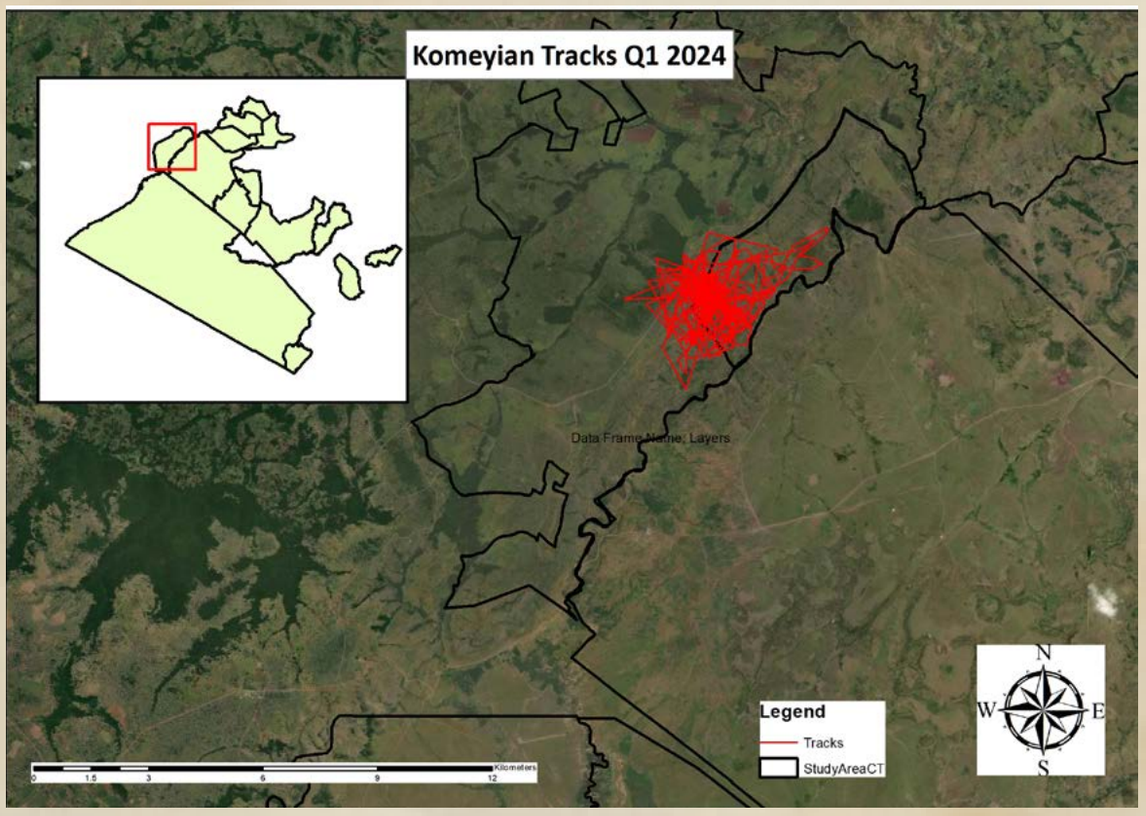

Figure 3. Komeyian's tracks are displayed in red.

Namunyak

Namunyak, who was collared within Naboisho Conservancy, is still with her sister and both are doing well, raising their eight sub-adults, four of each sex. They have stayed within Naboisho and Olerai Conservancies and minimally venturing outside the protected areas Figure 4). This lion pride adapts its activity patterns based on livestock grazing within their territory. After deploying a collar on Samara, it has become evident that the Fig Tree and Moliban prides have substantial overlaps.

