

AFRICA

Year in Review / 2022





You are here.

At the heart of every story in the following pages, there is you. Your love of Africa, your steadfast commitment, and your generosity are the essential forces behind every hard-earned achievement, every new reason for hope. Each beautiful photograph brings vividly to life the impact you are making, day after day, in the wild and in people's lives.

Thank you for choosing us as your team to make a profound and lasting difference in Africa.

◀ A young girl takes a break from playing with her friends while her parents attend a fisheries cooperative community meeting in Livambi Village, Angola © Roshni Lodhia.



Our Cover

Meerkat at sunset, Botswana
© Will Burrard-Lucas.

From the photographer: "These meerkats are completely wild but over time they have become habituated to humans. When people are around, these clever little creatures take full advantage of the situation and will sometimes climb on top of the nearest person for a better view out over the long grass. Sometimes they just decide that sitting on a warm human is more comfortable than sitting on the coarse sand!"

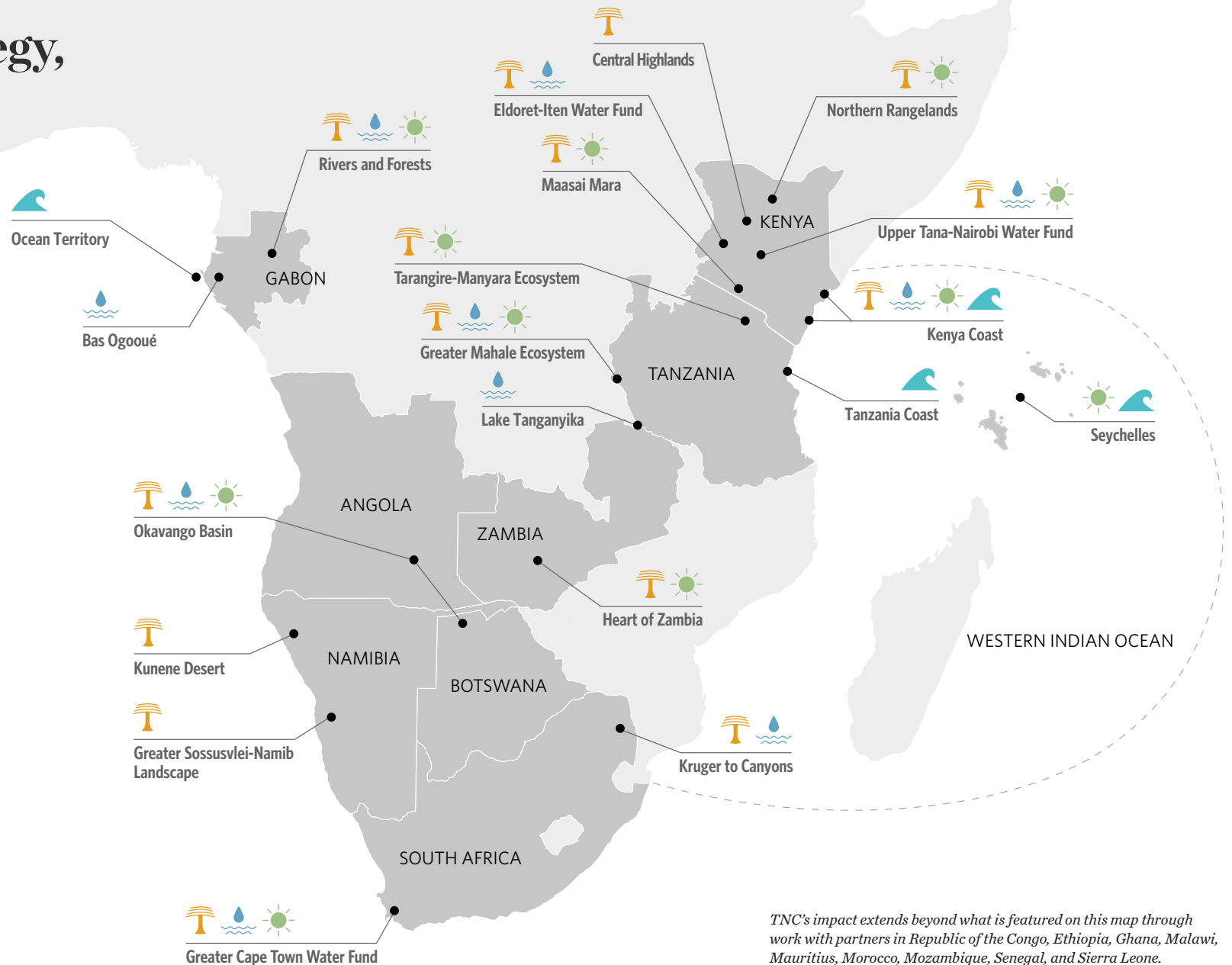


See behind-the-scenes antics from Will's photoshoot, starring a litter of meerkittens, at bit.ly/Will-Meerkats.

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Place, Strategy, and People





A New Dawn

AS I COME TO THE ANNIVERSARY of my first year with TNC, I'm energized by what I've learned and by all that's ahead of us. I have traveled to many places, seen firsthand our team in action, working with communities and partners, to contribute strongly to TNC's 2030 Goals.

This has been a year of unprecedented growth for the Africa Program, with over 35% of staff joining the team in the last year. I am working with the Africa Leadership Team on structures, systems, and strategies that will enable us to ensure that our growth is durable and that will move us from where we are to where we need to be.

Partnerships are critical to achieving our 2030 Goals. I have met many partners. Seeing the strong partnerships that our team has built gives me confidence that we can get things done by using the "power of many to go beyond."

To leverage capacity and get the greatest results, we are pushing ourselves harder to work holistically, to think about the implications of our work to address climate change, to conserve biodiversity, and to improve people's lives. Projects are delivery vehicles for our strategies.

A more integrated approach—looking at land, water, oceans, and people—will enable us to maximize impact.

Africa hosts roughly one-third of global biodiversity but we are losing it by the second. We want to focus on where we can achieve maximum results in our priority landscapes and seascapes in the fastest time and at the lowest cost. In the year ahead, we will reflect, review, and refine our strategic plan and sharply focus on a clear set of priorities going forward.

We are at a watershed moment in Africa's story. You are an essential part of that story. I hope you'll read the stories in this **Year in Review** and take time to celebrate what we've achieved together, get energized, and forge ahead. I am truly grateful for your support!

Ademola Ajagbe | Regional Managing Director, Africa

Global 2030 Goals

650M

HECTARES
CONSERVED

LAND

1M

KM OF RIVER
CONSERVED

FRESHWATER

30M

HA OF LAKES AND
WETLANDS CONSERVED

4B

HECTARES
CONSERVED

OCEAN

3GT

CO₂E AVOIDED
OR SEQUESTERED

CLIMATE

100M

PEOPLE
BENEFITED

45M

PEOPLE
SUPPORTED

PEOPLE



Peter Limbu, TNC's Lake Tanganyika program director, with local children © Ami Vitale. **Near Right:** Debli Gabo relaxes on top of fishing nets © Ami Vitale. **Far Right:** The Mahale Mountains are home to more than 30 species of butterflies © Cameron Anderson Raffan.

