MARA PREDATOR CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

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KENYA WILDLIFE TRUST

QUARTER 3 REPORT | 2025



KWT
KENYA WILDLIFE TRUST

OVERARCHING GOALS

SCIENCE-DRIVEN CONSERVATION OF PREDATORS IN THE GREATER MARA ECOSYSTEM



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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During this quarter (*July–September 2025*), Kenya Wildlife Trust's flagship, the Mara Predator Conservation Programme (MPCP) advanced its research and community outreach efforts across the Greater Mara Ecosystem. The twelfth annual Intensive Monitoring Session (IMS) began on 1st August, covering **6,672 kilometres** and recording **230 lion** and **52 cheetah** sightings. Collaboration with the Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI) strengthened data collection and long-term monitoring capacity.

A major highlight was the **successful rescue and recovery of six poisoned sub-adult lions** from Oloisukut Pride. Working with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) teams, all lions were treated and released back into Oloisukut Conservancy, one with a tracking collar for post-release monitoring. GPS data from collared lions revealed home ranges spanning **52–135 km²**, underscoring the importance of cross-boundary connectivity.

Cheetah monitoring recorded three new cubs, though only one, Kulete's cub in Mara North has survived so far. The collared male cheetah Olomunyak continues to disperse naturally into Serengeti National Park, illustrating transboundary movement patterns.

Finally, MPCP published a peer-reviewed study in Mammal Research showing that lions' movement responses to human activity vary by sex and age, with dispersing males taking greater risks than territorial females.

Community-based interventions remained central to MPCP's work, with notable achievements including the installation of over 80 solar-powered lion deterrent lights, construction of five predator-proof recycled plastic bomas (livestock enclosures), and training of **40 herders** in coexistence and livestock management practices. MPCP's Lion Ambassadors engaged nearly **4,900 community members**, removed 58 snares, and achieved a **4.46% reduction in livestock-predator conflicts**. Through our conservation education we reached more than 500 students through wildlife clubs, art-based conservation activities, and field excursions, while the 'Ufugaji Hifadhi' rabies vaccination campaign exceeded its target by immunizing **2,310 livestock** under a One Health framework.

Collectively, these efforts demonstrate MPCP's integrated approach to conservation combining science, community collaboration, and education to enhance predator protection, strengthen local livelihoods, and promote sustainable coexistence across the Mara ecosystem.

We invite you read more about this quarter's activities in this report.

RESEARCH UPDATE



Intensive Monitoring Session (IMS) 2025

For the twelfth consecutive year, the three-month Intensive Monitoring Session (IMS) commenced on August 1 and will run through the end of October. In the coming months, the team will process this year's IMS data, including identification, validation, and analysis. Comprehensive results from the annual monitoring will be presented early next year.

During this reporting quarter, the monitoring team covered a total of 6,672 kilometres across the Maasai Mara National Reserve, the Mara Triangle, and the surrounding conservancies. Over the first two months of the IMS, the team recorded 230 lion sightings and 52 cheetah sightings.

We are also pleased to acknowledge the continued participation of personnel from the Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI) in this year's survey. Their involvement reinforces the strong partnership between the Kenya Wildlife Trust (KWT) and WRTI, contributing to robust data collection, analysis, and long-term monitoring efforts across the Mara ecosystem.

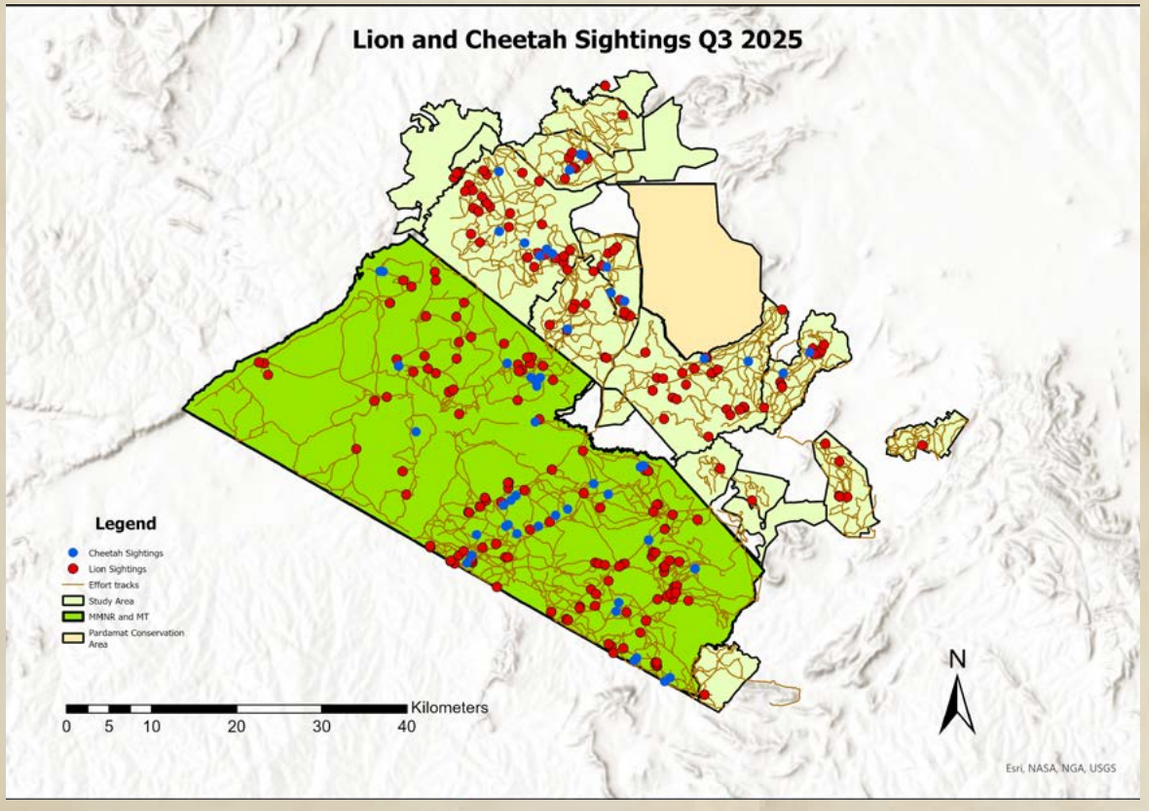


Figure 1: Maps showing lion and cheetah sightings overlaid with effort tracks.