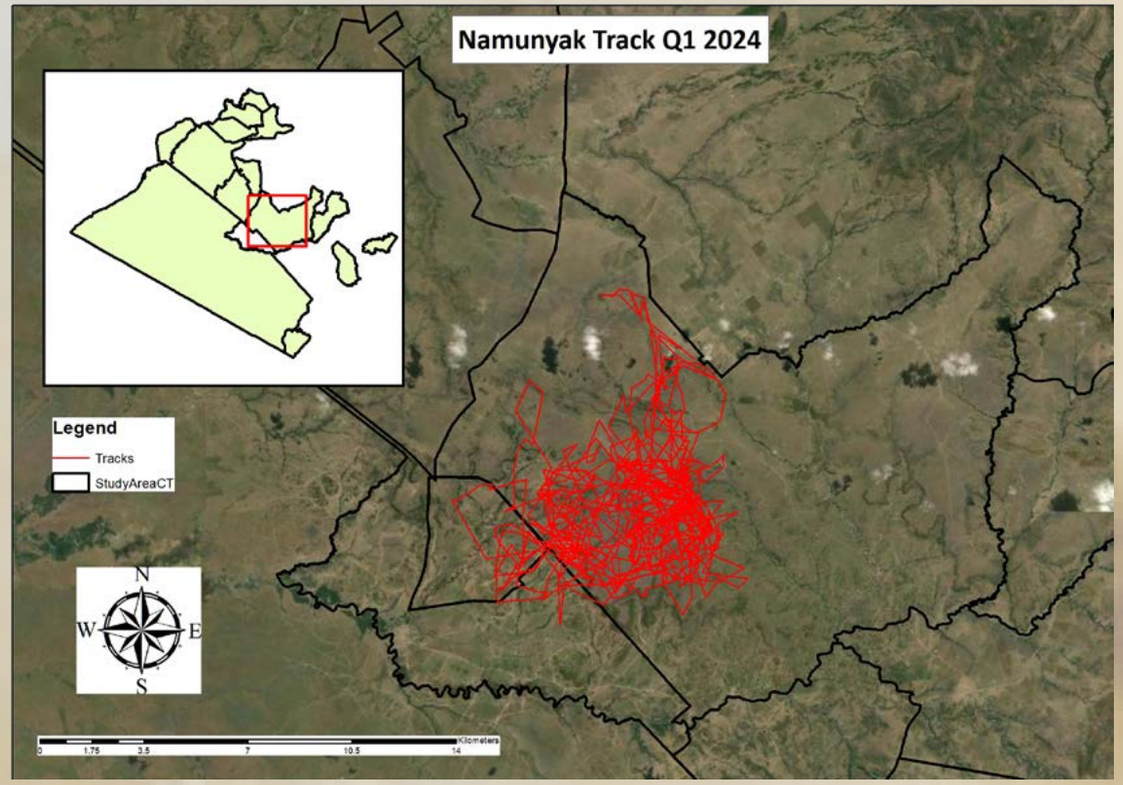

Figure 4. Namunyak's movements are displayed in red.

Ole Cook

The collar that was deployed on Ole Cook in Ol Kinyei Conservancy successfully dropped-off after a two-year period.

Ole Cook was born into the Ilkisiusiu pride in Naboisho Conservancy. After a relatively short dispersal period with his two brothers, they took over the Lemuny pride in Ol Kinyei Conservancy, whom they sired cubs with. Like many other pride males, these three left their pride for a spell, most likely to see if there were any other prides they could take over. However, their temporary departure from the pride raised questions, particularly surrounding the fate of the third male. While it is highly probable that he succumbed to mortality, the circumstances of his departure remain shrouded in mystery. This underscores the importance of collaring one of the surviving males to shed light on such crucial aspects of lion behaviour and population dynamics within the region.

Summary of the collar data

Table 1 shows a summary of the tracking data. All the data analysis for this collar is based on this data.

Tracking Data Summary

Ole Cook

Lion ID	Total points	First location	Last location	Tracking period (d)
Ole Cook	17258	23 February 2022	20 February 2024	727

Table 1: A quick overview of Ole Cook's tracking data. The collar collected hourly fixes throughout the tracking period.

Data visualisation

All the GPS points the collar took are displayed in Figure 5. Most of the points fall within conservancy boundaries but the points illustrate the lion also utilised the community lands.

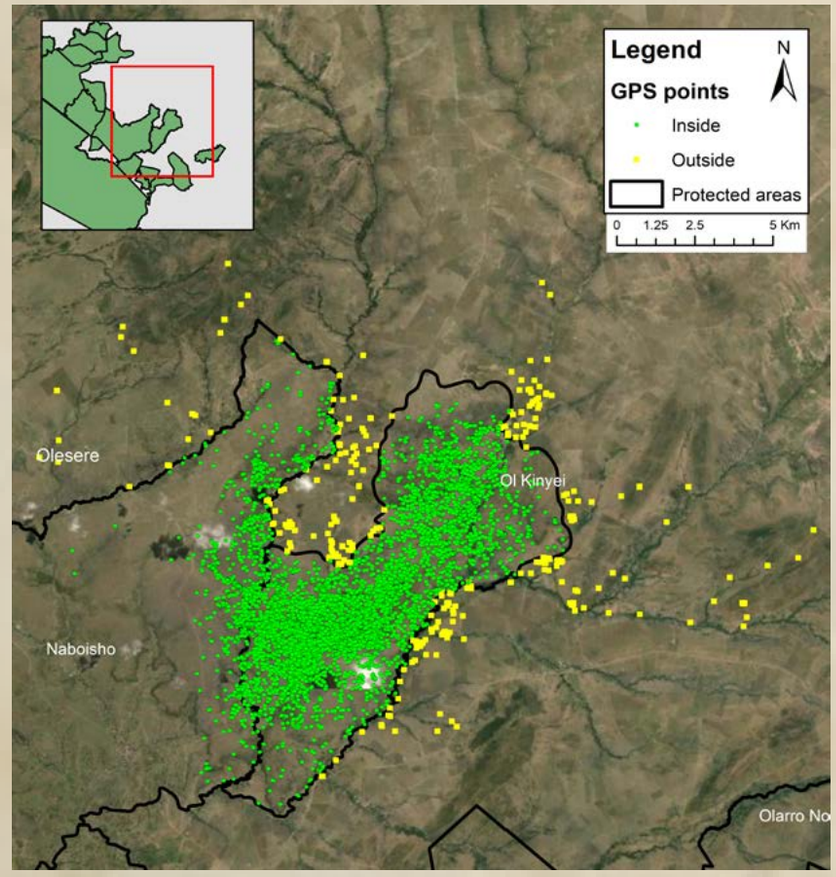

Figure 5: All the 17258 GPS points over the two-year collaring period are displayed on the map. Green dots are locations inside the conservancy boundary and the yellow squares, enlarged for easier viewing purposes, are the locations outside the conservancy boundaries.

Home ranges

Home ranges offer critical insights into the ecology, behaviour, and conservation of animal populations, aiding in informed management decisions and biodiversity protection.

Representing an animal's home range and analysing it involves various methodologies tailored to the species and the specific questions at hand. In the case of Ole Cook, we chose to delineate his 50%, 95%, and 99% home ranges, as depicted in Figure 6.