Watch a Video
nature.org/Tuangane

The Tuungane Project

The Transformative Power of Connecting Strategies, People, and Big Ideas

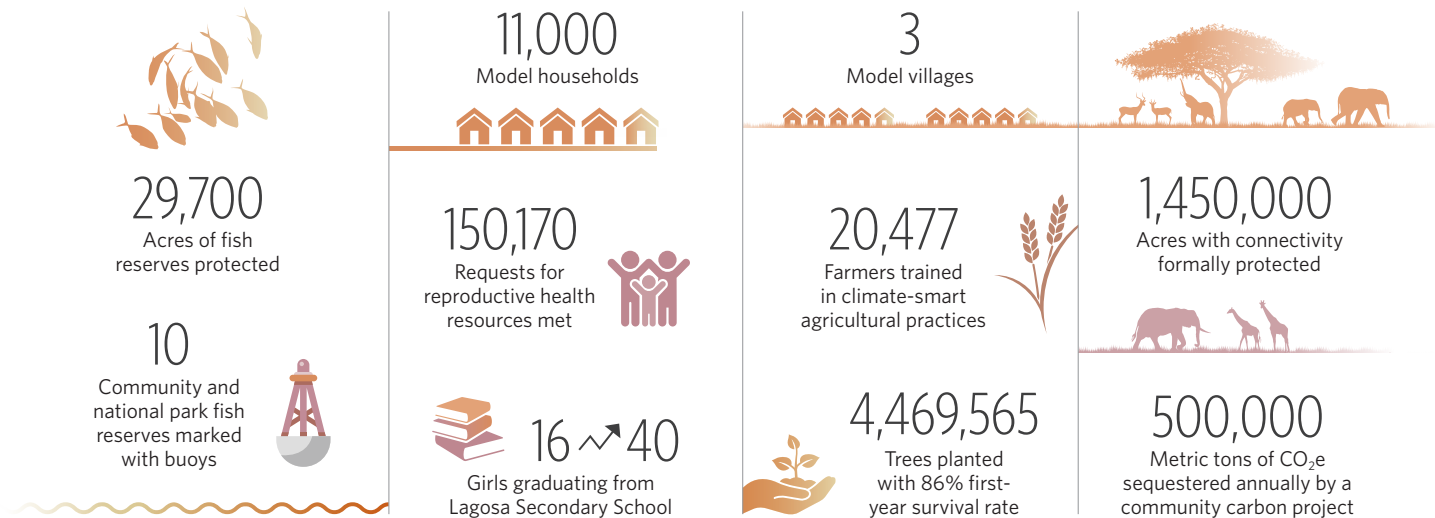


TUUNGANE IS A KISWAHILI WORD that means to unite or connect, and over the last decade, the Tuungane Project has lived up to its name. This innovative partnership with Pathfinder International has indeed united communities, supporters, government, and scientists to achieve tangible benefits for fish, forests, and families.

To mark the project's 10th anniversary, a team of freshwater, terrestrial, and social scientists from TNC conducted a rigorous strategic review to chart a course for the future. The verdict: Evolve our strategy from "growing" to "growing stronger."

Drawing on all that we have learned and achieved together, we will focus on closing remaining gaps in forest and lake biodiversity protection and on ensuring that our progress will endure by layering in strategies for financial sustainability and climate resilience.

Celebrating 10 Years of Impact



Many iconic species of East Africa, such as wildebeest and elephants, need large movement corridors in order to find enough food and water throughout the year. Many corridors run through communally owned lands, so TNC supports communities to derive more benefits from their resources while also leaving space for wildlife on the move.

© Anup Shah/TNC Photo Contest 2022





LAND

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I dream of the vast deserts, the forests, and all of the wilderness of our continent, wild places that we should protect as a precious heritage for our children and for our children's children. We must never forget that it is our duty to protect this environment.

Nelson Mandela

■ LAND

Most of Africa’s wildlife lives outside parks in Indigenous and communal lands. As growing populations pursue greater access to food, water, energy, education, healthcare, and better livelihoods, an ancient balance is tipping.

We are working with partners to create strong networks of conserved lands— Indigenous, communal, private, and government—that provide habitats for wildlife and improve local people’s lives. To ensure that our gains last, we are innovating ways to generate sustainable sources of revenue for conservation.

■ MILESTONE | CENTRAL KENYA

The Laikipia Plateau is a haven for iconic wildlife, including wild dogs, elephants, reticulated giraffes, and Grevy’s zebras. Indigenous people here have coexisted with wildlife for generations, but unsustainable land use practices and worsening cycles of drought have toppled that balance.

Grasslands are being depleted beyond their ability to regenerate as livestock numbers grow exponentially and traditional rotational grazing practices are abandoned. Farms are expanding, but unsustainable practices keep yields low and exhaust soil fertility. These factors are driving habitat loss, human-wildlife conflict, and competition for scarce water resources.

TNC launched the Central Highlands Ecoregion Foodscape (CHEF) project to support communities in producing food and income while also leaving water and food resources for wildlife to survive. CHEF aims to augment Indigenous expertise with globally proven regenerative agriculture practices. Regenerative food systems actively restore habitat and protect biodiversity in and around production areas, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve livelihoods of farmers and pastoralists.

To date, CHEF has focused on research, including completing a land use mapping analysis; a hydrological and ecosystem services assessment of different agricultural and land use scenarios; a study identifying the crop varieties most suited for regenerative farming; and a socioeconomic baseline to help us ensure that our efforts will measurably improve people’s lives. With this strong foundation in place, the project is now advancing to the pilot phase.

■ MILESTONE | NORTHERN TANZANIA

Together with partners, we are supporting Indigenous communities in securing formal tenure to land that they own communally and to benefit more from conservation, from new enterprises for women to more grass for livestock thanks to science-guided grazing practices.

To date, we have stitched together more than 3.6 million acres of savanna habitat under conservation agreements. Now we are increasing our focus on “pinch points”—wildlife migration pathways most urgently at risk of being blocked for good.

A new award of more than \$5.6 million from the U.K. government will enable us to scale up proven models, accelerate progress, and pilot promising strategies, such as soil carbon programs that can generate sustainable funding for conservation and local people.

■ ON THE HORIZON | INNOVATIVE FINANCE

More than 100 countries formally support the target to protect at least 30% of the world’s lands and waters by 2030 with the aim to halt biodiversity loss and to protect nature’s benefits to people. Turning a vision this big into a reality will require innovative solutions to ramp up the pace of action, as well as rethinking how to fund sustainable conservation efforts. TNC is working with partners and the governments of Kenya, Gabon, and other countries on a range of potential financial and governance approaches.

Top: The Laikipia Plateau of Kenya's central highlands region, where a new TNC program named CHEF is employing science to support farmers and pastoralists to increase food security and livelihoods while reducing habitat loss and human-wildlife conflict © Jim Gibson/Alamy Stock Photo.

Bottom Left: A mother and baby leopard in Maasai Mara National Reserve, Kenya. TNC's work with the Government of Kenya to develop sustainable sources of conservation funding at a national level will benefit all conserved areas, whether on government, community, or private lands. © Yaron Schmid/TNC Photo Contest 2022

Bottom Right: Women participating in a training on Population, Health, and Environment (PHE) through our partners in the Northern Tanzania Rangelands Initiative in Mwaskini Village, northern Tanzania © Roshni Lodhia.



↘ [Watch a Video](https://nature.org/AfricaLands)
nature.org/AfricaLands

The Wild Heart of Zambia

A new day has dawned for Kafue National Park, a 5-million-acre wilderness at the heart of a bold plan to create a border-to-border arc of conserved lands and waters.



A lion in Kafue National Park © Will Burrard-Lucas.
Opposite (l-r): Carmine bee-eaters resting on the bank of the Luangwa River, Zambia © Charl Senekal/iStock.
Miombo woodland habitat typical of Kafue National Park © Georgina Goodwin.

2022 HIGHLIGHTS BY THE NUMBERS

4,300 RANGER-DAYS PATROLLING ACROSS 1,250 SQUARE MILES OF HABITAT

16 FISH BREEDING RESERVES DESIGNATED

395,000 ACRES OF FORESTS CONSERVED BY NEW COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT GROUPS



A CONSTELLATION OF national parks and preserves fans out across Zambia’s western half, with one of Africa’s largest national parks—Kafue—at the center. Between them are communally owned lands designated as game management areas (GMAs) by the national government, a status that compels citizens to follow wildlife-friendly land use practices. Yet GMA communities have largely been without resources, support, and incentives to implement this mandate, and as a result, these precious buffer zones are under serious threat.

