



BIG LIFE FOUNDATION

QUARTERLY REPORT (OCT-DEC 2015)

MISSION STATEMENT

***“On the ground in Africa, partnering with communities
to protect nature for the benefit of all.”***

DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Another festive season has come and gone, and for Big Life this often means trouble. Poachers don’t take holidays, and so neither does our ranger network. We are always on high alert come December and this year brought the expected increase in poaching incidents, most of them related to bush meat.

The good news, however, was that we did not have one confirmed incident of elephant poaching in our core operating area over this quarter. But this is no reason to relax, as there were a number of elephant poaching incidents in neighboring areas, and there is still ivory moving through the ecosystem.

Sadly, it was a very bad quarter for predators, and lions in particular. There were at least eight lions killed, three of them in a single poisoning incident. While the majority of killings were outside of the area covered by Big Life’s predator compensation program, this is no consolation as most of these lions were from the greater Amboseli population, and their deaths are a huge loss.

Looking forward however, we are planning the next series of Maasai Olympics sports events for 2016, as part of the effort to discourage lion killing. More broadly, we have a host of exciting thoughts and plans, too many to discuss here.

The end of the year is also a good time for reflection and giving thanks. Much of our work is done in close partnership with the Kenya Wildlife Service, other NGOs, and local communities, and these partners all deserve huge thanks and credit. And to all of the readers that support Big Life in whatever way you can, we all thank you.



*Richard Bonham,
Director of Operations, Big Life Kenya*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AOO	Area of Operation
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
DSWT	David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust
HEC	Human Elephant Conflict
HWC	Human Wildlife Conflict
IPZ	Intensive Protection Zone
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Service
MEI	Moran Education Initiative
MO	Maasai Olympics
MWCT	Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust
OP	Observation Post
PCF	Predator Compensation Fund
RDU	Rapid Deployment Unit
TANAPA	Tanzania National Parks

Wildlife Security

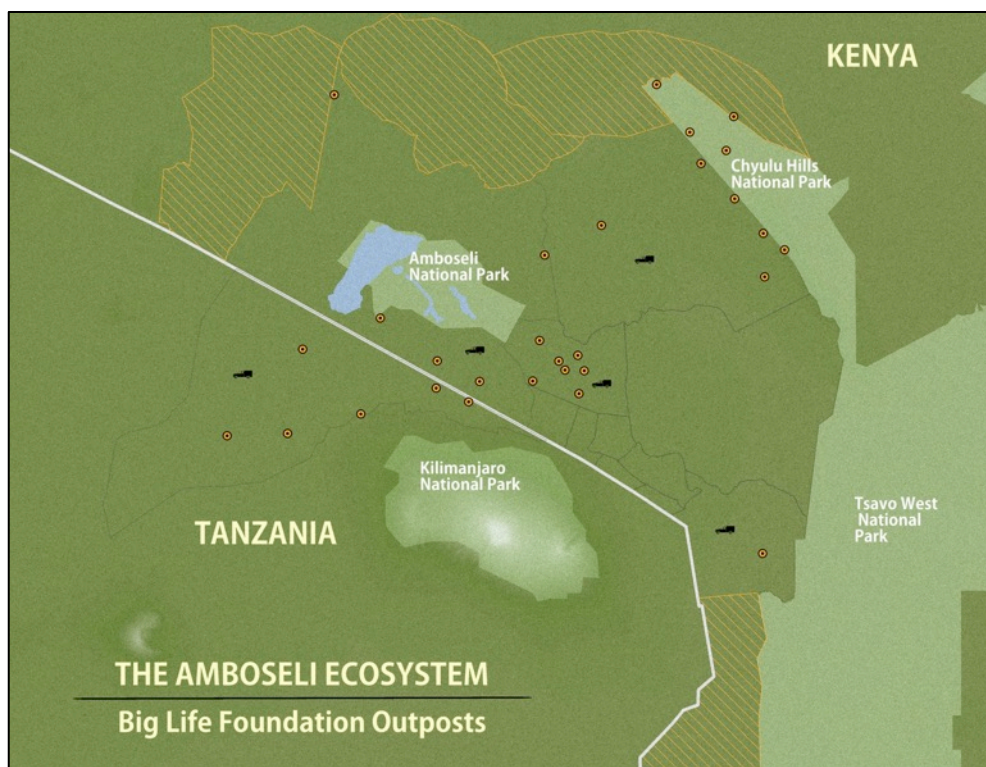
During the fourth quarter Big Life rangers arrested **51** suspects in **26** incidents of illegal activity (see table on next page). While the total number of incidents and arrests was lower than in the previous quarter, wildlife-poaching incidents were higher, as is often the case at the end of the year. **Fourteen suspects were arrested in eight poaching-related incidents.**

Over the last quarter of 2015, Big Life rangers patrolled **21,596 km** by foot and **63,902 km** by vehicle.