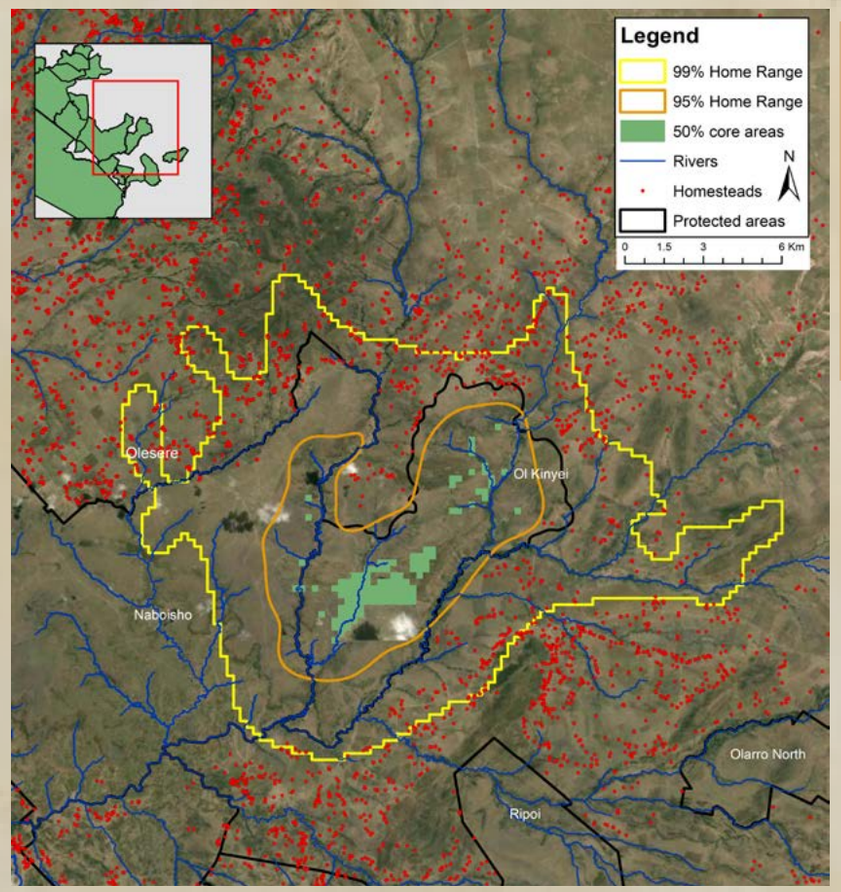

Figure 6: The 50%, 95% and 99% home ranges of Ole Cook. Only the 99% polygon spills deep into the community and where lions are at risk of being persecuted by people.

The 50% home range signifies where Ole Cook spent half of his time, serving as a measure of his core territories. These areas, located centrally within Ol Kinyei Conservancy, maintain a suitable distance from boundaries and human settlements.

The 95% home range provides the most accurate representation of Ole Cook's typical range, encompassing the area where he would be found on most days. Notably, this range is entirely contained within the conservancy boundaries, indicating his reliance on protected areas.

Finally, the 99% home range encompasses Ole Cook's entire ranging area, excluding only the outermost reaches. While Ole Cook spent a small percentage of time outside the conservancy boundaries, these areas overlap with human settlements. Despite the limited time spent outside the conservancy, these regions pose a heightened risk of persecution by humans, underscoring the importance of conservation efforts in mitigating human-wildlife conflicts. The sizes of the home rages are provided in Table 3.

Home range	Size (km^2)
50%	7
95%	67
99%	242

Table 2: The sizes in square km of the respective home ranges.

Activity patterns

In addition to tracking location, collar data provides valuable insights into activity patterns of the subject animal. Ole Cook's activity patterns reveal distinctions between day and night and inside and outside the conservancy, figure 7

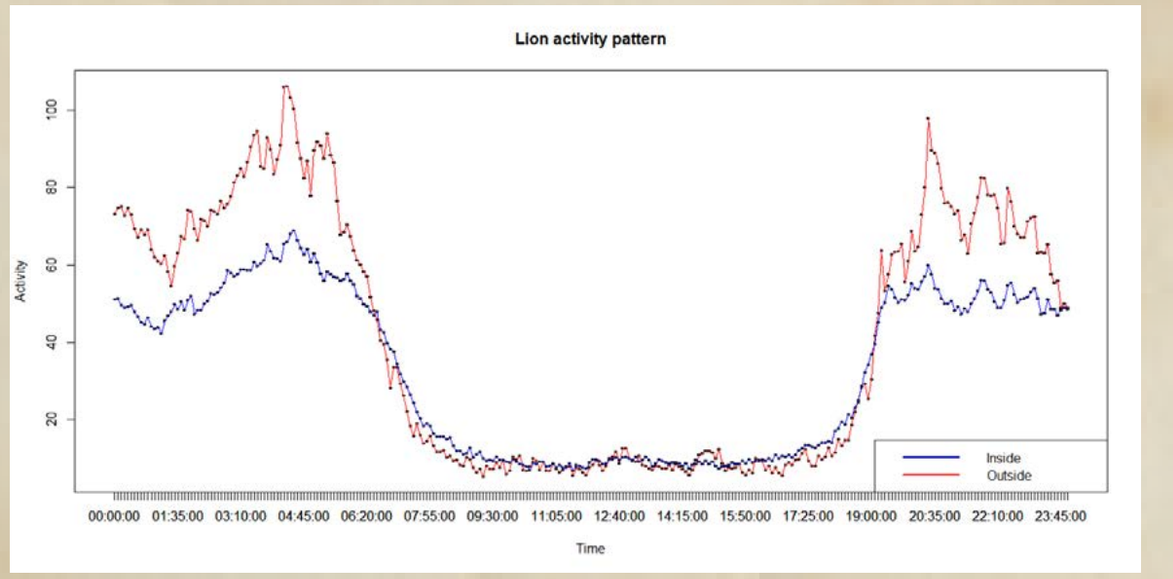

Figure 7. Ole Cook's average 24-hour activity pattern. The blue line is his activity inside the conservancy and the red line is his outside activity. Generally, Ole Cook was more active at night when he was outside the protected area boundaries.