Connecting existing protected areas by supporting communities to sustainably manage their resources—for their benefit and the benefit of wildlife—would create a conservation landscape of staggering size, sweeping from Angola to Namibia.

Taking this on would require TNC to quadruple the geographic scope of our ambitions in Zambia. So we did. This year our Zambia team grew from a staff of three to 19, and our project area blossomed from three narrowly defined places in the Kafue ecosystem to embrace the entire heart of Zambia’s western “wing.”

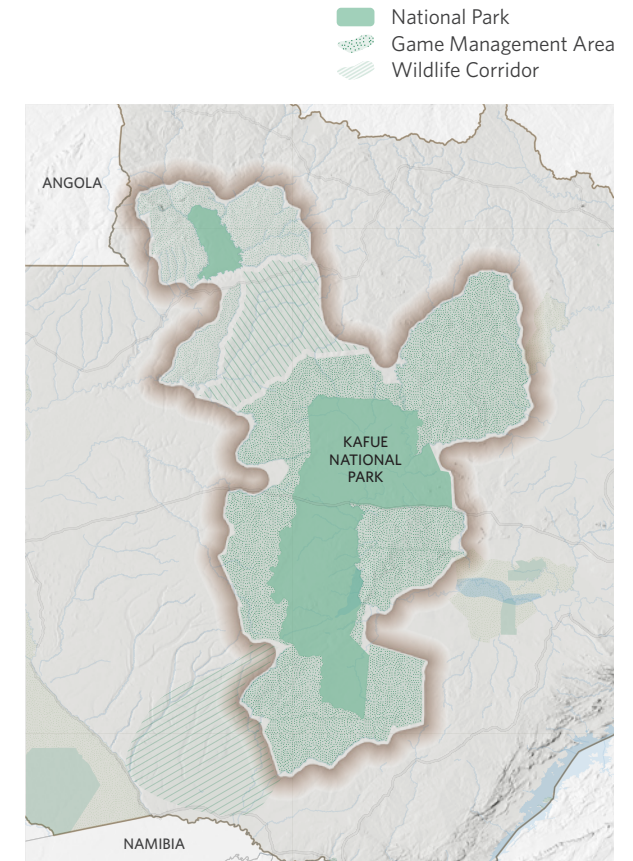
This growth is fueled by three recently awarded public grants of a combined \$16 million. These grants

will support community-based resource protection, improved governance, nature-based enterprises, and ecological connectivity. Further, this funding has helped establish platforms to drive a unified vision for conservation across the greater landscape.

TNC led the enormously complex, lengthy process of securing the funding and is now leading the mammoth work of coordinating a growing number of stakeholders and partners, such as Mushingashi Conservancy, Game Rangers International, Panthera, and community resource boards, and ensuring that targets are achieved.

Our Zambia team’s achievements this year include supporting the establishment of a community conservation governance institution in the Ngabwe Chiefdom, the first of its kind in the area, and signing a game-changing agreement with African Parks for cooperation across Kafue National Park and surrounding GMAs.

We have adopted a new name for TNC’s Zambia Program—the Heart of Zambia—which is about more than geography. It honors the hopes of local community members, their love of their natural heritage, and the appreciation that people around the world feel for this special place.



Achieving Unity Through Education



A new school in Kenya—built with support from TNC donors—is bringing kids together for the peace and education they deserve.



WHEN THE HONORABLE Sarah Korere was first elected as a member of Parliament for Laikipia County, she noticed a large area where there were no schools. Other members of government told her it was due to political insecurity in the region.

But Hon. Korere felt it was their responsibility to provide education to the people, no matter what. “I realized that you can bring people together, and being united will achieve more than being divided,” she said.

And so the dream for the Amani School, named for the word “peace” in Kiswahili, was born.

Hon. Korere knew that Loisaba Conservancy—created with TNC support—had helped transform schools on its eastern border, so she approached them about creating the new school on its western flank. With seed funding from the Loisaba Community Trust and local government, as well as a significant financial boost from TNC’s Africa Affinity Group for Women and Girls, the school opened to 89 students in January 2021.

The Amani School now bursts with energy from nearly 200 students from many ethnic backgrounds,

many of whom would otherwise not be receiving a formal education.


For years, 13-year-old Eunice Shaila spent four hours a day walking to the next nearest school and back. “I used to take a bath and get ready for school when it was still dark outside so that I could leave at 6 a.m.,” she said. “Now it takes me two minutes to get to school.”

Educating children, especially girls, is a critical component in changing such practices as early marriage, cattle rustling, and banditry—and in promoting the peace and stability that can help generate conservation progress and community benefits. Conflict is not just an issue for people; it’s one of the biggest threats to the area’s iconic wildlife.

“When children are given an opportunity to interact with other tribes early in life at school, they will grow up breaking those tribal barriers,” Hon. Korere said. “Parents also have an opportunity to mingle and to take care of their children in one location. This will all have a long-lasting impact for peaceful coexistence in the area.”



Students enjoy the new classrooms and playground at Amani Primary School in Laikipia County, Kenya
© Roshni Lodhia.

A person is standing in a narrow, dugout Mokoro boat, navigating a narrow waterway through tall papyrus reeds. The person is wearing a red and white striped shirt and dark pants, and is holding a long wooden pole vertically. The water is calm, reflecting the golden light of the setting sun. The sky is a clear, deep blue. The reeds are tall and thin, with some showing small flowers. The overall scene is peaceful and serene.

Mokoro dugout boats are African cousins of Venetian gondolas, with mazes of pompom-topped papyrus sedge taking the place of pastel-colored palaces. As one glides through a field of floating water lilies, the quiet is so pure that a dragonfly is a startling little helicopter buzzing off its launch pad. This wild labyrinth feels like a dream, a world of its own, and yet the Okavango Delta is tethered to its mother rivers, which flow from Angola. © Roshni Lodhia



FRESHWATER

“

You cannot protect the environment unless you empower people, you inform them, and you help them understand that these resources are their own, that they must protect them.

Wangari Maathai

■ FRESHWATER

Rivers, lakes, and wetlands cover a minute fraction of Earth's surface and yet harbor disproportionately high concentrations of biodiversity. They are also lifelines for wildlife, and they provide water, food, livelihoods, renewable energy, and much more to people.

This increasing dependence, coupled with the impacts of climate change, is driving widespread degradation. We are convening expansive new alliances and driving science-guided action at ever-greater scales to craft solutions that will balance the needs of people and nature.

■ MILESTONE | THE OKAVANGO

To help save the Okavango Delta, TNC is racing to secure its headwaters in Angola. Working with partners, we are equipping Angolan leaders and communities with sustainable alternatives to damaging practices in order to build prosperity at home while sustaining one of Earth's greatest remaining natural wonders.

Building on expertise honed through water funds, the team completed an economic case for resilient, rather than conventional, development in Angola's Cubango-Okavango River Basin (CORB). Through comprehensive hydrological modeling, TNC scientists found that for every U.S. dollar spent on resilient development, communities will accrue \$7 worth of benefits.

Five communities completed the legal process of establishing fishing cooperatives thanks to support from TNC and our local partner Associação de Conservação do Ambiente e Desenvolvimento Integrado Rural (ACADIR). As seen in the Tuungane Project, community-managed fisheries groups can be highly effective for advancing sustainable practices.

TNC-supported scientists developed baseline assessments to better understand current levels of biodiversity and fish abundance in the areas where we are working with communities, and to identify areas of greatest importance to conserve.

■ MILESTONE | GABON

TNC's footprint in Gabon extends from local communities to the highest levels of government. For example, we supported local partner Organisation Ecologique des Lacs et de l'Ogooué (OELO)—a 2022 recipient of the U.N. Development Programme's prestigious Equator Award—in developing community-led fisheries cooperatives and a sustainable freshwater fisheries management plan that was signed into ministerial decree.