BIG LIFE RANGERS

There are a total of 35 units (six in Tanzania managed by our Honeyguide Foundation partners), comprised of approximately 280 rangers, in the wildlife-security network managed by Big Life. This provides nearly comprehensive coverage across the Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro landscape.

On the Kenyan side of the ecosystem, there are 22 permanent ranger outposts, four mobile units, a Rapid Deployment Unit (RDU) and two permanent observation posts (OP's) covering a total of 1,678,000 acres (679,000 hectares). However, there are still important areas with insufficient attention and further outposts are being planned. We are actively fundraising for this effort; if you are interested please email donations@biglife.org for additional information.



MAP: Big Life areas of operation in Kenya and Tanzania. Orange dots represent Big Life ranger outposts, black cars are mobile units, and orange stripes are areas covered by the RDU.

INCIDENTS AND ARRESTS

Crime category	Crime type	Incidents				Suspects arrested			
		Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Poaching	Trophy	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
	Bush Meat	-	3	1	4	-	6	2	8
	Trading in wildlife trophies	2	-	-	2	3	-	-	3
Poaching Intention	Possession of snares	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	2
Habitat Destruction	Charcoal	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1
	Logging	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	1
	Firewood	-	3	-	3	-	12	-	12
Encroachment	Illegal grazing	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	1
	Illegal water pumping	1	1	-	2	1	2	-	3
	Trespassing	2	1	-	3	5	1	-	6
Community Crimes	Drug possession	1	-	-	1	2	-	-	2
	Theft	2	1	-	3	4	1	-	5
	Assault	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	1
	Murder	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	1
	Road accident	-	-	1	1	-	-	4	4
TOTAL		12	10	4	26	19	22	9	51

ITEMS RECOVERED IN ARRESTS

Item	Total
Ivory (whole)	1 tusk
Ivory (pieces)	4.475Kg
Poison	200g
Chainsaw	1
Bhang (marijuana)	1Kg
Vehicle >1ton	5
Vehicle <1ton	1
Poisoned arrows	4
Non-poisoned arrows	3

Item	Total
Bow	1
Charcoal bags	2
Knife	3
Machete	7
Motorbike	4
Snares	32
Water pumps	3
Bicycle	4
Torch	4

ELEPHANT INCIDENTS

No confirmed elephant poaching incidents occurred within our area of operation (AOO) over the reporting period. However, **four people were arrested in connection with trophy dealing.**

- 2nd October 2015: One suspected (*pictured below left*) poacher was arrested with 275g of ivory pieces and 200g of poison and pieces of ivory he was trying to sell.
- 7th October 2015: Two suspects were arrested with ivory pieces weighing 4.2 kgs
- 4th December 2015: One suspect was arrested with a whole piece of ivory, four poisoned arrows, three non-poisoned arrows, one bow, two cable snares and a knife (*pictured below right*).



ELEPHANT MORTALITIES

Total dead: 7

Total dead *within* Big Life's AOO: 6

Total dead *outside* Big Life's AOO: 1

During the reporting period **seven elephant mortalities** were recorded, (**three natural, three unknown & one euthanized**), none of which were confirmed to be human-caused.

Six carcasses were discovered within our AOO, while the seventh was discovered inside Amboseli National Park. Four animals were calves (below four years) and the remaining three were adults. Tusks were recovered in five cases.

Details on all elephant deaths (within and outside BLF AOO):

- *27th October 2015:* An informer reported an elephant carcass at Engong'u Narok swamp, Amboseli National Park. A Big Life team immediately responded and confirmed that the carcass was of a male calf of approximately 2 ½ years old. It was suspected to have died naturally as there were no injuries or attempts to remove the ivory.
- *29th October 2015:* An elephant herd raided farms in Elerai, Kimana at night. They were scared from the farms by a group of farmers. As the elephants fled one adult male of approximately 43 years stepped on abandoned pit latrine floor, which collapsed under his weight. The animal broke his hind leg and treatment was deemed impossible. The animal was subsequently euthanized by KWS. (*pictured below*)



- *3rd November 2015:* A male calf of approximately three years old died of an infection on the trunk (presumed natural) at Inkoikumashi area, Olgulului. Both tusks were removed and handed to KWS Amboseli.
- *11th November 2015:* A Big Life team on patrol at Oldule area of Kitenden conservancy, Olgulului (near the Kenya-Tanzania border) came across a carcass of an adult female elephant. It was estimated to have died a week before. Both tusks were opportunistically pulled out (as opposed to cut out by poachers) and never recovered. Poisoning is suspected but the post-mortem was non-conclusive, so cause of death is unknown.
- *12th November 2015:* Mobile one team received information from a local chief from Oltiasika, Mbirikani, that an elephant carcass has been seen in the area. Olokurto and the Mobile one team confirmed that it was an adult female with no physical injuries. Both tusks were removed. Joint search teams comprising Big Life and Maasai Wilderness Conservation

Trust (MWCT) combed the area, and acting on a tip from a community member they recovered one tusk in the evening and the other at dawn the following day. The tusks had been removed and hidden separately. Though no wounds were found on the carcass the cause of death is unknown. (pictured below)



- 19th November 2015: While on patrol at Enkong'u Narok, Olgulului Bravo Oscar 2 came across an adult female carcass of approximately 50 years. Both tusks were present. No wounds were present so cause of death is suspected to be natural.
- 23rd November 2015: Bravo 3, while on patrol at Enkigir area, Kimana, came across a juvenile elephant carcass that was estimated to have died over a month before (cause of death unknown due to decomposition). It had decomposed severely and the sex could not be identified. It was approximately three years old and the tusks were missing.