Lion Update

On the morning of 28 September, the Oloisukut Lion Ambassador reported a suspected poisoning incident involving six sub-adult lions to Dominic, MPCP's Community Outreach Officer. The poisoning is believed to have occurred during the night of 27 September.

Upon arrival at Oloisukut Conservancy, our MPCP team joined the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) veterinary and investigative units already on site. The veterinary team acted swiftly, administering emergency treatment to all six affected lions, identified as subadults from the Oloisukut Pride. Following treatment, the lions were relocated to a secure area within the conservancy, away from nearby settlements. Three lions (one female and two males) responded well to the treatment and began showing signs of recovery, while three females remained immobile.

On 29 September, the veterinary team conducted a reassessment. The three immobile females showed little improvement, while the other three lions continued to recover steadily. After consultations among all teams present, it was agreed that the three females be transferred to the Mara Triangle enclosure for continued treatment and close monitoring. Encouragingly, all three responded positively to the additional care and eventually made full recoveries.

Once declared fit for release, the lions were released and are now back in Oloisukut Conservancy, where they successfully reunited with their mothers. To support post-release monitoring, a tracking collar was fitted on one of the females to help follow their movements.

We extend our appreciation to all teams involved and local partners for their rapid and coordinated response, which ensured the successful recovery and release of the lions.

Collared Lion Update

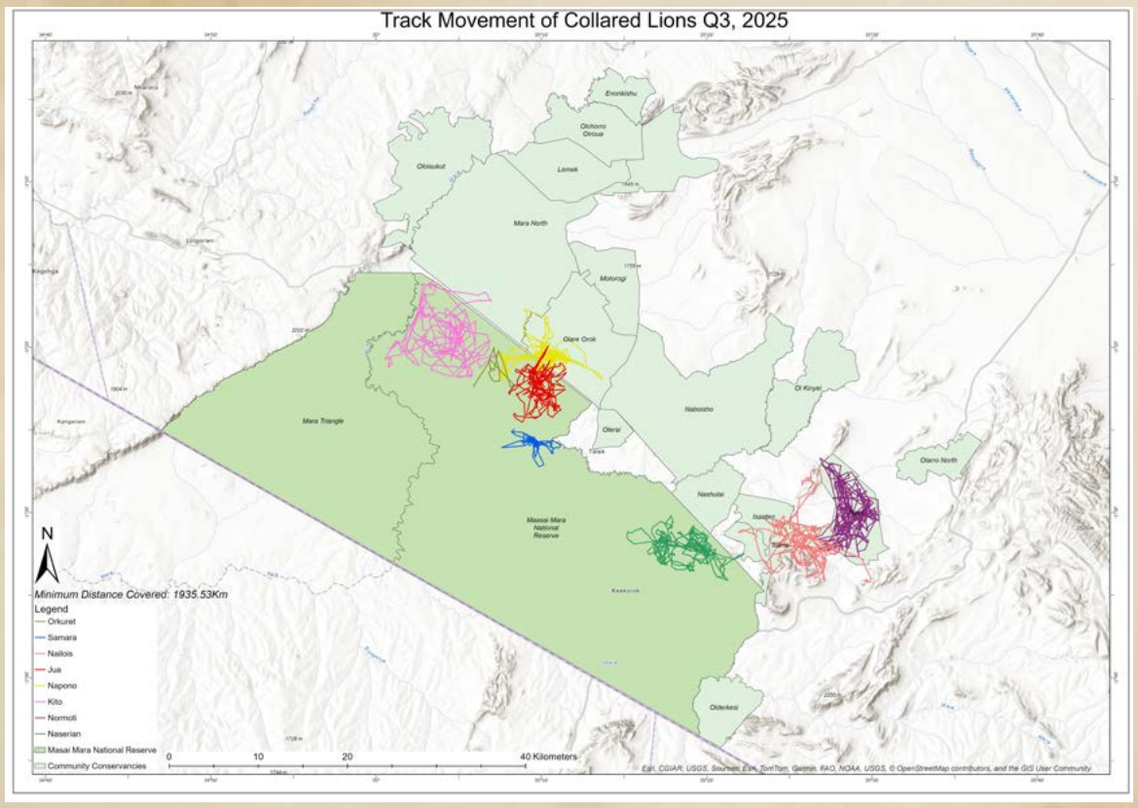


Figure 2: Track Movement of collared Lions.

Collared Lions	Pride	Location	Area Coverage(km)	99% Home range utilization (Km^2)
Orkuret	Satellite male (No pride)	Dual range - Maasai Mara National Reserve (MMNR) & Olare Motorogi Conservancy (OMC)	25.76	61.18
Samara	Fig Tree	MMNR & Olerai Conservancy	104.13	52.37
Nailois	Isanchu	Isaaten & Siana Conservancy	284.98	104.62
Jua	Topi	MMNR & Olare Motorogi Conservancy (OMC)	228.01	75.06
Napono	Engoyanai	Olare Motorogi Conservancy (OMC)	288.56	71.25
Kito	Marsh	Mara North and MMNR	324.90	135.37
Normoti	Normasi	Ripoi Conservancy	421.06	78.93
Naserian	KWS	MMNR	258.80	65.93

Cheetah updates

Births and Mortalities

Over the last quarter, we recorded three cubs from two different females, Kulete and Nashipae. Kulete brought out a male cub from the lair in Mara North Conservancy in July. They are both doing well under close monitoring from the Mara North Conservancy rangers, and we hope the male cub, who is around five months old now, survives to adulthood despite the many challenges that cheetah cubs face during their upbringing.