Together, we are gathering social and ecological data, exploring sustainable economic options for communities, and conducting a pilot project in the use of low-tech elephant fencing to protect crops.

In parallel, TNC is working with the government to innovate finance solutions to achieve its ambitious conservation goals as the first country to commit to conserving 30% of its freshwater habitat in addition to 30% of its land and marine habitats. This year, we co-hosted Jeff Bezos and other leaders from the Bezos Earth Fund, which has invested millions into conservation in the Congo Basin.

■ ON THE HORIZON | LAKE TANGANYIKA

Our successful work with the Tuungane Project on Tanzania's shores of Lake Tanganyika has readied us to go bigger. Working with partners, we are growing the body of groundbreaking science to guide conservation action, as well as pursuing replication and scaling of successful models of community-led freshwater and fisheries management across the four-nation basin. We aim to increase protection of Freshwater Key Biodiversity Areas in the lake from the current <1% to 30%.

Top: Lake Oguemoué is one of the many lakes in Gabon's Ogooué Basin © Roshni Lodhia.

Bottom Left: Many year-round fishers occasionally turn to farming small plots to feed their families and supplement their income. This can lead to human-wildlife conflict when nearby forest elephants eat those critical food supplies. TNC, OELO, and Space for Giants are conducting a pilot project on Lake Oguemoué with farmers like Martine Betoue in which low-tech elephant fencing is installed to protect crops. © Roshni Lodhia

Bottom Right: Fish monitor Manuel Vipuali Armando documents the tigerfish he caught that morning in a river near Liavela Village, Angola. This new process of recording fish catch will help communities manage the health of their fisheries. © Roshni Lodhia



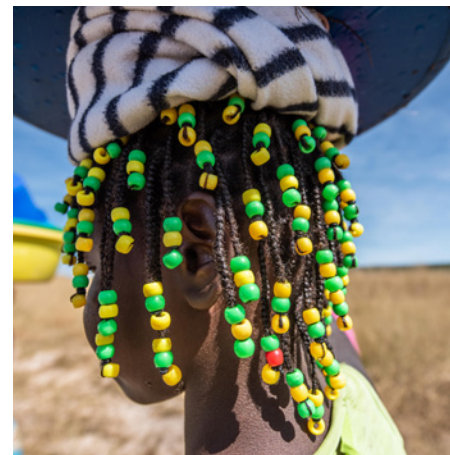
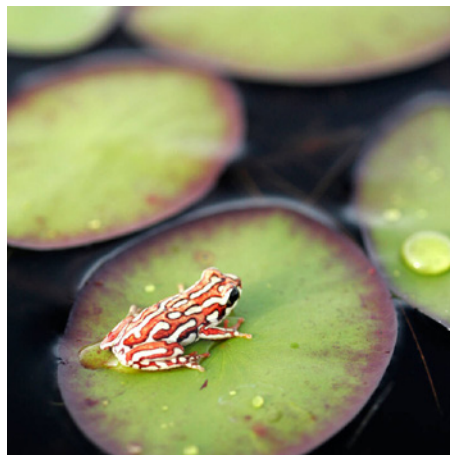
[Read More
nature.org/GabonAction](https://nature.org/GabonAction)





Into the Okavango

JUST WHEN THE KALAHARI DESERT'S fleeting spring evaporates, floodwater pushes south from Angola through Namibia into Botswana and the vast oasis of the Okavango Delta doubles in size, setting into motion one of the planet's last epic migrations. Nearly 95% of the delta's water originates in Angola, where proposed development projects and unsustainable farming practices could jeopardize up to half of the water flow. TNC is growing our program here quickly, and will soon announce a new \$7.5 million public grant that will help drive collaborative conservation at an ecosystem scale.



Clockwise from Opposite: The Okavango Delta is home to Africa's largest population of elephants © Eiko Jones. Mosivas, or fishing baskets, have been used by Angolan fishers like Hilario Kandonga for generations © Roshni Lodhia. A young woman carries washed clothes from the Cuito River, which flows through her village, Livambi, en route to the Okavango River © Roshni Lodhia. A painted reed frog © AfriPics.com/Alamy Stock Photo.



Nature and Water

“**JUST THREE YEARS AGO**, TNC was leading on two water funds in Africa. Today, thanks to the outcomes achieved with partners, there are 15 water funds in progress on the continent—with 70 percent being led by partners. That number could double or triple.

People come to us because they’ve seen that water funds get results. They bring together the public and private sectors to implement nature-based solutions for water benefits, community benefits, biodiversity benefits, and climate benefits.

If the watershed is outside our priority areas, we support others to take the lead. We provide resources, coaching, and a standardized methodology, and they can be the boots on the ground.

This is the true spirit of Ubuntu: We can go much further together. This is why I always want to keep on expanding the bounds and saying we can do more.”

Fred Kihara | TNC Africa Water Funds Director

■ MILESTONE | SCALING REGIONALLY

To drive rapid and cost-effective scaling of watershed investment programs, TNC partnered with Pegasys, a South Africa-based water management consulting firm, to create the Nature for Water Facility. Together, we are providing local champions with support from an international team with expertise in hydrology, ecology, governance, finance, and project management.

Left: Tanzania’s Usambara Mountains, site of the new Tanga Water Fund, is home to eight species of chameleon, three of which are endemic, including this two-horned chameleon © Roshni Lodhia. **Right:** Blyde River Canyon is a priority landscape in the new Kruger to Canyons Catchment Investment Program in South Africa © imageBROKER/Alamy Stock Photo.

■ MILESTONE | KENYA

The Eldoret-Iten Water Fund completed the final stages of the two-year development process and officially launched in August. The water fund will focus on the reforestation of three watersheds, alternative economic opportunities for farmers, and wetland restoration. The mountainous watersheds are biodiversity hotspots, home to birds like the African crowned eagle and Hartlaub's turaco.

■ MILESTONE | KENYA

In Kenya's Upper Tana watershed, soil erosion from 300,000 small-scale farms has been disrupting the water supply for 9 million people. Here, we are fixing farms and forests to achieve a clean and reliable water source, conserved and restored nature, and improved community benefits. The Upper Tana-Nairobi Water Fund—the first water fund in Africa—has reached maturity and is now an independent Kenyan charitable trust.

■ MILESTONE | SOUTH AFRICA

In the Greater Cape Town Region, invasive plants “steal” 13 billion gallons from the water supply, crowd out water-wise fynbos plants, and threaten the area's rare freshwater biodiversity. We are working with partners in the Greater Cape Town Water Fund to conduct one of the largest freshwater ecosystem restoration efforts ever undertaken in South Africa. This year, the water fund received a \$2.75 million commitment from the City of Cape Town.

■ ON THE HORIZON

We are co-leading development of three new programs that will make strong contributions to achieving TNC's Global 2030 Goals: the **Kruger to Canyons Catchment Investment Program** (South Africa), the **Tanga Water Fund** (Tanzania), and the **Jumuiya Water Fund** (Mombasa, Kenya).

IMPACTS TO DATE:

Upper Tana-Nairobi Water Fund

89,000

FARMED ACRES
UNDER IMPROVED
MANAGEMENT

52,000

FARMERS BENEFITING

4M

TREES PLANTED

Greater Cape Town Water Fund

145,000

ACRES CLEARED OF
INVASIVE ALIEN PLANTS

3B

GALLONS OF WATER
RECLAIMED PER YEAR

40%

OF GREEN JOBS CREATED
ARE HELD BY WOMEN



Protecting the Endangered Redfin



The Greater Cape Town Water Fund’s invasive pine removal program is delivering more water for people and reclaiming habitat for the area’s native fynbos plants. But what is it doing for life beneath the surface?

WHEN MOST PEOPLE PICTURE endangered African wildlife, their thoughts turn to black rhinos or mountain gorillas or similar large, charismatic mammals.

Giant redfin? Probably not.