In addition to tracking location, collar data provides valuable insights into activity patterns of the subject animal. Ole Cook's activity patterns reveal distinctions between day and night and inside and outside the conservancy, figure 7

Figure 7 highlights Ole Cook's increased activity levels outside the conservancy boundaries and during nighttime hours compared to within the protected area. This data, derived from the collar accelerometer, indicates that higher activity correlates with faster movements rather than prolonged periods of activity. Lions navigate a landscape of fear outside protected areas, where human activity poses a constant threat. In response, they exhibit heightened vigilance and adjust their behaviour, accordingly, favouring nocturnal activities to minimize encounters with humans. Consequently, Ole Cook's increased activity outside the conservancy boundaries reflects this adaptive response.

Photo ©2024 Niels Mogensen

Ole Cook

Human-Lion Conflicts

OLOBOR

The ongoing conflict between humans and lions poses a significant threat to the lion population residing on the fringes of protected areas. It is likely that we are underestimating the true extent of lion losses due to the discreet nature of these conflicts. Addressing concerns surrounding the Black-rock male Oloborr's disappearance, the MPCP swiftly initiated collaborative efforts with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and the Narok County Government (NCG). In a proactive response, MPCP launched daily, extensive search operations within the Maasai Mara National Reserve (MMNR), focusing on locating the missing male. While there are indications of his possible demise, the exact circumstances remain unclear.

Emphasizing a commitment to community engagement, MPCP places a high priority on outreach efforts whenever conflicts arise between herders, livestock owners, and wildlife in the vicinity of MMNR. Facilitating constructive discussions, we actively address the issues and implement preventative measures. Significantly, our dedicated 'Lion Ambassadors' conduct thorough household visits, offering guidance and reinforcing strategies to minimize future incidents and we have finalized a conflict protocol that was developed in collaboration with NCG, KWS, and other stakeholders., in our efforts to ensure a harmonious coexistence between the community and wildlife.

Efforts are underway to find comprehensive solutions to mitigate the impact of human-lion conflicts on the region's lion population.

SUMMER

In March 2024, a conflict incident occurred when two lions infiltrated a livestock enclosure in the Olare Orok settlement area, resulting in the death of two cows. This is almost a week after a similar incident happened around that same area, where lions were reported to have invaded a livestock enclosure resulting in the death of around 30 sheep. Fortunately for the owner, he is a member of Mara North Conservancy and was compensated for the lost sheep. This occurred through their compensation scheme, in which both conservancy tourism partners and landowners contribute funds. In response to attack on the cattle, however, Summer, a key member of the Topi Pride, was tragically killed while the other lion managed to escape unhurt.

Following this incident, the MPCP took proactive steps to address the issue by convening a meeting with the local community members and leaders. The objective of this gathering was to collaboratively devise and implement effective measures aimed at mitigating human-predator conflicts in the area. The meeting facilitated open dialogue and exchange of ideas between MPCP representatives, community stakeholders, and local leaders, with a focus on identifying strategies to prevent future incidents and promote coexistence between humans and predators. Together, participants explored various approaches such as improving livestock enclosures, implementing early warning systems, and enhancing community education and awareness about predator behaviour and conservation efforts. By fostering community engagement and participatory decision-making, MPCP sought to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among local residents towards conserving wildlife while safeguarding their livelihoods. Through this collaborative effort, MPCP aimed to create a sustainable framework for coexistence where both humans and predators can thrive harmoniously in the shared landscape of Olare Orok.

Cheetah updates

Births and Mortalities

We have not recorded any births during the first quarter of the year, although we suspect that at least one female has given birth. Cub mortalities have been recorded, however. Nebaati's daughter, who is a first-time mother gave birth to six cubs last year but is now down to two cubs after losing another two cubs in the last quarter in Olare-Motorogi Conservancy (OMC). She and her two remaining cubs are currently moving between OMC, Naboisho and Olkinyei conservancies.

Figure 8: Namunyak & 2 Cubs

Adult Deaths

In an unfortunate turn of events, we also lost two adult cheetahs during the last quarter. The first individual was a male in Ripoi Conservancy who disappeared in mid-January this year. He was part of a coalition of three males that showed up at Ripoi Conservancy at the beginning of last year. As we were receiving reports of them

Figure 9: Kisaru

preying on sheep, we suspect that he has succumbed to conflicts. This is the second male to disappear and so only one male remains.

The second adult individual we lost was Amani's daughter Kisaru in a suspected lion attack. She was in the company of her six-month-old male cub, who was captured and taken to an animal shelter in the Mara Triangle. He is currently doing well, and the plan is to release the cub once he is old enough to fend for himself.