In early June, we sighted Nashipae mating with Mwanga in Olare Motorogi Conservancy, shortly after she had lost her litter in the lair. On 25th September, Nashipae was seen relocating her two cubs to a safe place, likely away from lions and other potential threats in the area. Unfortunately, after two days, she lost her cubs and was seen far away from the den, moving around her usual home range.



Kulete and Cub at Mara North Conservancy

Collared Cheetah Update
Olomunyak

In December 2024, we fitted a GPS collar on Olomunyak, a young dispersing male cheetah and son of Namunyak. Since then, we have followed his incredible journey as he moved through several conservancies, across the Maasai Mara National Reserve, into community lands, and eventually into Serengeti National Park.

Olomunyak now ranges about 45 km south of the Kenya–Tanzania border, in an area with less livestock and tourism pressure, conditions that give him a good chance of survival. His collar is programmed to drop off in December 2025, after which we'll share a full report on his movements and insights from his journey.

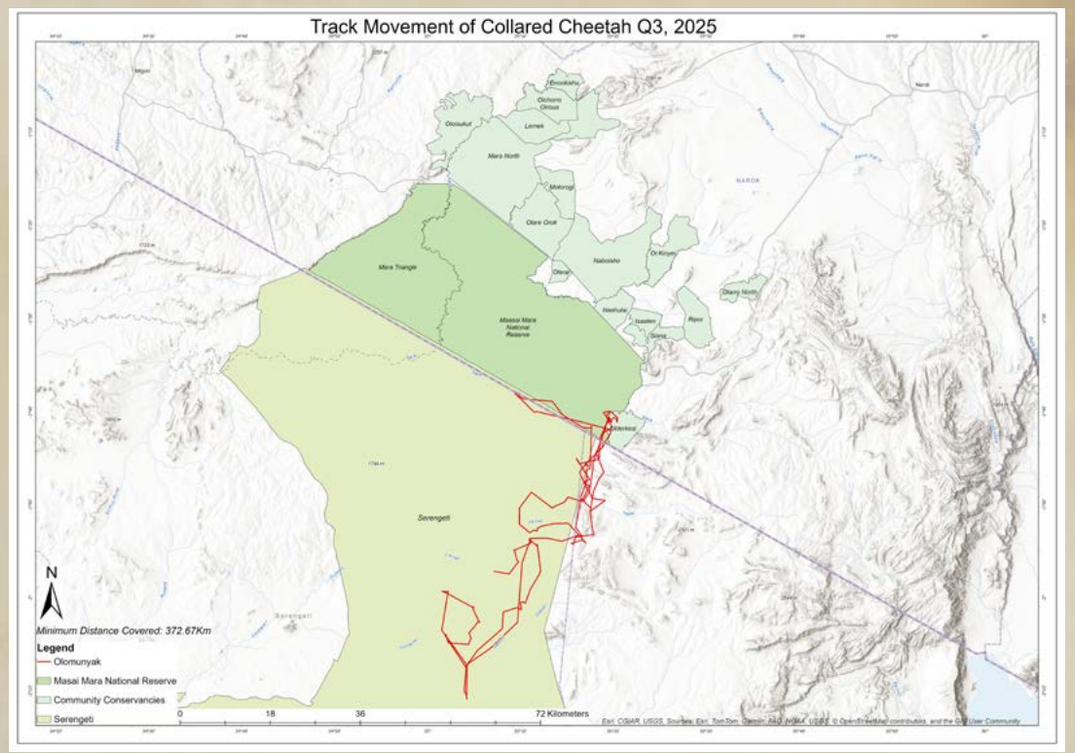


Figure 3: Track Movement of collared Cheetah

Publication

This quarter our study on lion movement patterns titled 'Large carnivore movement patterns differ between demographics in response to human activity', was published in the scientific journal Mammal Research.

Our study explored how African lions in Kenya's Maasai Mara respond to people, and whether these responses vary by demographic group. We fitted GPS collars on 14 lions, nine young dispersing males and five territorial females, to track how they moved in and around protected wildlife areas compared to community lands used by people and livestock.

Our results showed clear differences. Territorial females were more cautious during the day: when they ventured outside protected areas, they tended to stay still, likely using their knowledge of the landscape to avoid people. Dispersing males, in contrast, often moved faster and in straighter lines at night when outside wildlife areas. These patterns suggest males reactively adjusted their movements while navigating unfamiliar, risky environments.

Overall, our findings show that human activity influences lions differently depending on age, sex, and social status. Such differences mean some individuals, especially dispersing males, may face greater risks, with potential consequences for lion survival and conservation.

You can read the full article here https://bit.ly/46fjDg5

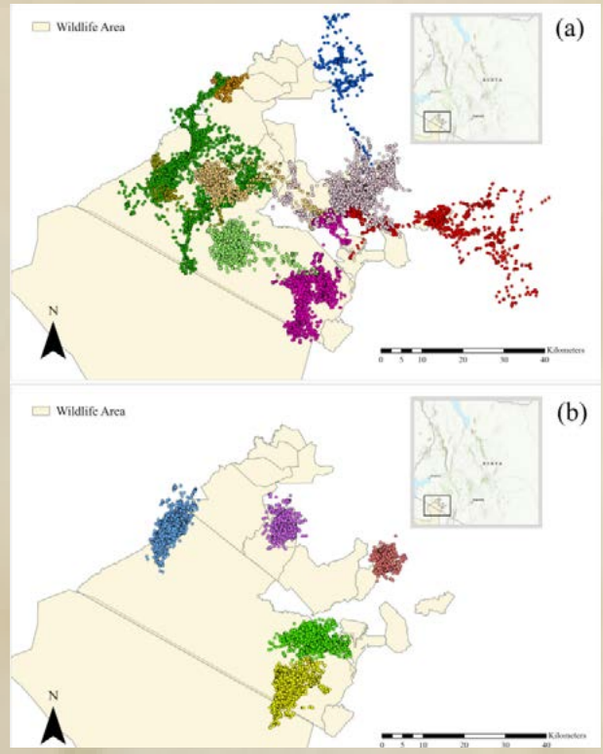


Figure 4, Maps depicting the GPS coordinates of the lion collars in the Maasai Mara ecosystem, Kenya, for (a) male natal dispersing lions (n = 9) and (b) territorial adult female lions (n = 5). Areas outside of wildlife areas were considered non-wildlife areas

Lion Ambassadors

The Lion Ambassadors program has continued to strengthen coexistence between people and predators. Through consistent community engagement, awareness about predator conservation has grown significantly. Beyond reporting incidents to support decision-making, the Lion Ambassadors have been actively involved in community-level initiatives.