The giant redfin is an endangered fish found in only three streams near Cape Town, at the southwestern tip of South Africa. It was only scientifically discovered in the last decade, showing just how much there still is to discover in South Africa’s streams and rivers.

The giant redfin is the largest of 16 redfin species found in South Africa. These species are part a freshwater fish family commonly known as minnows. In the breeding season, males flaunt bright red bases on their fins and knobby growths called tubercles on their heads.

Giant redfin face significant challenges and, as is so often the case, what affects fish also affects people. Both need clean and plentiful water.

In 2018, TNC helped launch the Greater Cape Town Water Fund (GCTWF) to address the region’s long-term water security concerns while providing

near-term ecological solutions. Through the water fund, TNC is supporting the removal of invasive plants that are contributing to the area’s water shortages.

Invasive trees soak up about 13 billion gallons a year in the region’s catchments. Watersheds in the Western Cape province lose up to 31 percent of the mean annual runoff and 9 percent of registered water use because of invasive plants. In an area where every drop of water counts, those losses are significant not just for local residents but also for natural communities.

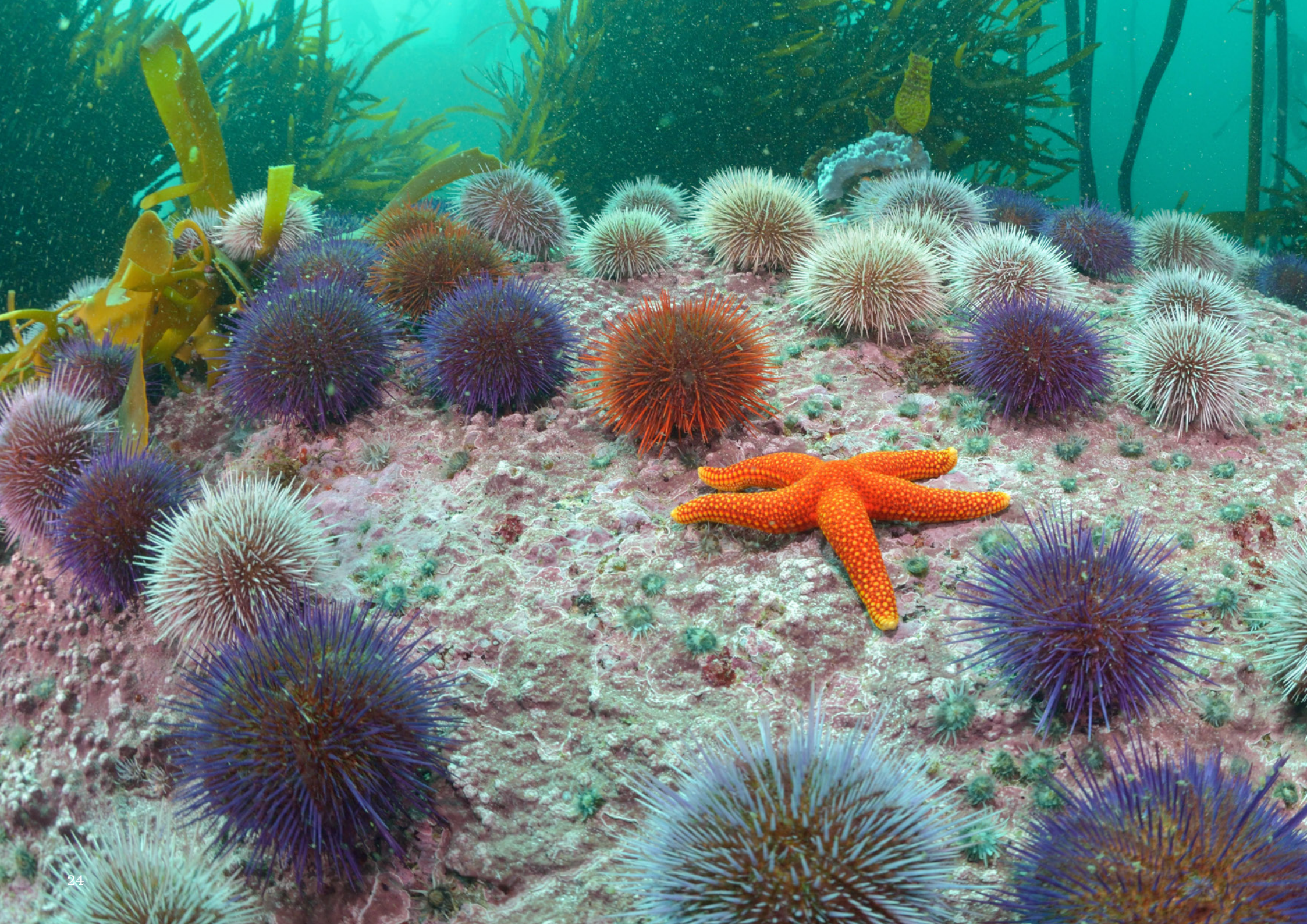
The Cape Floristic Region is one of the most botanically diverse areas in the world—it contains 3 percent of the world’s plant life and more than 20 percent of Africa’s. Those plants face well-documented repercussions from invasive flora.

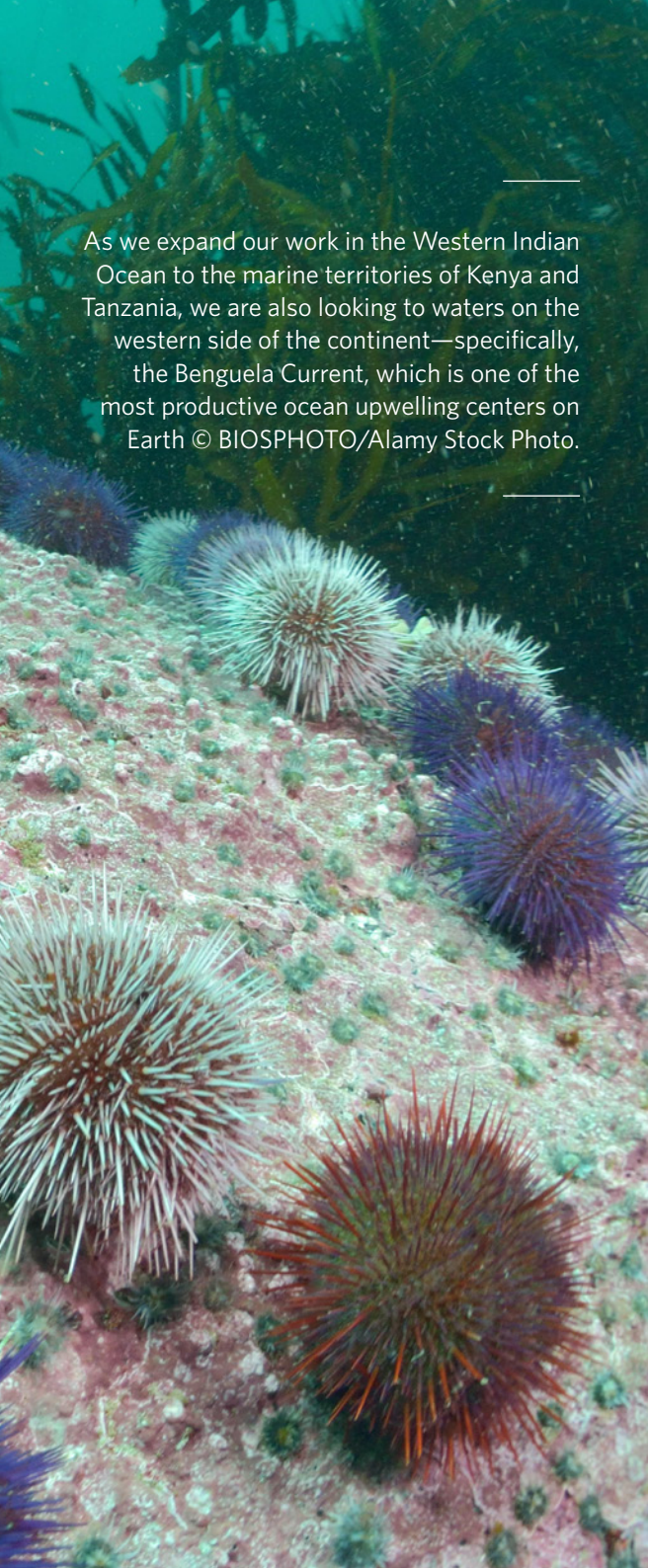
So does the river and its inhabitants. Data collected thus far show that removing these invasives improves the quality and quantity of water flowing through those rivers. These benefits ensure that endangered fish, including the redfin, have the conditions they need to thrive.