ELEPHANT INJURIES

Treated: 3 – by the KWS/David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT) mobile vet

Not treated: 2

Details

Treated:

- *30th October 2015:* Unit Bravo Mike 7 came across an elephant that was having difficulty walking at Ol Donyo Lodge. The animal, named Tom, had been treated previously on three occasions for scrotum cancer. This time he had a spear wound on the rear right leg. The KWS vet was notified and the rangers kept monitoring the animal. Tom was tracked and treated on 1 November 2015.



- *12th November 2015:* Bravo Oscar 2 came across a sub-adult female elephant (named Jetta) that was limping. She has two suspected spear wounds, one the right hind leg while the other was at the back near the tail. The KWS Amboseli vet was called and the animal was successfully treated. *(pictured below)*



- *15th November 2015*: Rangers on patrol at Satao Elerai conservancy came across elephant tracks with a blood trail. After several hours tracking an injured adult bull of approximately 25 years, he was found at Dapodapo area of Kimana. KWS vet from Amboseli was called in and the animal was treated of a fresh spear wound on the right hind leg at the hip. (*pictured below*)



Not treated:

- *24th October 2015*: Sierra Echo and Bravo Kilo 8 while on patrol in Kimana came across a herd of four elephants. One was limping from what appeared to be an injury on its left hind leg. KWS Amboseli veterinarian was notified but was unable to respond that day. The individual was not seen again.
- *11th December 2015*: A team on patrol at Osewan saw an elephant with a wound on the rear left leg. After consultation with KWS it was determined that this animal has already been treated by KWS Kajiado at Maparasha recently and did not require additional follow-up.

BUSH MEAT POACHING

Poaching for bush meat continues throughout the ecosystem, especially in areas with high densities of both people and wildlife and along the extreme edges of Big Life’s AOO. Over the reporting period **10 suspects were arrested in five incidents** for bush-meat poaching or poaching intention.

Eight suspects were arrested after they killed (16 animals in total), while the remaining two were arrested prior to poaching.

	Eland	Lesser kudu	Giraffe	Dik-dik	Impala	Ostrich	Total
Oct.	1	-	2	-	-	-	3
Nov.	4	1	1	4	1	1	12
Dec.	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Total	5	1	4	4	1	1	16

Details:

- *6th November 2015:* With information from elders, Mailua conservancy rangers arrested one suspect with a knife, torch and impala meat in Mailua Town. They killed the animal at Enkusero area. Three accomplices (all Tanzanian nationals) managed to escape.
- *7th November 2015:* Bravo Kilo 6 arrested three suspects with eland meat. They used a machete to slash its legs. *(pictured below left)*



- *8th November 2015:* The RDU and Mailua conservancy rangers arrested two bush-meat poachers with dik-dik meat. *(pictured above right)*
- *13th December 2015:* RDU arrested two suspects with head from a Grant's gazelle and lesser kudu and five wire snares. *(pictured below)*



DE-SNARING

Thirty-one snares were recovered during both arrests and de-snaring patrols. Eleven were found on suspects in three arrest incidents, while 20 were found in the bush and destroyed by our rangers on patrol.

HABITAT DESTRUCTION

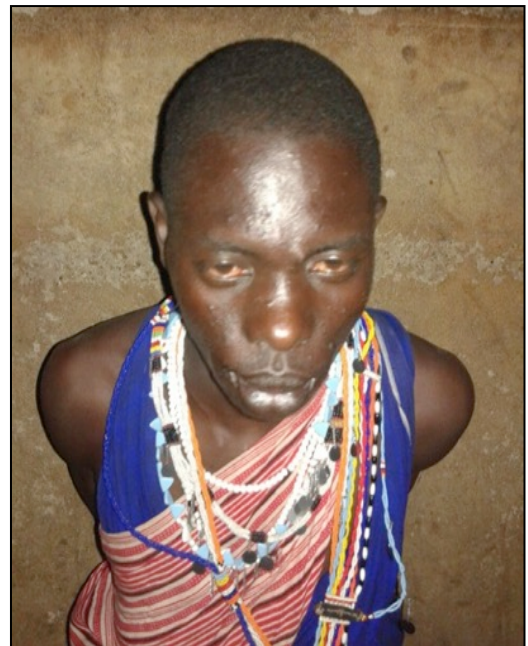
There was a **significant drop in habitat destruction** crimes recorded during the reporting period. **Fourteen arrests** were made in **five incidents**, when compared to last quarter (32 people arrested in 12 incidents). The majority of arrests this quarter were for firewood collection in conservation areas where it is not permitted.



Illegal firewood recovered & given to local school (left). Rangers destroy illegal charcoal kiln (right).

COMMUNITY CRIMES

Big Life rangers have continued to assist the community in apprehending various non-wildlife-related criminals. **Thirteen suspects were arrested** by our rangers: one for murder, one for assault, two for drug possession, four for hitting a pedestrian and running (*one suspect pictured right*), and five arrested for theft. Two trucks that were stolen from outside Big Life's AOO, destined for Tanzania, were recovered.



PROSECUTIONS

One bush-meat poaching case, involving five suspects who killed a giraffe, concluded during the reporting period. The suspects were given an option of Ksh 30,000 (\$300) fine each, or to serve a six-month jail term, by Taveta court after they admitted to subsistence hunting. Three suspects were able to pay the fine while the other two will serve the sentence.

Table: Ongoing court cases being monitored by Big Life staff

Date of Arrest	No. Suspects	Crime	Bond (USD)	Remarks
6-Jul-13	1	Trading in ivory	300	Out on bond.
26-Jul-14	2	Trophy poaching - 1 elephant	1,000	Out on bond.
1-Sep-14	3	Bush meat poaching - 1 eland	3,000	Warrant issued against 1 suspect out on bond. 2 still in remand.
12-Nov-14	3	Bush meat poaching - 3 gazelles	1,000	Warrant issued against 1 suspect who skipped bail
25-Dec-14	1	Bush meat poaching - 3 gazelles & 4 dik-diks	5,000	Remanded. Government chemist to submit report to confirm that it was indeed wildlife.
11-Jan-15	3	Bush meat poaching - 1 dik-dik		Out on bond.
16-Mar-15	8	Bush meat poaching - 1 eland	1,000	Warrant issued against all. They were out on bond
31-Mar-15	4	Laying snares		In remand
24-Apr-15	2	Spearing elephants	1,000	Out on bond.
17-May-15	1	Bush meat poaching - 3 grant gazelles, 1 impala & 2 dik-diks	Unk.	
11-Jun-15	2	Lion poisoning - 1 lion	1,000	Out on bond.
9-Jul-15	1	Trading in ivory	10,000	In remand.
29-Jul-15	3	Trophy poaching - 5 elephants	20,000	In remand.
7-Aug-15	1	Poaching intention	Unk.	In remand.
19-Aug-15	1	Bush meat poaching - 1 impala	Unk,	
9-Sep-15	3	Bush meat poaching - 2 giraffes, 1 zebra & 2 gerenuks	Unk.	
29-Sep-15	2	Bush meat poaching - 1 bush buck	600	One suspect released after pleading guilty because he's under-18. Others still in custody
2-Oct-15	1	Ivory trade	5,000	In remand.
6-Oct-15	2	Ivory trade	25,000	In remand.
6-Nov-15	1	Bush meat poaching - 1 impala	Unk.	
7-Nov-15	3	Bush meat poaching - 1 eland	Unk.	
8-Nov-15	2	Bush meat poaching - 1 dik-dik	Unk.	
4-Dec-15	1	Trophy poaching	500	Given an option of \$40 cash bail that he paid. Big Life recharged suspect
13-Dec-15	2	Bush meat poaching - 2 gazelles	Unk.	

RHINO PROGRAM

The total **population of black rhino** in the Chyulu Hills is **7**. All individuals are **healthy**.

Ongoing efforts to obtaining IPZ status (Intense Protection Zone), enabling inbound rhino translocation, are progressing well. It is vital that the remaining rhinos continue to prosper in order for this to be achieved. As other rhino habitats in Kenya reach carrying capacity, the future of the Chyulu Hills as black rhino range becomes more and more important for the species.

In order to qualify as an IPZ, the Chyulu Hills area needs to meet a minimum level of requirements, mostly to ensure that the rhino population (whether it be augmented by inbound translocations or not) receives sufficient protection and monitoring (and will continue to do so). The requirements yet to be fully met are the fencing of the eastern boundary of the Chyulu Hills National Park (CHNP, which is bordered by a large community), an upgrade of the road network, installation of an additional water point, and an increase in available security-specific manpower. BLF is continuing to fundraise for the above and together with key partners hope to achieve IPZ status by the end of 2016 if possible. However, there are still significant funds necessary in order to achieve this. Please email donations@biglife.org if you are interested in supporting this effort.



RHINO INCIDENTS

MORTALITIES

The rhino program suffered its second disappointment in 2015. On 27 November rhino rangers on patrol inside CHNP came across an **old rhino carcass, estimated to have died over eight months previously**. As the second rhino to have died in Chyulu Hills this year, it clearly indicates the difficulties experienced within the rhino program.

Though the carcass was completely decomposed (only bones remaining) the cause of death was determined to be from a snare. The primary, larger, horn was missing but the smaller horn was recovered. Pictured below is what remained of the rhinos foot.



Due to decomposition it was impossible to identify the individual, however all known ID'd rhinos have been sighted since the estimated date of death. In addition, the skull indicates an individual of 10-12 years of age; no rhinos of that age category have been identified over the past three years. Therefore, it is thought that this rhino was a new individual. Had he or she survived this would have been a huge boost to this special population, and all the more reason to achieve IPZ status as soon as possible and secure the future of the remaining rhino.

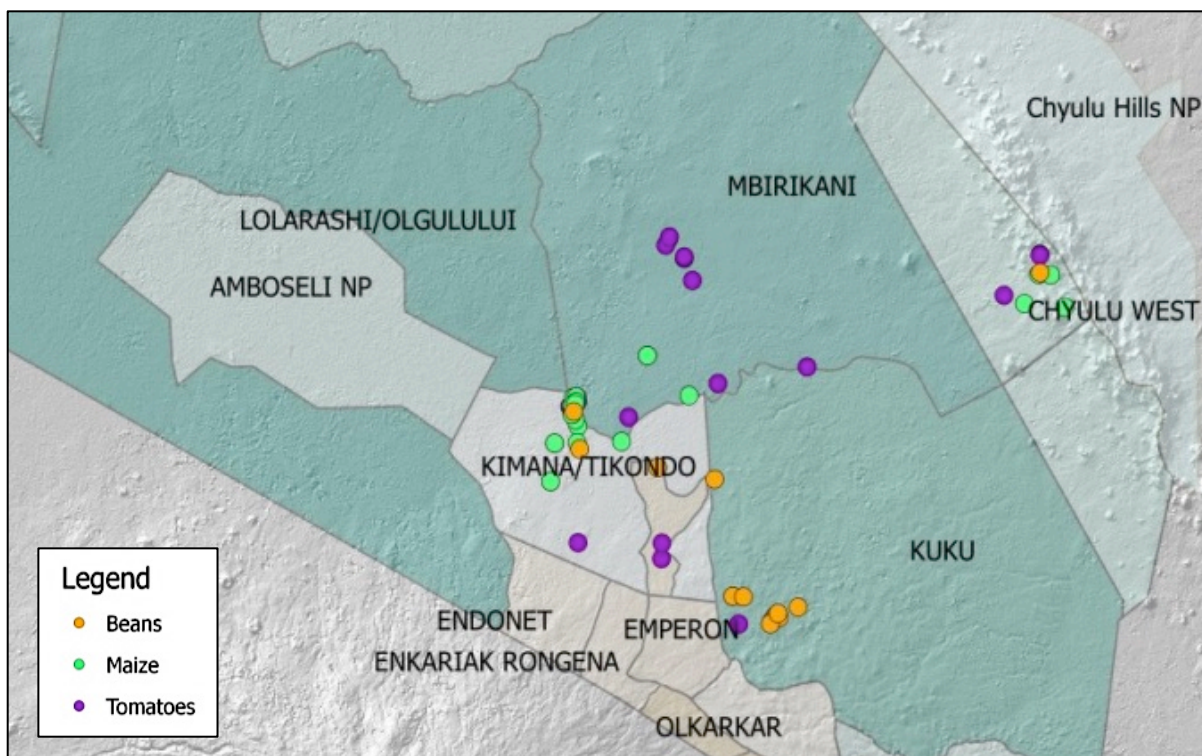
HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC), specifically **Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC)**, continues to be the **most significant threat** to the ongoing conservation of wildlife within the Amboseli Ecosystem. Incidents in which humans are injured or killed appear to be happening more regularly. This is partly due to the dry conditions, bringing humans and large wildlife species into more frequent contact, and may also be exacerbated as wildlife population numbers are increasing.

CROP-RAIDING & HUMAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICT

Crop-raiding by all species over the reporting period was relatively low; but elephants remain the most regular offenders. While all agricultural areas were affected, the majority of rain-fed areas experienced little conflict as planting had not yet begun. The spring-fed areas of Namelok and Isinet, and the pipeline-fed areas in Mbirikani and Kuku, experienced the highest rate of conflict. The season is a factor, but it is hoped that part of the reduced rate of conflict can be attributed to new ranger deployment and elephant mitigation methods, however it is far too soon to confirm.

Elephant and eland were the only species recorded as crop-raiders during the reporting period. Out of **74** recorded incidents, **elephants were responsible for 70**, and damaged 46 of the 47.9 acres of crops. This in comparison to a total of 230 crop-raiding incidents recorded in the previous quarter.