During this quarter, key achievements included the removal of **58 snares**, monitoring and responding to over **1,040 geofence breaks** from collared predators, engaging **4,895 people** on wildlife conservation issues, conducting **64 barazas** focused on conflict mitigation and retaliation, distributing over **80 deterrent lights**, responding to critical cases of **5 poisoning incidents** and more. Overall, livestock-related conflicts declined by **4.46%** compared to the previous quarter.

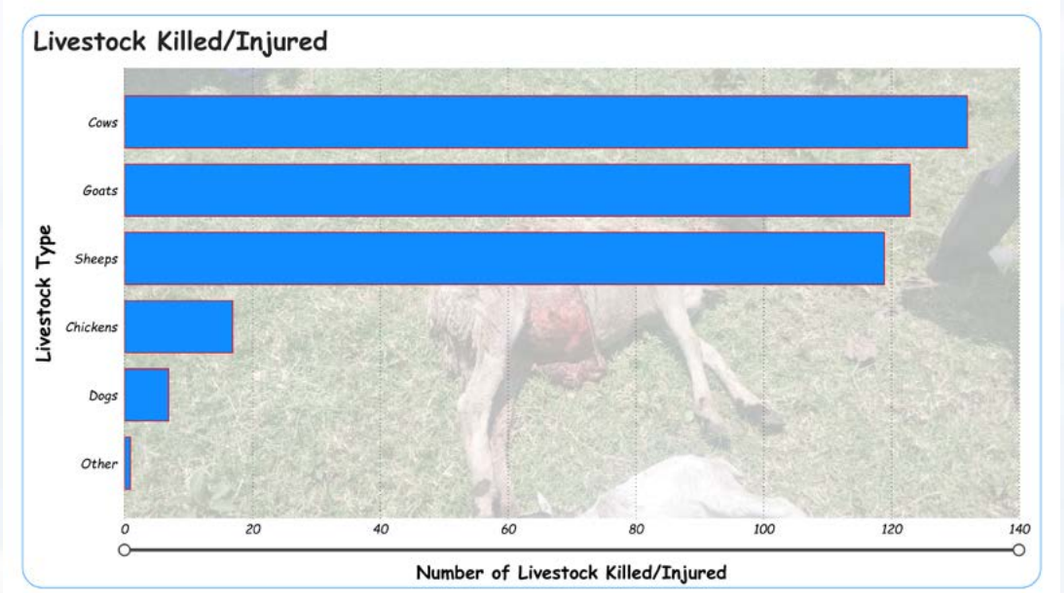


Figure 5: Livestock killed/injured.



During this reporting period, livestock conflict incidents recorded a slight decrease of 4.46%, with a notable shift showing an increase in cattle losses compared to shoats. This trend corresponds with a rise in lion-related livestock conflicts, as illustrated in Figure 5. In contrast, losses of sheep and goats to depredation declined by 12.64% compared to the previous quarter, largely due to a significant reduction in hyena-related conflict cases.

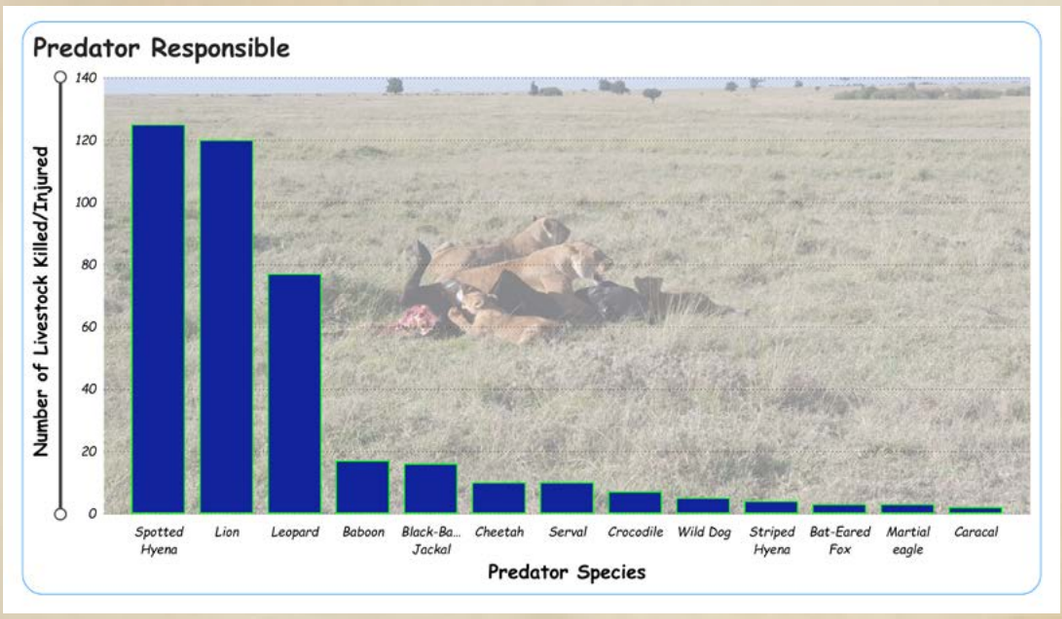


Figure 6: Predator Responsible for livestock depredation.

Spotted hyenas remain a leading cause of livestock losses across the landscape; however, compared to the previous quarter, hyena-related cases declined by 14.38%, while lion-related cases rose by 4.65%, nearly matching the hyena levels. The increase in lion conflicts is linked to the expansion of their home ranges beyond protected areas.