 [Watch a Video
nature.org/GiantRedfin](https://www.nature.org/GiantRedfin)

Clockwise from Opposite: Giant reedfin are confirmed to live in only three locations in the South African Cape; through the GCTWF, TNC is supporting school groups to learn about the health of their local rivers; the giant reedfin was celebrated at a festival that included a giant sculpture made by artist Chip Snaddon with the help of community members; Bruce Paxton samples freshwater biodiversity in the Theewaterskloof catchment, South Africa © Jeremy Shelton.





An underwater photograph showing a seabed covered with numerous sea urchins. The urchins are in various colors, including purple, blue, and reddish-brown. The water is clear, and the seabed is a mix of sand and small rocks.

As we expand our work in the Western Indian Ocean to the marine territories of Kenya and Tanzania, we are also looking to waters on the western side of the continent—specifically, the Benguela Current, which is one of the most productive ocean upwelling centers on Earth © BIOSPHOTO/Alamy Stock Photo.

OCEAN

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It seems to me that the natural world is the greatest source of excitement; the greatest source of visual beauty; the greatest source of intellectual interest. It is the greatest source of so much in life that makes life worth living.

David Attenborough

Conflict among competing uses, such as artisanal fishing and oil extraction, is depleting fisheries and destroying ocean habitats. Through a newly expanded marine program, we are working at all levels—from supporting community-led coastal and marine protection efforts to building on the successful debt conversion in Seychelles.

By blending science, multi-stakeholder negotiations, government relations, and innovative financing, we can help build sustainable blue economies in other African nations and scale up programs that protect marine diversity and enhance climate change resilience.

■ MILESTONE | **SEYCHELLES**

Seychelles used a comprehensive and equitable marine spatial plan process to protect more than 410,000 square kilometers, a commitment of the Seychelles–TNC debt conversion. A team of TNC scientists recently measured the benefits of its marine protected areas (MPAs) to local people.

The ecosystem services report showed that the MPAs house about 156.7 million metric tons of blue carbon, that coral reefs generate \$51.5 million annually from activities like snorkeling, and that 18 percent of people living in low-lying areas benefit from the storm protection provided by reefs in or beside protected areas.

Overall, the results suggest that Seychelles’ protected areas contribute significantly toward protecting the values underpinning the nation’s Blue Economy. The data generated through this project not only can strengthen existing knowledge and fill data gaps on human uses that had been less widely considered, but also can help guide development of future management plans in other locations around the world.

■ MILESTONE | **TANZANIA**

In the shallow waters around the island of Zanzibar, women can be seen hard at work, wading over to lines of seaweed hanging from lines of rope. Eventually, this seaweed could end up in anything from a carton of ice cream to a tube of toothpaste.

In Tanzania, seaweed farming is a major industry, employing over 25,000 people, 80 percent of whom are women. Here, TNC is collaborating with corporate buyers and the government to train seaweed farmers on best management practices that would protect the environment and increase productivity.

Since June 2021, the project has trained nearly 200 farmers and improved management of over 1,200 acres of ocean area. After the first six months, project leads were already starting to see environmental benefits, such as a 20 percent reduction in farmers using mangroves for stakes, and a 44 percent reduction in plastic debris being disposed into the ocean.

Increases in production are expected after the first year, but in the meantime, farmers are enjoying the benefit of having a guaranteed buyer for their harvests.

■ ON THE HORIZON | **BENGUELA CURRENT**

The Benguela Current is a cold, nutrient-rich ocean current that flows northward from the tip of South Africa past the coastlines of Namibia and Angola. The current nourishes critical fisheries and unique mammals and birds such as the Cape fur seal and the African penguin. Our vision is to support these countries and the regional cooperation and governance they need to increase their level of ocean protection and develop sustainable financing for long-term protection of the Benguela Current.

Top: Mondy Muhando, TNC's seaweed technician, trains 40 seaweed farmers in Tumbe, Pemba Island, on sustainable and improved seaweed farming practices. For example, students learn how to use the double-made loop. This technique, in which two seedlings are tied on one spot, can double or triple production. © Roshni Lodhia

Bottom Left: A whale shark swims off the coast of Seychelles © WaterFrame/Alamy Stock Photo.

Bottom Right: Therence Labrosse and his son, Derrick, go trap fishing in Seychelles. Therence says fishing is much harder now compared with when he was younger and that they have to go farther out to catch fish. © Roshni Lodhia



 [Watch a Video
nature.org/TZSeaweed](https://www.nature.org/TZSeaweed)

Mother Mangrove

Women are coming to the rescue for Kenya's coastal mangroves and providing benefits to wildlife, community livelihoods, and the climate.



MANGROVES MAY BE THE super trees of the plant world. Not only do they prevent coastal erosion and provide a buffer against storm surge, but they also absorb about *four times* more carbon than their terrestrial counterparts, making them especially important in tackling climate change.

They also provide important habitat for a variety of animals, including crabs, the dominant target species for fishers in the area.

Lamu County is home to more than 60 percent of Kenya's mangroves, and community members depend on them for things like construction material, livestock fodder, and medicine. But for many years, the mangroves were being cut too fast, and the forests couldn't replenish quickly enough.

Luckily, these super trees have superheroes: local women. Zulfa Hassan, known locally as Mama Mikoko (or Mother Mangrove), was intrigued when TNC and other partners, including Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT), Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute, and Kenya Forestry

Clockwise from Far Left: Zulfa Hassan © Sarah Waiswa. Mangrove propagules near Mtangawanda Village on Pate Island, Kenya © Roshni Lodhia. Members of the Mtangawanda Women's Association walk to a mangrove restoration site © Roshni Lodhia.

Research Institute, visited Mtangawanda Village and identified mangrove restoration as a community need.

A few years later, the villagers and members of the Pate Marine Community Conservancy invited them back to provide support in science-based mangrove restoration. Zulfa began learning about how extractive practices, such as producing limestone chalk for building materials, were harming the mangroves.

"We knew loggers cut mangroves to get money but didn't realize they are destroying mangroves in the process," Zulfa said. "These organizations helped us to understand a lot about mangroves—we previously didn't know how to plant them or how to collect propagules."

Zulfa formed the Mtangawanda Women's Association and, together with other women's groups in nearby Pate Island and Kiunga Village, they have planted over 61,000 mangroves in about 30 acres of degraded mangrove area.

The community has already seen an increase in numbers of aquatic invertebrates.

"Nowadays, fishers tell us that they pass by our plantations and see crabs sleeping," Zulfa said.

Many of the women involved are directly benefiting, too, by participating in NRT's microfinance group, through which they can apply for loans to start sustainable businesses.

TNC supported Lamu communities in establishing two community forest associations and formally securing tenure rights for co-management of mangroves through forest management agreements. New participatory forest management plans will guide sustainable mangrove management for the next five years.



Read More
nature.org/KenyaMangroves

CLIMATE

“

I believe the only qualification you need
for you to conserve the environment is
the fact that you live on this planet.

Anita Soina | Maasai youth climate activist



A tree in Loango
National Park, Gabon
© Roshni Lodhia.

Climate change is not a distant threat to Africa—it is happening now. So in addition to helping stem the tide of rising temperatures through natural climate solutions, such as reforestation, we must help nature and people adapt to drought, larger and more frequent wildfires, floods, and other challenges.