New Individual

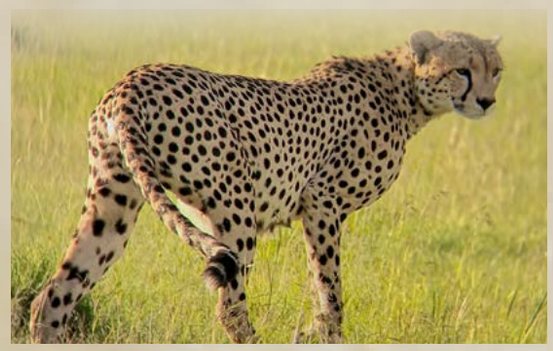

Figure 10: New Male

We recorded a new individual who we could not identify in our database. The adult male was sighted in Olkinyei Conservancy towards the end of January. He presumably made his way from the eastern side of the Greater Mara Ecosystem where we believe there is a small cheetah population.

Guides and Ranger Meeting

Olare Motorogi Conservancy

We held our first guides and conservancy rangers interactive meeting in January. The meeting aimed to share the importance of collaring through the programme's objective of collars for conservation. This enhances our understanding of the importance of Earth Ranger and Lion Ambassadors as valuable tools for monitoring collared individuals and responding promptly to potential conflict situations when lions cross the protected areas to the community.

Additionally, strategies for identifying suitable candidates for collaring were discussed, considering factors such as pride affiliation, past conflict incidents, and spatial distribution within the conservation area which overlaps with the community areas. The meeting also addressed various aspects of predator management and conflict resolution, including communication strategies, species identification protocols, and response protocols for conflict incidents. Plans were made to obtain feedback from guides to enhance predator monitoring and research efforts, promoting collaboration and community engagement in conservation endeavours.

Naboisho Conservancy

We also held a successful meeting with the Naboisho Conservancy rangers as part of our ongoing interaction with rangers and guides within our study area. Some of the issues discussed were our continuous close collaboration in reporting predator-related issues, response to conflict-related incidences, and how best to approach sensitive issues like handling live animals, for example when cheetah cubs get separated from their mother. Overall, the meeting was very successful with attendance from the conservancy manager, the warden, and the different section rangers.

Earthranger

Collars For Conservation

Kenya Wildlife Trust has successfully implemented its **Earth Ranger** platform, a comprehensive tool for collecting, integrating, and presenting data concerning collared predators and other relevant data per the project objectives. This platform serves as an efficient method for monitoring the movements and habitat usage of the collared individuals across the landscape. During this reporting period, five lions have been fitted with satellite GPS collars, but we only analysed three lions using **Ecoscope** which had a full last quarter data.

The respective Lion Ambassadors are linked to the collared lions which are adjacent to their zones and can now access and receive alerts regarding the lion's movement, particularly when they venture beyond designated boundaries from protected areas into community zones. This proactive approach holds the potential to mitigate human-predator conflicts by addressing potential conflicts promptly and this forms the basis of our real-time conservation collaring objective.

Through the generous support of **Mara Elephant Project (MEP)**, we have now started analysing this data using **Ecoscope**, an open-source analysis module for tracking, environmental and conservation data analyses.

Lion Ambassador's Conflict Reports

We utilised Earthranger for conflict data capture and display and Ecoscope to analyse conflict reports from the Lion Ambassadors in communal areas over the reporting quarter. This represents an experimental shift in data collection from Cybertracker to the Earthranger mobile platform. It is important to note that the data presented here does not account for effort, which is accounted for with the Cybertracker app used concurrently during this trial phase.

Since adopting the Earthranger platform for recording conflict data, we have quantified the scale of conflicts in specific areas within the ecosystem compared to others, Figure 11. The data underscores the pressing need for targeted conservation efforts to mitigate conflict between local communities and wildlife, focusing on the predation patterns of hyenas, leopards, and lions, Figures 12 and 13.

Implementing strategic measures to effectively address the escalating conflict, collaboration, and coordination among various stakeholders, including local communities, conservation organisations, and governmental bodies, is imperative.

By pooling resources, expertise, and knowledge, we can develop comprehensive conservation strategies tailored to each zone's specific needs and challenges. Through proactive engagement and adaptive management approaches, we can strive to achieve a sustainable balance where wildlife and human communities thrive harmoniously. The data serves as a call to action, urging us to increase our efforts in conservation and forge ahead with determination to preserve the rich biodiversity of the communal area for posterity.

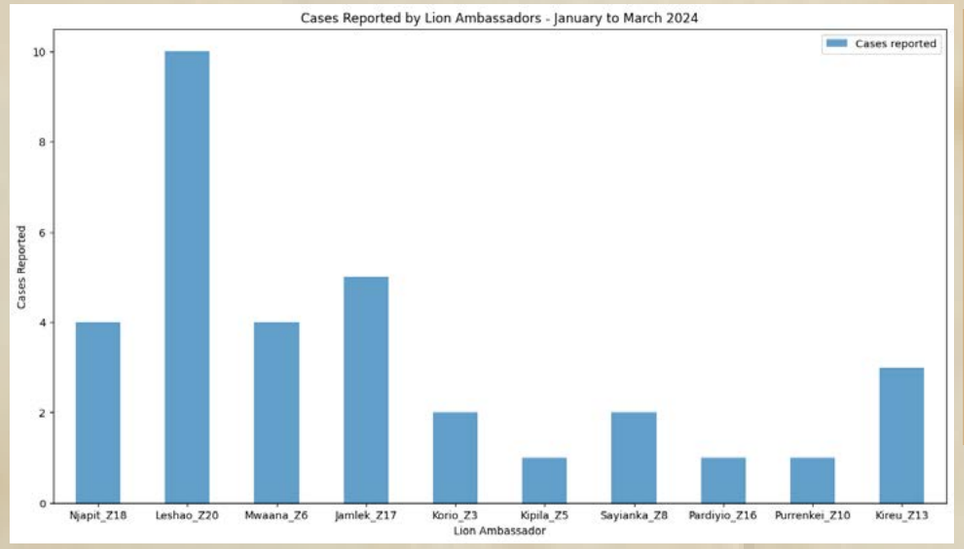

Figure 11: Lion Ambassador's livestock predation reports per zone. It is important to note that effort has not been accounted for.