Additionally, livestock depredation incidents have broadened to include new predators such as serval cats, wild dogs, and bat-eared foxes.



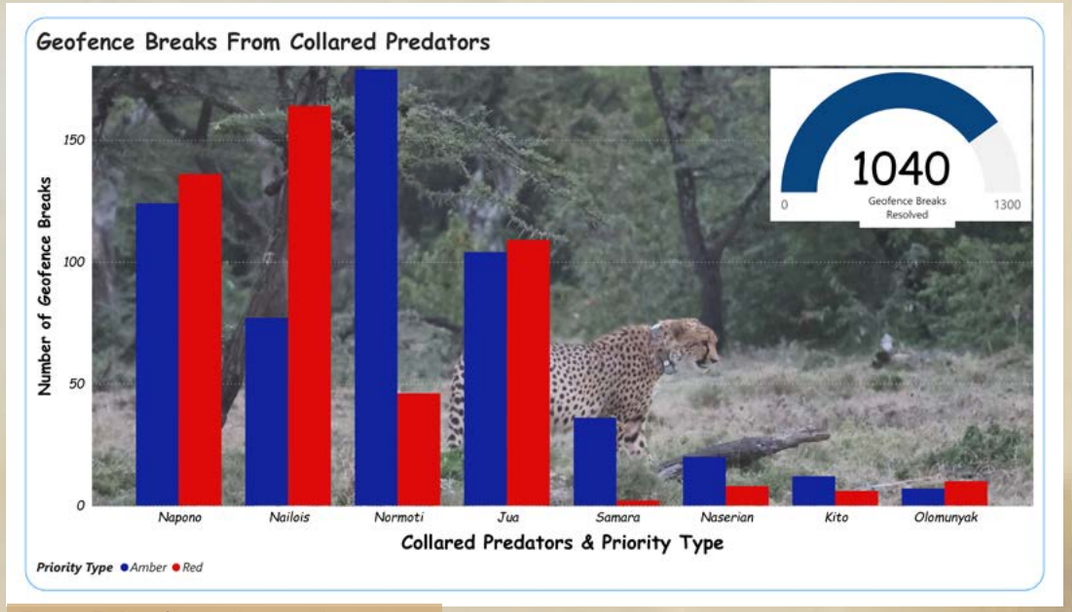


Figure 7: Geofence alerts and response

The Lion Ambassadors program, complimented by the Collars for Conservation initiative, continues to play a key role in mitigating human–wildlife conflict. During this quarter, the team successfully addressed 1040 geofence alerts, which are triggered when a collared predator crosses a designated virtual boundary. Lions Napono, Nailois, and Jua were the most conflict-prone individuals, recording the highest number of red-priority geofence breaches along community boundary zones. The Lion Ambassadors promptly relay these alerts to local herders and community representatives, enabling timely responses to predator presence within community areas.

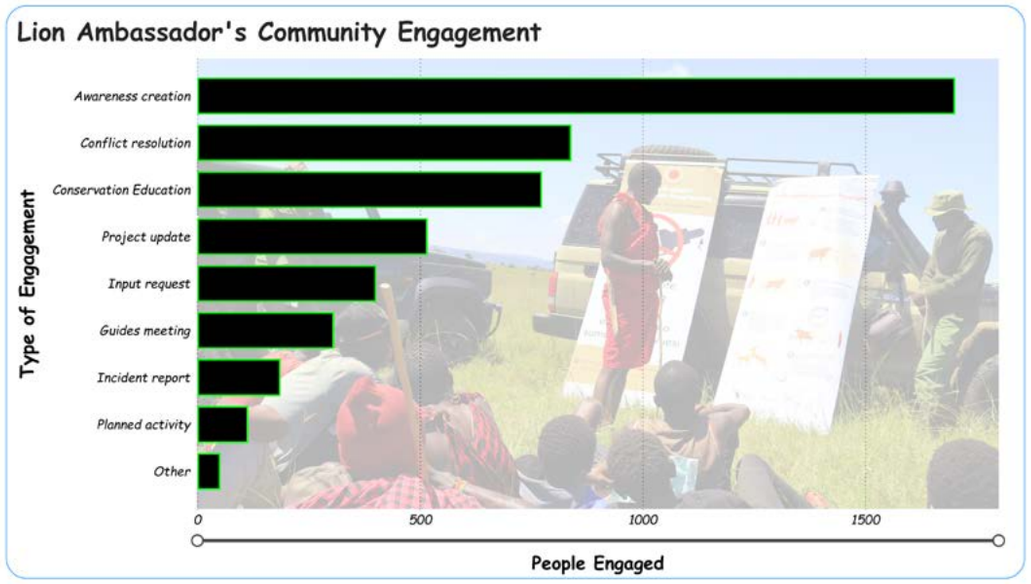


Figure 8: Lion Ambassadors Community Engagement.

De-snaring remains one of the core activities undertaken by the Lion Ambassadors during their daily patrols. In this quarter, they successfully removed 58 snares across the landscape, primarily consisting of neck, hanging, and foot snares aimed at species such as impalas, elands, gazelles, and spotted hyenas.

In addition, the Lion Ambassadors carried out community awareness campaigns highlighting the negative impacts of snaring on wildlife and engaging locals to identify the underlying causes of this practice.



Danson Tikoilel, a Lion Ambassador from Zone 7 (along the edge of Enarau Conservancy), removes snares during his routine patrol.

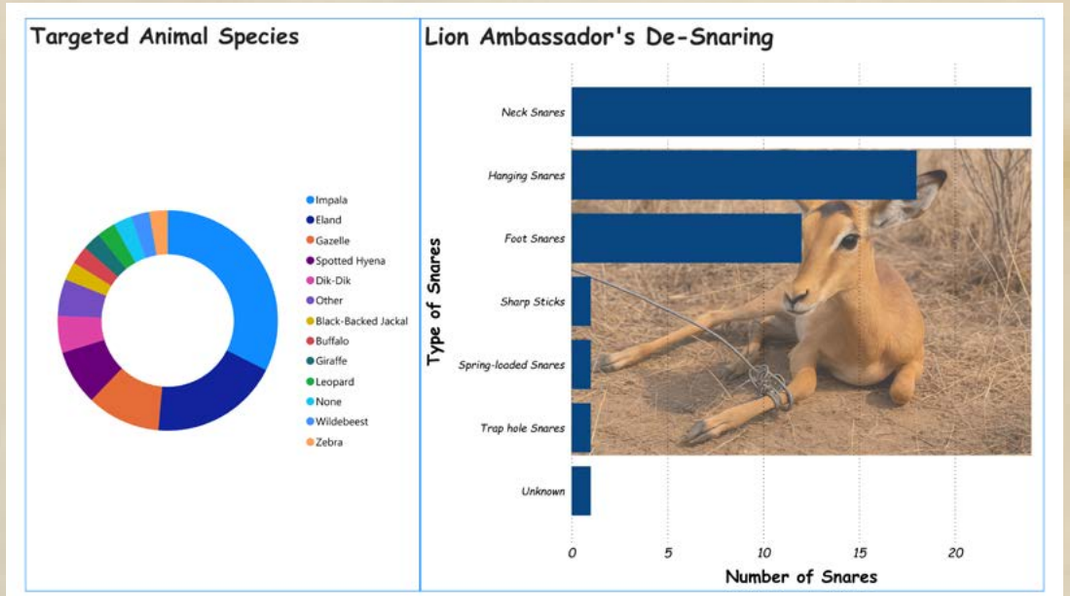


Figure 9: Lion Ambassadors de-Snaring records

COMMUNITY UPDATE



HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT MITIGATION

Communities residing adjacent to the Conservancies and Reserve in the Mara continue to experience frequent nighttime livestock predation, a leading cause of human–wildlife conflict. Such incidents often provoke retaliatory killings, contributing significantly to predator mortality.

To mitigate these challenges, the Mara Predator Conservation Programme (MPCP) has introduced community-based, non-lethal strategies aimed at reducing conflict and promoting sustainable coexistence between people and wildlife.

Predator deterrent lights

One of the initiatives within MPCP's effort is the installation of lion lights—solar-powered deterrent devices designed to prevent nighttime predator attacks. In August, the Mara Predator Conservation Programme (MPCP) installed over 80 lion lights across three high-conflict areas: Olkurroto, Oloonkolin, and Kipaipaya. This community-driven intervention is a key component of MPCP's broader strategy to strengthen livestock protection, reduce retaliatory killings of predators, and promote long-term coexistence and conservation throughout the Mara region. The lights will help protect more than 2000 livestock from nighttime predation.

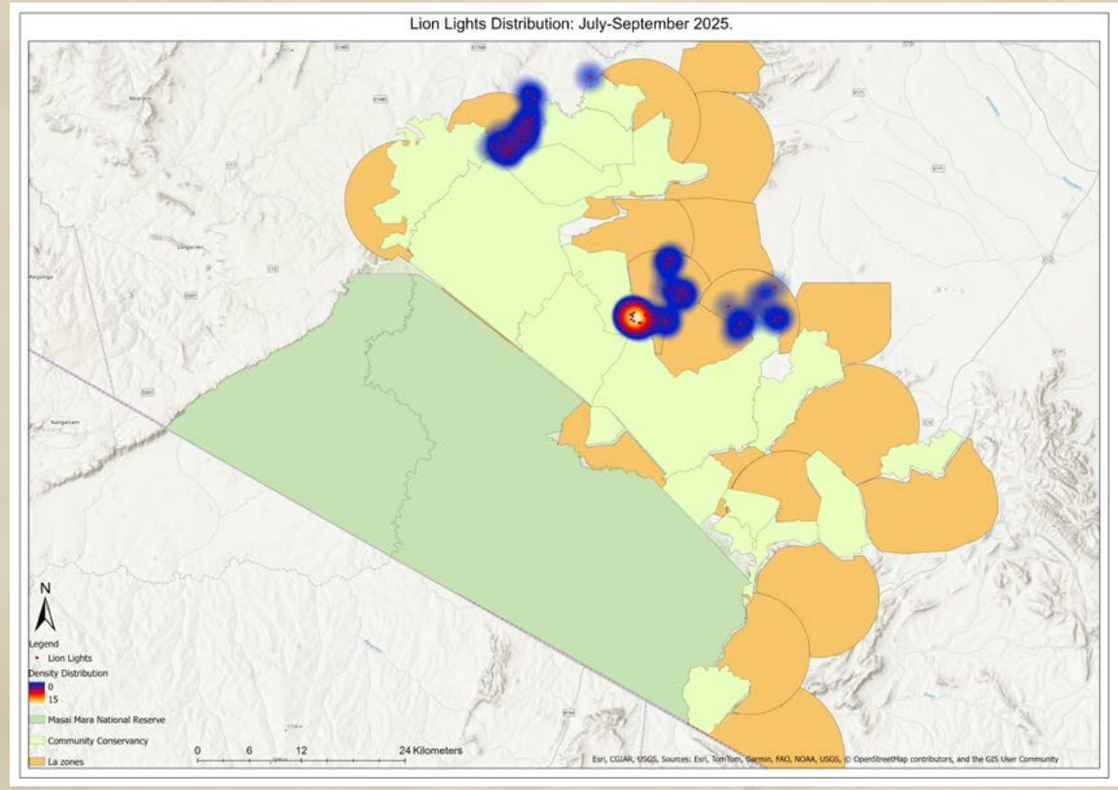


Figure 10: Lion Lights Geo- Distribution

Mara Herder's training

During the reporting period, a human–wildlife coexistence training was conducted to address predator-related conflicts within the Maasai Mara ecosystem, where close interaction among people, livestock, and wildlife frequently results in Human–Wildlife Conflict (HWC).

The training aimed to equip livestock herders with practical knowledge of predator ecology, coexistence strategies, and effective herding practices to minimize livestock losses and reduce retaliatory killings of predators.

A total of 40 herders from Nkineji, Oloolaimutia, and Ositeti villages along a key wildlife corridor participated in the program. The sessions, facilitated by conservancy rangers, Lion Ambassadors, and local elders, focused on predator identification, the ecological roles of predators, and the legal implications of wildlife crime under the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act (2013).



MPCP Community Outreach Officer engaging with livestock herders at Kipayipaya Village.

The initiative strengthened collaboration between herders and the conservation teams, enhancing communication and promoting shared responsibility in conflict management. Some of the anticipated impacts include reduced predator retaliatory killings, improved livestock security through the adoption of better herding and predator-proofing practices, increased community tolerance toward predators, and long-term conservation benefits such as improved livelihoods, employment opportunities.

Recycled Plastic Pole Bomas

The Mara ecosystem represents a shared landscape where people, livestock, and wildlife coexist in proximity, often within the same physical spaces. During the day, livestock graze in areas that overlap with critical wildlife habitats, while at night, predators and livestock frequently occupy the same zones—heightening the risk of conflict. Traditional bomas, particularly those in poor condition, remain highly vulnerable, with predators exploiting structural weaknesses to attack livestock. Such incidents lead to significant economic losses for households and escalate tensions between communities and wildlife, posing a serious threat to long-term coexistence.

Mara Predator Conservation Programme (MPCP) has been working with local communities to strengthen livestock enclosures by replacing traditional bomas with durable, eco-friendly alternatives. These upgraded structures incorporate recycled plastic poles and triple-twisted chain links, an approach that reduces nighttime livestock predation and promotes environmental sustainability by minimizing tree cutting and repurposing plastic waste. This intervention further contributes to climate change mitigation efforts.

During the reporting period, MPCP prioritized community members from Olesere and Enchorro Osidan, located along the Naboisho–Pardamat corridor; a key wildlife movement route that has experienced persistently high livestock losses. Reinforcing bomas in these areas was essential not only to safeguard livelihoods but also to prevent retaliatory predator killings, thereby supporting peaceful human–wildlife coexistence.



One of the the traditional bomas targeted for reinforcement at Olesere

As a result, five predator-proof bomas were constructed, providing secure shelter for more than 550 cattle. These reinforced enclosures have significantly enhanced livestock security and strengthened community confidence in coexistence measures. By protecting household livelihoods, the project has established a strong foundation for long-term conservation outcomes.

The initiative is expected to further reduce retaliatory predator killings, promote positive community attitudes toward carnivore conservation, and encourage broader adoption of climate-smart practices that benefit both people and wildlife across the Mara ecosystem.



The newly constructed predator proof Boma for Mzee Mpooya of Olesere

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

KWT/MPCP established 21 wildlife clubs with a total membership of over 1,000 students across the Mara ecosystem. The primary objective of this initiative is to foster conservation awareness and education among learners in both primary and secondary schools. The activities undertaken during the reporting period are outlined below.

Science art as a medium for showcasing biodiversity



Margaret Kenyatta Olkurroto wildlife club members showcasing biodiversity art to villagers.

In September, the Mara Predator Conservation Programme (MPCP) supported biodiversity awareness activities in five schools, utilizing wildlife clubs as key platforms for education and community engagement. A distinctive feature of this initiative was the integration of science art—a creative approach to communicating complex ecological concepts in accessible and visually engaging ways.

Student conservation champions extended their impact beyond the classroom, reaching more than 200 community members, including both men and women, in surrounding villages. Through artistic presentations and visual demonstrations, they illustrated ecological principles such as trophic levels, highlighted locally significant species, and underscored the vital role of predators in maintaining ecological balance.

This innovative approach not only enhanced public understanding of biodiversity and ecosystem dynamics but also empowered young conservation leaders to drive community-based conservation initiatives in inspiring and impactful ways.

Annual game drive

During this year's wildebeest migration, the Mara Predator Conservation Programme (MPCP) organized educational field visits to the Maasai Mara National Reserve for six schools affiliated with Wildlife Clubs. A total of 262 students comprising 167 boys and 95 girls, participated in the excursions. These annual visits are designed to give new Wildlife Club members an opportunity to experience nature firsthand and deepen their understanding of wildlife conservation.



Wildlife club members from Molibany school during a field visit to Maasai Mara National reserve

The MPCP team accompanied the students throughout the visits, providing educational guidance and sharing insights on the rich biodiversity of the Maasai Mara ecosystem. Through direct observation of wildlife and interactive learning sessions, the students gained a greater appreciation of the importance of conservation and the interconnectedness of species within the ecosystem.

Holiday Kids Camp

The Mara Conservation Art Bootcamp, held in August 2025, was a collaborative initiative designed to promote environmental awareness and conservation among youth through artistic expression.

Organized by the Kenya Wildlife Trust, Kicheche Community Trust, Asilia, and artist Naitiemu, the bootcamp brought together 48 students aged 11 to 16 from five local schools.



Participants at the August Holiday Bootcamp

Over the course of four days, participants engaged in a series of creative and interactive activities under the theme "Harmonious Coexistence Between People and Wildlife." Divided into eight wildlife-themed groups, students participated in guided nature walks, a game drive in the Maasai Mara, and a variety of art workshops, including nature collages, leaf prints, and costume-making using recycled materials. These hands-on sessions enabled participants to explore conservation concepts through traditional storytelling, biomimicry, and natural aesthetics.

The program culminated in a public art exhibition where students showcased their artwork and shared conservation messages with the community. The bootcamp had a lasting impact, helping participants develop confidence, leadership skills, and environmental stewardship while equipping them with practical knowledge in sustainability and waste management.

Overall, the initiative highlighted the transformative role of art in environmental education and youth empowerment, underscoring the importance of engaging young people in shaping a more sustainable and conservation-minded future.

'Ufugaji Hifadhi' Programme

Rabies vaccination

The rabies vaccination initiative in the Maasai Mara ecosystem aimed to address the high risk of rabies transmission in an area where people, livestock, and wildlife coexist in proximity. Acknowledging the devastating impacts of past rabies outbreaks that once decimated African wild dog populations in the region, the program adopted a One Health approach, integrating human, animal, and environmental health interventions.

The initiative's primary objectives were to curb the spread of rabies through mass vaccination of domestic dogs and cats, strengthen surveillance and reporting systems, and enhance community awareness on prevention measures. Implemented across Oloolaimutia, Sekenani, Nkoilale, Aitong, and Talek, the campaign successfully vaccinated 2,310 animals, surpassing its initial target of 2,000.

Complementing the vaccination efforts, community education activities increased understanding of rabies transmission and prevention, while improved data collection and monitoring enhanced early detection and response capacity. Overall, the initiative is expected to significantly reduce rabies prevalence, decrease human and livestock fatalities, protect vulnerable wildlife populations, and establish a stronger foundation for long-term, sustainable rabies control in the Maasai Mara ecosystem.



County veterinarian vaccinating dogs at Ingila village

Stakeholders Engagement and Workshops

2nd International Wildlife Scientific Conference 2025

The Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI) recently hosted the Second International Wildlife Scientific Conference in Naivasha, Kenya, under the theme "Innovations in Wildlife Science and Practice for Sustainable Biodiversity Conservation and Socio-economic Development."

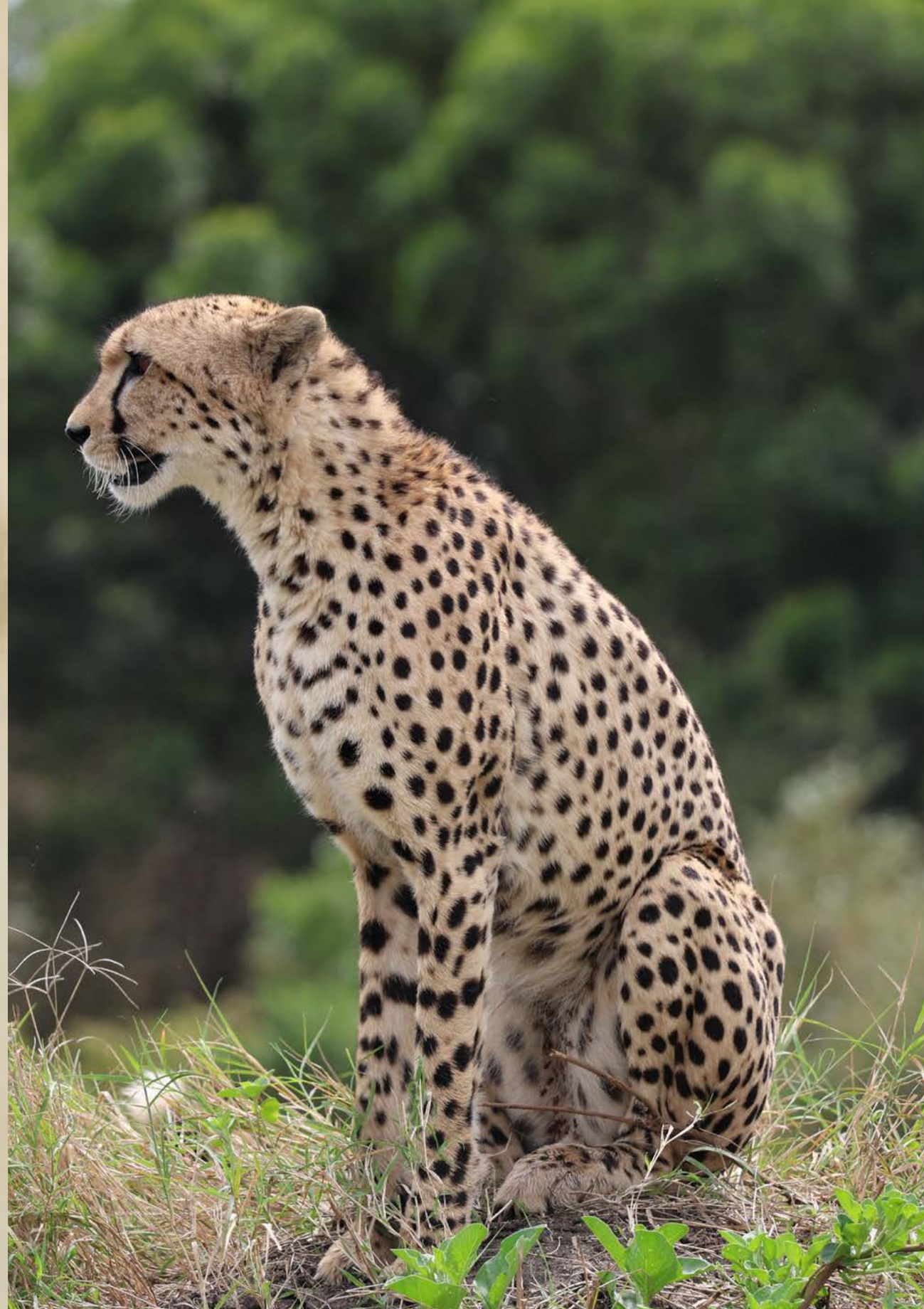


The conference brought together scientists, wildlife managers, policy makers, and conservation stakeholders to share research findings, experiences, and expertise from different parts of the world.

The Kenya Wildlife Trust (KWT) team; Niels, Kasaine, Calvin, and Billy participated in the conference and contributed through presentations. Kasaine presented on "Spatiotemporal Habitat Use and Home Range Sizes of Collared Lion s (Panthera leo) in the Maasai Mara Ecosystem, Kenya," while Niels presented on "Balancing Benefits and Bur dens: Tourist Camps and Lion Conservation in the Maasai Mara." Both presentations, delivered on the third day of the conference, echoed their ongoing academic work; Kasaine's MSc and Niels's PhD and demonstrated how MPCP long term data is being applied to advance scientific research.

In recognition of KWT's continued support and collaboration, the WRTI Board presented the o organization with an appreciation award, alongside other key partners.







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