■ MILESTONE | WESTERN TANZANIA

On the shores of Lake Tanganyika in western Tanzania, everything is interconnected. Topsoil erosion from unsustainable agriculture not only causes low crop productivity and leads to farms expanding into forested areas, but it also increases sedimentation into the lake, damaging fisheries and forcing more fishers back to agriculture to feed their families.

A climate-smart agriculture (CSA) program through the Tuungane Project aims to stop this cycle and has already reached over 20,000 farmers with more drought-resistant crops and techniques to improve soil health and increase their yields.

“When we adhered to the training directives, I found that my situation changed,” said Deodatha Yusufu, a farmer from Mgambo Village, about the program. “I am empowered in my life and I am now food secure. That is why we call it sustainable agriculture: We conserve so that our grandchildren and their grandchildren can benefit on the knowledge through this training.”

■ EXPANDING THE AFRICA FOREST CARBON CATALYST

The AFCC is building a pipeline to dramatically accelerate the supply of scalable carbon projects on the market, delivering benefits for climate, conservation, and communities. Additionally, the AFCC is committed to improving global conditions for carbon progress. We focus on three areas—markets, policy, and science. The aim is to promote collaboration, increase quality and integrity, and improve efficiency on the way to project validation and verification. This scaling is possible in great part thanks to the innovative Scale Up Fund for conservation, founded by TNC Africa Council members John Bernstein and Fred Wakeman.

■ MILESTONE | COASTAL KENYA

Several of the first grant recipients from TNC’s Africa Forest Carbon Catalyst (AFCC) are now on solid financial footing. For example, the AFCC helped Komaza, a social enterprise that supports smallholder farmers with commercial agroforestry and timber woodlots, to diversify its tree planting, pilot new business models, and analyze its environmental and social impact.

Since 2020, when the AFCC supported the development of a financial mechanism, Komaza has unlocked \$28 million in direct investment. So far Komaza’s work has led to over 19,000 restored acres, 189,000 tons of carbon dioxide stored annually, and 22,000 people with improved livelihoods. Now Komaza aims to plant a billion trees across Africa by 2030.

■ ON THE HORIZON | CONGO BASIN

The Congo Basin is the world’s second largest tropical rainforest and a key player in the fight against global temperature rise. TNC is providing financial and technical support that governments and entities in this region need to enter the voluntary carbon market, which will provide greater economic incentives for forest protection.

Through AFCC grants, TNC’s global network of scientists (see next page), and a burgeoning Congo Basin strategy, TNC is sharing its expertise and resources in this critically important region.



A Greener Way to Use Forests

The Congo Basin is the world’s largest carbon sink—it absorbs more carbon than it releases. Lower-impact forestry methods used here can have a significant impact on global climate outcomes.

THE TRACKS WERE FRESH in the mud. A leopard had walked across the logging access road between dusk and dawn. And it wasn’t the first animal sighting of the week—forest elephants and western lowland gorillas carried out their daily routines in the forest just as the loggers carried out theirs. Stingless sweat bees made their presence known, too, congregating by the hundreds on any exposed skin perspiring in the midday sun.

The animals provided a wild reminder that a sustainably managed forest is a forest before logging begins and a forest after logging ends.

Left: Gabon, which is part of the Congo Basin, has one of the highest levels of forest cover in the world © Roshni Lodhia. **Right:** Forest technicians in Congo measure a stump's diameter to estimate its carbon storage © Ethan Belair.

Peter Ellis and Ethan Belair, two members of TNC's global Natural Climate Solutions Science team, were in Republic of the Congo to train forest technicians from a local forestry consultant group on protocol for estimating carbon emissions from logging and ways to reduce it. Now, for the first time ever, the scientific community has baseline data that will accurately quantify the logging impacts in northern Congo.

TNC developed reduced impact logging for climate (RIL-C), a system of selective logging that can maintain timber harvests while cutting carbon emissions by 50 percent. Groups that implement RIL-C practices can reduce carbon emissions and measure these improvements against a baseline, enabling them access to carbon financing.

The Government of Congo and some large logging concessions are interested in using RIL-C to keep more carbon in their forests and generate voluntary carbon credits. TNC will assist logging groups in developing plans tailored to the region to maximize the results.

“Loggers need to be our allies in this fight against climate change and protecting our environment,” Peter said. “If logging went away in some tropical forests around the world, the alternative would be much more destructive forms of land use, like oil palm, which replaces sustainably logged forests with a desert of one species with very little biodiversity and much less carbon.”

How do you cut carbon emissions from logging?

On average, for every one tree logged, six trees in the forest are lost as collateral damage. Simple steps can reduce that amount by about half:



AVOID CUTTING HOLLOW TREES



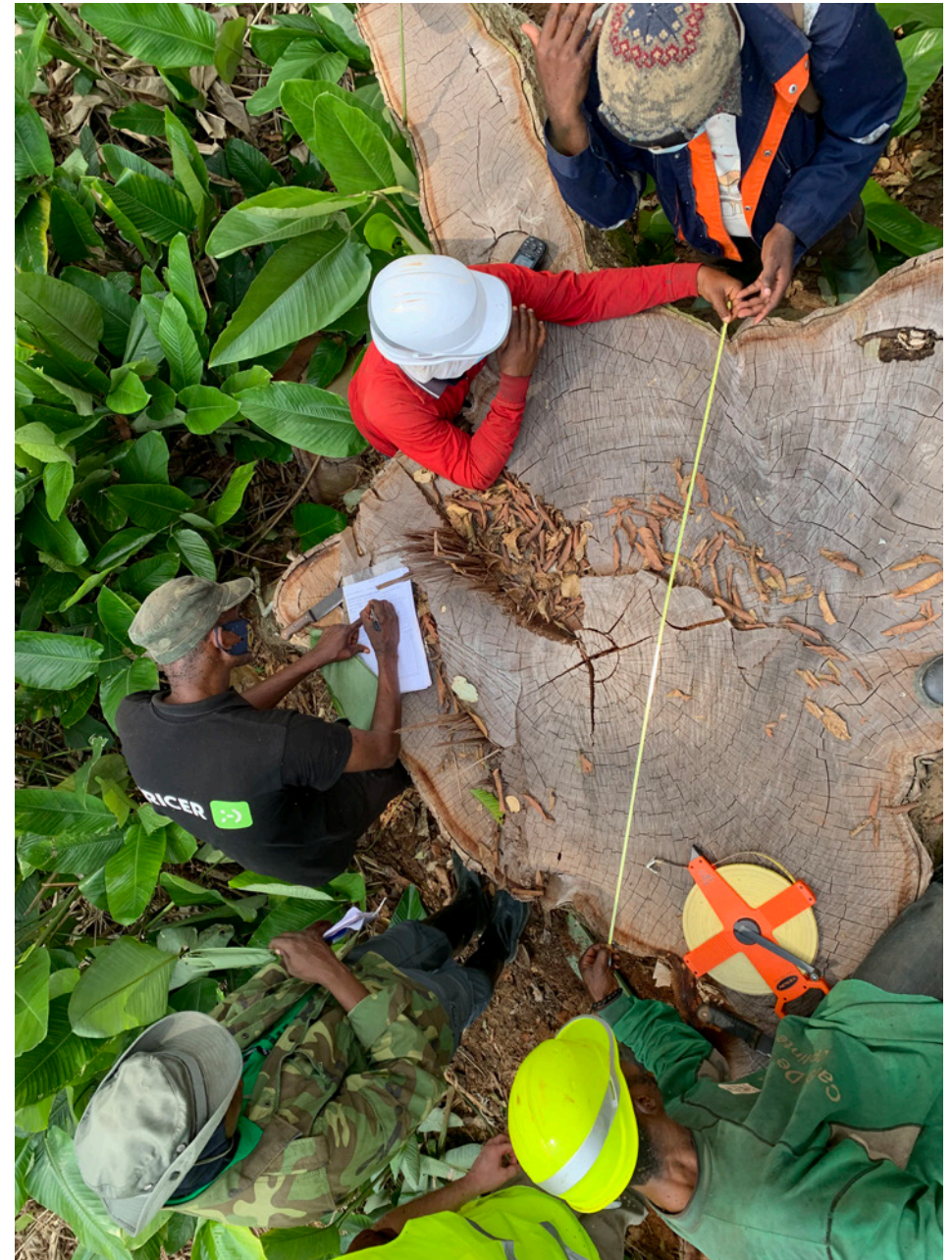
NARROWER AND STRAIGHTER ROADS



DIRECTIONAL FELLING



LIGHTER MACHINERY



Giving Together

Supporters join forces for more meaningful and lasting impact for women and girls across the region.