Map: Areas impacted by wildlife crop-raiding in the Amboseli ecosystem

Number of incidents and area damaged per crop species:

Crop	Incidents	Area damaged (Acres)
Beans	15	18.25
Capsicum	2	1
Paw paws	2	0.5
Maize	21	13.0
Kales	1	0.5
Tomatoes	24	11.8
Onions	4	1.75
Cabbages	1	0.5
Bananas	1	0.25
Mangoes	2	0.25
Sisal	1	0.125
Total	74	47.925

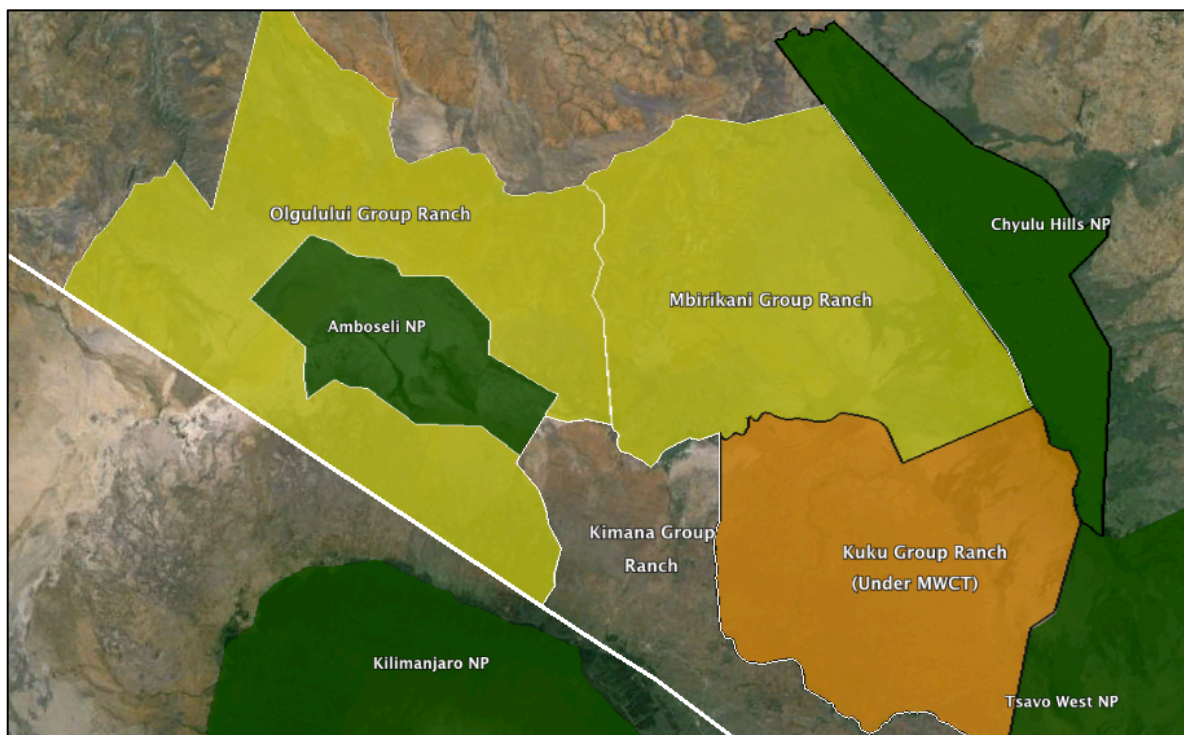
HUMAN INJURIES & DEATH

During the 4th quarter, two incidents involving wildlife led to human death.

- *2nd November 2015*: A 3-year-old child died from a snake bite in the Risa area, Olgulului. He was bitten inside a boma at night.
- *24th December 2015*: A man suffered serious injuries to the head and chest after he was attacked by a hippo at Marura, Mbirikani. Big Life and KWS visited the scene and confirmed the incident. The man later succumbed to his injuries and the hippo responsible was shot by KWS on 31 Dec.

PREDATOR PROTECTION PROGRAM

Big Life protects all the major predators of the Amboseli ecosystem through an innovative predator protection program on two group ranches. The core component of this protection program is livestock compensation (the Predator Compensation Fund or PCF), aimed at reducing the motivation for retaliatory killing of predators following livestock depredation. The fund pays livestock owners for a portion of the value of their livestock lost to predators, on condition that no predators are killed in retaliation. Big Life staff verify all depredations, and penalties are applied for poor husbandry. The community provides 30% of the total compensation paid bimonthly (every two months), and fines are applied if any predators are killed in PCF areas (Mbirikani and Olgulului group ranches, see map below). MWCT runs a similar program on neighbouring Kuku group ranch.



Map: Ranches covered by predator compensation in the Amboseli ecosystem

The second part of the Big Life predator protection strategy is focused on the warriors (morans) of the Maasai community, and is known as the Menye Layiok program. In Maasai culture, lion killing has traditionally been an important part of becoming a man. We have worked with partners to create the Maasai Olympics, a culturally relevant sporting event for warriors across the ecosystem, to give young men an alternative avenue through which to demonstrate physical prowess. The lead-up to the event is combined with a targeted education program aimed at changing attitudes and behaviour to wildlife and conservation. This series of events take place every two years (next Olympics to be held mid-2016), but education meetings with the warriors continue to be held intermittently.

PREDATOR INCIDENTS

It was not a good quarter for predators, especially lions. Retaliatory hunts were frequent. Late October through December brought the rains, following months of drought. Many livestock died over this dry period, and tension was already high. Following the rains wild herbivore species dispersed, leaving fewer prey options for predators, which therefore turned to livestock. For many livestock owners and herders, for an animal to have survived the drought only to be killed by a predator was too much, leading to attempts at retaliation.

It is important to note that while PCF is the fulcrum of Big Life's predator protection efforts, the security network also play an important role. Big Life has learned that a quick response by rangers to conflict goes a long way to calming the owners.

Big Life's rangers, informers and PCF personnel, in conjunction with partners Lion Guardian and KWS have worked together to **stop three lion-hunts** over the reporting period (*one incident picture below*).



LION HUNTS STOPPED

- *20th December 2015*: Four lions (three females and one male) killed two cows in Noosilale, Mbirikani. Big Life's Clinic team, Mobile 1, Lenkiloriti and Oldonyo Sambu rushed to the scene and managed to prevent warriors who were already initiating a hunt. The lion injured one warrior. Prolonged discussions, diversionary tactics and use of local opinion leaders ultimately ended the hunt.

- *24th December 2015*: Three lions killed one bull in Olosikitok, Mbirikani. An informer reported to our teams that warriors were hunting the animals. The rangers found the hunting party and stop them before they found the lions.
- *30th December 2015*: One was donkey killed by two lions in Enchurai, Olgulului. Verification Officers from Olgulului confirmed the incident. A lion hunt nearly began but our rangers and the area’s senior chief calmed the warriors and drove them home.

PREDATOR MORTALITIES

Although our teams managed to prevent several incidents, some hunts were ‘successful’. **Eight lions were killed**, largely outside of Big Life’s core AOO. Three lions were killed in Tanzania, three in Kaputei, one in Olgulului (inside our core AOO), and one in Eselengei. In addition, two hyenas were killed in separate incidents.

Details:

- *11th October 2015*: A hyena killed two goat kids and injured another near a boma in Inkoisuk, Mbirikani. The animal was thought to be rabid and was killed by unknown community members.
- *21st October 2015*: Bravo Oscar 2 received a report of two lions killed at Mbirika, near Namanga, in Tanzania (*pictured below*). Initial reports said that the lions were speared after they attacked and injured livestock. However, a follow up on 22 October by Big Life, who visited the area where the lions were killed, learned that a herder grazing his livestock saw the lions relaxing next to the river, went back home notified his friends and went after them armed with spears. Reports say the hunting party grew to more than a hundred as word spread. The lions were speared to death along the river a few kilometres from each other, and in the process the lion injured one warrior. Warriors removed the canines and claws, and a cut a large piece of meat to eat.



- *24th November 2015*: A hyena that was found chasing livestock and was stoned to death by angry locals in Orbili, Mbirikani.
- *11th December 2015*: On the 8th and 9th, a series of livestock predations were reported in Oomau, north of CHNP. Big Life personnel visited the area and confirmed at least three cows had been killed by a pride of lions. No signs of poisoning were noticed. On the 11th, an informer reported a carcass had been poisoned and eaten by predators. The Lenkiloriti team and KWS rushed to the scene and confirmed that one cow carcass was missing and had been eaten by at least five lions. Three lion carcasses, an adult female and two cubs, were discovered in the lava forests and covered with foliage. Big Life has identified one suspect, but he has gone into hiding. The carcasses were burned to prevent other casualties (*pictured below*).



- *17th December 2015*: Warriors killed a sub-adult male lion (eight spear wounds) after it killed a sheep in Nado-Enkare, Olgulului. A meeting was held, attended by KWS, Big Life, Lion guardians, community leaders and members, but with tensions exceptionally high it was impossible to identify the suspect(s). The carcass was taken by KWS Amboseli.
- *18th December 2015*: A three-month-old cub died of four spear wounds and attack by dogs in Noonkulak, Eselengei. The cub's mother had recently killed a two-day-old calf after it broke into a boma at Lenkesim. The warriors tracked the animal with dogs, but the lioness escaped. On 19 December, a meeting between KWS, Big Life, Porini conservancy rangers and community leaders agreed that names of suspects (known by community leaders) were to be given to KWS.
- *28th December 2015*: An adult lioness was reported dead after it attacked and killed a grazing cow in Noompong, Tanzania. Esiteti Unit and KWS Amboseli confirmed the incident. The female was pregnant with three cubs. No cow carcass was found at the scene and her paws and head were found removed from the carcass. The carcass was burned.

PREDATOR COMPENSATION FUND

The table below details livestock killed by predators, and compensation paid to livestock owners, on Mbirikani and Olgulului group ranches between October & December 2015.

Predator	Cattle	Shoats	Donkeys	Amount (KSH)	Amount (USD)
Cheetah	11	138	-	438,000	4,380
Elephant	1	2	-	26,000	260
Hyena	153	593	24	1,894,300	18,943
Jackal	-	115	-	172,500	1,725
Leopard	-	1	-	1,500	15
Lion	34	44	7	620,500	6,205
Total	199	893	31	3,152,800	31,528

MORAN EDUCATION INITIATIVE

While 2015 is an 'off' year for the Maasai Olympics, there has been ongoing engagement with the warriors, the Menye Layiok (or 'cultural fathers') and the general Maasai community. This ensures that the conservation education provided during the Maasai Olympics is continually reinforced, and that the passion and zeal generated during and immediately following the sports competitions (which last took place in December 2014) do not die out.

During the 4th quarter one meeting was held with the Menye Layiok in which they requested more frequent meetings with the warriors. Samuel Kaanki, the Moran Education Initiative (MEI) Coordinator, then held meetings in each of the four manyattas (warrior villages) with the goal of strengthening the bond and importance of wildlife conservation with the warriors, the Menye Layiok and the community.



Pictured: Moran Education Initiative Coordinator, Samuel Kaanki, attending a warrior ceremony in Olngosua, Mbirikani.

Through the MEI programme, a group of warriors from Mbirikani Group Ranch, the majority of whom are strong participants in the Maasai Olympics, were given soccer uniforms and balls by Big Life and encouraged in soccer practice and facilitated in attending soccer competitions. The winner of the 2014 Maasai Olympics 800m event was facilitated by the Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust to travel to New York and run in the New York marathon that happened in November-2015.

A survey to assess the impact of the Maasai Olympics (MO) on local warriors was conducted across the four participating group ranches in October and November 2015. One-hundred-and-sixteen warriors were interviewed.

The MO is focused on lion conservation, and preventing warriors from engaging in lion hunts, and so a number of questions were focused on lion conservation and attitudes and behaviour towards lions. The remaining questions were specific to the event itself, including attitudes towards the event and an understanding of purpose behind the event.

Among other results, the survey found that 91% of the warriors believed that it is important to protect lions, and of those, 65% mentioned MO as a reason for their attitude. Of the warriors that knew about MO, 87% stated that the MO had made them less interested in killing a lion, 91% said that MO had made them more willing to support lion conservation, and 93% said that they believed that MO had raised awareness about lion conservation in their community. Respondents were also asked how they viewed the MO as a way to compete for status and recognition of manhood, something that would historically have been done through lion hunting. Ninety-three percent felt that it was either a good or very good alternative.

To help fund the upcoming 2016 Maasai Olympics, please email donations@biglife.org.

EDUCATION

Big Life continues to provide support for local education both through facilitating sponsorships (ranging from primary school to university) as well as supporting schools with infrastructure improvement and paying teachers where necessary.

Big Life is currently **sponsoring** school fees for **147 students** and paying all or part of the **salaries for 27 teachers**.

Big Life secured funding for an educational tour to Amboseli National Park on 16 December for 49 of Big Life's Wildlife Education Scholarship students (*pictured below*). The goal was to reinforce the wildlife conservation message among the sponsored students. The Park visit was enhanced by

informative talks on top of Observation Hill on elephant social structure, how the matriarch is vital in the elephant world, and general conservation.



The annual meeting for the sponsored students was held on the 21st December. The students discussed wildlife conservation in their community, and the recurring message was that wildlife is an important resource that can be harnessed by the local community for the benefit of the present and future generations. The students wrote conservation essays, which will be marked and a prize given to the top essay for primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

The Mbirikani Group Ranch committee organized a meeting about local education on the 26th December, which was attended by over 300 people attended including local MP Katoo Ole Metito and other leaders. Big Life was recognised as a key education stakeholder and partner in local wildlife conservation. Demonstrating a shift in attitude toward conservation, the Maasai community was receptive to Big Life's hope that one day an elephant, lion and zebra will bring as many or more economic benefits to the community as cows, goats and sheep.

Further afield, Big Life's Daniel Ole Sambu visited schools in Hong Kong and Singapore in December, giving Big Life the opportunity to reach out to the hearts and minds of the ivory destination market. Daniel's goal was to change the attitude and behaviour of these children, and give them a better understanding about the source of products such as ivory and rhino horn. Daniel's school presentations and street demonstration (with The Elephant Society) drove home the message that the tusks on display in Hong Kong shops came from poached elephants, which also threatens the lives of the rangers who protect them, and destroys local communities' economies that are dependent on wildlife conservation and tourism.



Big Life plans to develop the relationships with the schools in Hong Kong and Singapore to strengthen the international anti-poaching campaign to eliminate the end markets that drive wildlife poaching in Africa.

PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

The work detailed above is made possible thanks to the generosity of Big Life's donors and partner organizations, many of which are listed below. We are continually grateful for this support.