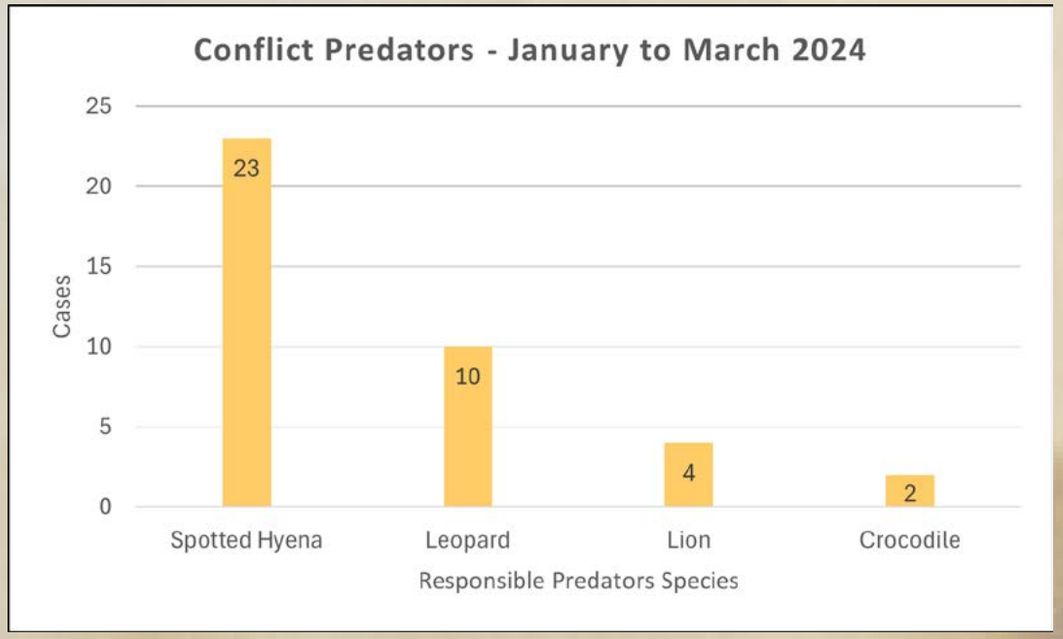

Figure 12: Predator species involved in predation of different livestock from reported Lion Ambassador zones.

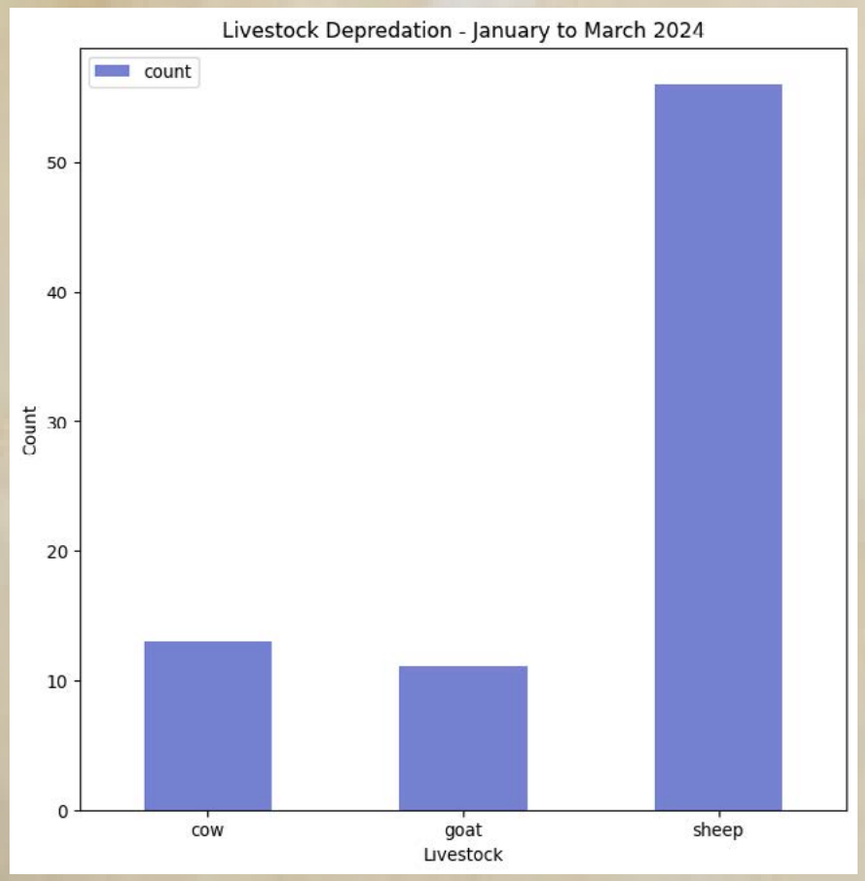

Figure 13: Total number of livestock injured or killed by predators

Collared Lions Home Ranges using Elliptical Time Density (ETD) in Earthranger

During this reporting quarter, we analysed the home ranges of three collared lions with complete data for this period, utilizing the ETD methodology.

At 50%, Komeyian's home range spanned approximately 0.31 Km², while Jua covered 2.88 Km², and Namunyak encompassed 4.81 Km², At the more expansive 99% level, Komeyian's range extended to 9.88 Km², Jua's to 44.5 Km², and Namunyak's to 52.188 Km², Figure 14. This data highlights significant variations in home ranges among the collared lions, with Namunyak consistently exhibiting the largest territory at 50% and 99%.

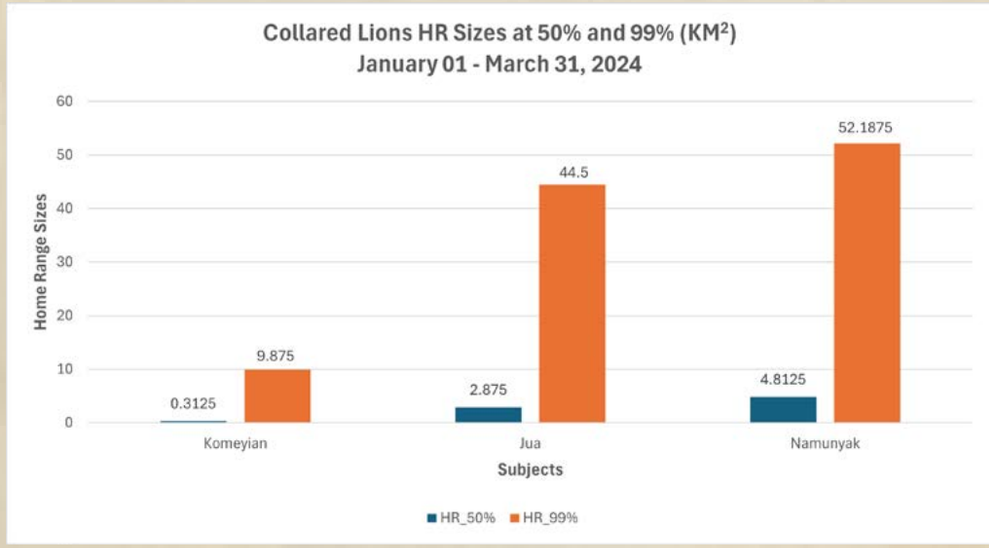

Figure 14: Showing both the 50 and 99% HR for three collared lions with complete data during the last quarter.

The analysis underscores the importance of understanding lion spatial dynamics within the ecosystem, as it provides valuable insights into their habitat utilization and potential conflict areas. The substantial differences in home range sizes among the collared lions suggest varying resource availability and habitat suitability across the landscape. Such information is crucial for wildlife management and conservation efforts, allowing for targeted interventions to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts and ensure the long-term sustainability of lion populations in the region.

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Photo ©2024 Felixie Kip

HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT MITIGATION

Figure 16: Community members and other stakeholder attending the meeting

Human-Predator Conflict Resolution barazas

After the prolonged rainy season spanning from November 2023 to February 2024, instances of **Human-Predator Conflicts (HPC)** notably increased, particularly in regions adjacent to the Maasai Mara National Reserve. Incidents of nocturnal attacks were frequently reported by the MPCP's Lion Ambassadors and community members. In response to this escalating issue, the MPCP team, in collaboration with various stakeholders including conservancies, the **National Reserve management, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS)**, and **governmental representatives**, initiated proactive community Barazas (Figure 13). These Barazas are designed to raise awareness among communities residing along the borders of conservation areas regarding the surge in predator attacks across the ecosystem. Furthermore, these engagements catalyze community members to implement protective measures for their livestock during nighttime. The following is a summary of the key discussions held during the inaugural meeting convened on **March 16th** in **Olare-Orok village**.

The major causes of Human Predator Conflicts (HPC) in Olare-Orok village were explored during a session led by MPCP revealing several factors including *poorly constructed Bomas without lighting, people staying away from livestock enclosures at night, absence*

of dogs in some Bomas to alert people, and careless disposal of dead livestock around the Bomas.

To address these issues, the formation of Predator Conflict Response Committees was proposed by MPCP to collaborate closely with lion ambassadors in mitigating HPC and preventing retaliatory killings of predators. Ten community members were suggested for this committee. Additionally, MPCP informed the community about the development of five **Human Predator Conflict Protocols (HPCPs)** to guide stakeholders in responding to HPCs in the Mara region.

The roles of a Lion Ambassador were reiterated, focusing on reducing conflict incidences and retaliatory killings, enhancing understanding of lions' ecological importance, and collecting robust data for effective policy formulation. Community members were also briefed by county government representatives on the **Wildlife Act of 2013**, emphasizing its provisions for wildlife protection and the consequences of intentional predator killing.

Following the meeting, several outcomes were established:

- Firstly, the **Human Predator Conflict Committee** was established, comprising 8 men and 2 women representing the village.
- Secondly, this committee, in collaboration with the **Area Lion Ambassador**, will work on identifying and mapping out poorly built Bomas.
- Thirdly, **livestock owners and herders** have agreed to work with the conservancy to **improve daytime herding practices**.
- Additionally, community members have committed to **enhancing nighttime vigilance** by lighting fires and placing scarecrows around Bomas, while also seeking more permanent solutions.
- Moreover, **County Rangers, Conservancy rangers**, and **MPCP Lion Ambassadors** will coordinate to prevent retaliatory killings of predators. The **Lion Ambassador** will alert authorities when lions enter community lands.
- Furthermore, regular **sensitization meetings** will be conducted to reduce conflicts, and community members will adhere to the **Wildlife Act of 2013**, reporting any harm or killing of wildlife.
- Lastly, there is an encouragement to **strengthen Bomas** to prevent future attacks, and the **MPCP's Lion Ambassador** is charged with ongoing monitoring and reporting of conflicts.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

Wildlife Clubs

Throughout the quarter, the Mara Predator Conservation Programme (MPCP) remained dedicated to fostering conservation education through its wildlife clubs, extending its outreach to include new schools at Oloisuk Conservancy. This expansion facilitated a range of engaging activities aimed at involving school children in conservation efforts. Noteworthy activities included "**Twende Porini**," which focuses on wildlife immersion experiences, alongside the establishment of kitchen gardens to promote sustainable practices. Additionally, wildlife monitoring and game drives were conducted, providing students with practical insights into ecosystem dynamics.

Asilia 'Twende Porini'

Asilia Africa led this initiative by organizing a conservation trip for 16 wildlife club members to one of its camps situated within the Maasai Mara Game Reserve. Over four days, the children immersed themselves in the wilderness, fostering a connection to nature through camping experiences and gaining invaluable insights from various stakeholders on the significance of conservation.

The itinerary included game drives and enlightening talks from different organizations highlighting the importance of preserving the Mara ecosystem. Hailing from Olesere, Mararianda, Mbitin, and Loigero schools, the sixteen participants enjoyed a memorable and educational journey aimed at nurturing their appreciation for wildlife and habitat conservation.

Wildlife club members during a demonstration from one of the rangers

Equipping Irbaan school kitchen garden

Kitchen garden at Irbaan school

Irbaan Primary School, situated between Naboisho Conservancy and Maasai Mara National Reserve, hosts a student population of 640. Late last year, the Mara Predator Conservation Programme (MPCP) extended support to its wildlife club by fortifying its eco-friendly kitchen garden against domestic and wildlife browsing. This initiative by the wildlife club members, has yielded sustainable outcomes, providing a vital source of green vegetables for the school and surrounding community. Recognizing the challenge of water scarcity, MPCP supported the club by procuring and installing a 3500-liter water tank to alleviate the issue, ensuring consistent irrigation for the garden during dry seasons.

Game drives

MPCP prioritizes connecting children with nature through activities like game drives, a favorite activity among the youth. Each year, MPCP organizes field visits for all wildlife club members, affording them and select community members the opportunity to immerse themselves in nature's wonders through visits to the Maasai Mara National Reserve or neighboring conservancies.

During this period, 250 new wildlife club members from five schools in the Oloisukut Conservancy were granted the privilege of visiting the Mara Triangle for an unforgettable wildlife viewing experience, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of the natural world.

Wildlife club members from Pusanki posing for a photo during (right) and after (left) a game drive to Mara Triangle

'Ufugaji Hifadhi' Programme

The '*Ufugaji Hifadhi*' (livelihoods programme) is centered on equitable and financially inclusive digital ecosystems to alleviate the impacts of climate change and socio-economic challenges on rural indigenous communities residing in wildlife areas. Our primary goal is to boost income derived from livestock while enhancing resilient livestock health and husbandry practices that promote environmental sustainability. This initiative aims to combat the prevalent issues of high livestock mortality and morbidity.

Livestock mass vaccination

During this quarter, a comprehensive livestock vaccination campaign was conducted throughout the Mara ecosystem across 20 clusters. This initiative primarily targeted **Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia** in cattle and **Bluetongue** in sheep, diseases that are very significant and prevalent during periods of heavy rainfall.

Activities

Development of **Livestock Vaccination Strategy**

Publicity across Mara Ecosystem.

Procurement of vaccines **140,000 contavax** & **50,000 bluvax**

Planning with the **Narok County Government**.

20 Conservation Agents trained on **data collection** and **disease surveillance**.

The vaccination exercise was carried out in ***Lemek***, ***Emorijoi***, ***Ilchambai***, ***Emarti***, ***Oloisukut***, ***Aitong***, ***Edoinyo Erinka***, ***Olkurto***, ***Enooronkon***, ***Olesere***, ***Mararianda***, ***Olare orok***, ***Impuai***, ***Talek***, ***Sekenani***, ***Nkoilale***, ***Olkarkar***, ***Meguarra***, ***Oloolaimutia*** and ***Nkineji***.

Vaccination plays a crucial role in preventing diseases that can harm both animals' health and the livelihoods of those dependent on them. This contributes to poverty reduction by enhancing food security, improving household income, and supporting sustainable livelihoods.

Vaccination across the region

Achievements

108,594 cattle vaccinated against CBPP.

61,901 sheep vaccinated against Bluetongue.

162 animal clinical services offered.

These accomplishments were made achievable through the support of **Vitol Foundation**, which supported KWT's '*Ufugaji Hifadhi*' programme, and **MMWCA**, which aided in training Conservation agents on data collection and disease surveillance, enabling timely response from responsible authorities.

We extend our gratitude to the **Narok County Government's** ***Department of Livestock and Fisheries*** for their technical veterinary support and provision of **30,000** doses of **Bluvax**.

Mara Predator Conservation Programme
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