Students at Lagosa Secondary School—including Teresia Gabriel, pictured below left—enjoy the extra time for homework and friendship that living in the dorm provides © Roshni Lodhia.

IT WAS A LATE DAY in March when Teresia Gabriel began to tell her story. Wendy Bennett leaned in, listening closely. The Zoom call connection was wonky, the image occasionally frozen, the words sometimes garbled. Still, it was thrilling. From western Tanzania, Teresia spoke to dozens of TNC supporters across North America, recalling how hard it once was for her to attend school—she walked 8 miles each morning, retracing her steps each evening—and how a new girls’ dormitory changed everything.

“Hearing from her, listening to her earnest voice, confirmed the impact of my giving,” says Wendy, co-founder of the Africa Affinity Group for Women and Girls (AAG) and a TNC Africa Council member. AAG support for the new dormitory helped create a world of possibilities for girls who once had little hope of an education. “It’s just one example,” says Wendy, “of why I’m so committed to this work.”

In 2017, when Wendy and fellow Africa Council member Teresa Beck joined forces to launch the AAG, they were propelled by a simple idea: We can do

more good together than we can alone. Ever since, the giving group has been changing lives—and improving conservation outcomes. Today, AAG members have plenty of stories to tell about their support for sustainable livelihoods, leadership training, healthcare access, and education. These stories demonstrate again and again how improved well-being for people means communities are able to take better care of their lands and waters.

The group has discovered something else, too. Their giving—that simple idea of shared commitment—has enriched their own lives with friendships, inspiration, and a sense of purpose. “There’s an equation to successful philanthropy,” says Teresa. “The benefits really go both ways.”

For those who joined the Zoom call, that message came through loud and clear: Across the miles, across cultures and generations, we are all bound together. We share the same world, the same future. And the benefits of giving—some tangible, some impossible to measure—are unmistakable and enduring.



18,000

Thanks to the AAG, that's how many women benefit from sustainable livelihoods that also support conservation. Seaweed farming in Tanzania, octopus fishing in Kenya, invasives clearing in South Africa—across the landscape, the AAG is creating meaningful impact.

The group has sparked philanthropy from others, too, leveraging more than \$2 million in additional gifts, widening the circle of generosity, expanding the community of giving, and empowering more and more women and girls across the continent.



Read More
nature.org/WomenInAfrica

Leave a Legacy

The lesson of the mugumo tree.

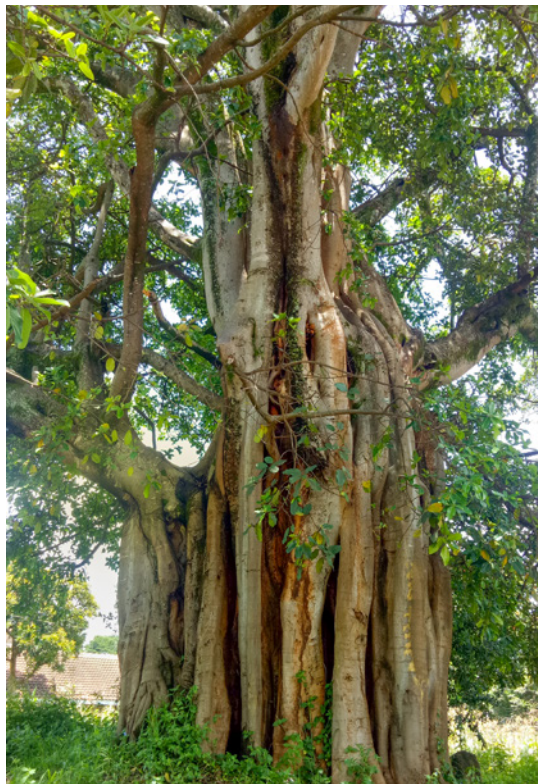


◀ Edwin Macharia, his daughter, Nancy, and his late wife, Lorna Irungu-Macharia, loved exploring Kenya's wild places together. Edwin's commitment to TNC is a way to honor Lorna and leave a legacy for his daughter and children across the globe.



Join the Legacy Club

Contact Cori at cmessinger@tnc.org to learn more about the Legacy Club and other ways to make a lasting difference in Africa.



MUGUMO TREES CAN LIVE for 500 years, their branches spreading low and wide, casting a shadow that settles on the earth below like a protective mantle, a place of comfort and peace. Revered for its size and strength, the tree is valued for its enormous capacity to conserve moisture and increase soil fertility. For some, the tree is sacred, a home for ancestral spirits. Prayers are offered beneath this living shrine.

Growing up in Kenya, Edwin Macharia remembers taking shelter under a mugumo tree. He was in school one day when the weather grew dark and a violent thunderstorm blew through, tearing the roof from the building. For a year afterward, until the roof was repaired, the students met outside, continuing their learning beneath the branches of a mugumo tree.

Today, Edwin, a global managing partner at Dalberg Global Development Advisors, recalls that childhood experience as a vivid reminder that nature can be our protector and ally. It's a concept he wants his young daughter to understand: In a world grappling with daunting environmental challenges, nature's power can be harnessed for good, safeguarding ecosystems and helping communities to thrive.

TNC is built on this idea—that nature and people can and must coexist. That taking care of nature helps nature to take care of us. “TNC’s role in bending the curve toward harmonious coexistence couldn’t be more important,” says Edwin, who joined the Africa Council in 2018. Two years later, he was nominated to TNC’s Board of Directors.

Based in Nairobi, Edwin manages a demanding career and family schedule, but he makes room for volunteer commitments like TNC—and for meaningful giving. “Having seen TNC’s impact in Africa, joining the Legacy Club just made sense,” he says. “It’s a tangible way for me to take care of nature and, in turn, take care of my daughter—and all children.”

By designating TNC Africa in his estate plans, Edwin joins 30,000 TNC Legacy Club members—and most of his fellow council members—in making a remarkable gift to the future. Together with our loyal supporters, we can help to ensure enduring progress, a more harmonious world. Like the mugumo tree, we can leave a legacy that stands for generations.

Africa Council

Teresa Beck
Wendy Bennett
John Bernstein
Joanna Brown
Shona Brown

Phillip Ihenacho
Pamela Isdell
Elsie Kanza
Dennis Keller
Tom Lalampaa

Edwin Macharia
James Mworio
Mary Anne Rogers
Karim Shariff
Fred Wakeman

We are forever grateful to the many Africa Council members who have made generous legacy commitments. Their vision and generosity are helping to support a better future for our world.



Left: A mugumo tree © Kenyan nature/Shutterstock.

Right: Mother and baby Maasai giraffe, Maasai Mara National Reserve, Kenya © Dhir Jakharia/TNC Photo Contest 2021.

Back Cover: Children play at the primary school in Okoumi Ikassa Village on Lake Avanga, Gabon © Roshni Lodhia.

Africa Impact 2008-2022

ACRES UNDER CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT:



29,512,200

LAND



80,400

FRESHWATER



102,802,000

OCEAN



192

PARTNERS



1,648,300

PEOPLE BENEFITING



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The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends.