



**BIG LIFE**  
FOUNDATION

**QUARTERLY REPORT**  
JANUARY - MARCH 2018



## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

We track a lot of numbers, but there are two that shape our world more than any other. One is the amount of money that we raise and put into our community conservation projects. The second is the amount of rainfall that hits the ground here in the greater Amboseli ecosystem.

Rainfall is a fundamental driver of the health of local communities, both human and animal, and this season has been an absolute bumper. Last year was brutal; the combination of an extended period of erratic rainfall and grazing mismanagement had tipped the ecosystem over the edge. Carcasses of both wildlife and livestock were a common sight. But in a very welcome turnaround, we've already received more rainfall in these first three months than we sometimes do in an entire year. The transformation of the landscape has been spectacular; the dust turned to a sea of grass humming with life.

The widespread availability of water and forage has allowed elephants to further explore the limits of their ranges, sometimes with disastrous consequences. Amboseli is a big ecosystem, but there is an edge, and a sharp fall-off in human tolerance for wildlife beyond this edge. We had a horrible reminder of this in January, when crop-raiding by elephants on and around Eselengei Group Ranch (a communally-owned piece of land in the north of the ecosystem, outside our core area of operation) led to violent retaliation by angry farmers. Five elephants were speared to death, and numerous others wounded. I worry that this is only a taste of things to come, and it emphasizes the need to continue to find ways to balance the needs of both humans and animals.

It is thus timely that Big Life is expanding our work in this same area, having created a mobile unit of rangers to patrol Eselengei in an exciting project funded by USAID. We are also working with the community to expand the Predator Compensation Fund onto Eselengei, in an attempt to ease the economic burden caused by high levels of livestock predation.

At the end of the day, most human behavior is driven by these economic realities, and the trade in illegal wildlife products is no different. These products are all worth a lot to the people who deal in them, and catching them is no easy task. Big Life continues to invest heavily, and with great success, in disrupting these supply chains. Following the cumulative total of more than 1 ton of ivory confiscated in 2017 (working in collaboration with Kenya Wildlife Service), Big Life has arrested 28 people this quarter with everything from ivory to lion teeth to a worrying increase in pangolin (live and scales).

As usual, there is a lot going on here at Big Life, but there is always time to say a big thanks to our partners and supporters. We couldn't do this without you.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Bonham'.

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

# WHERE WE WORK

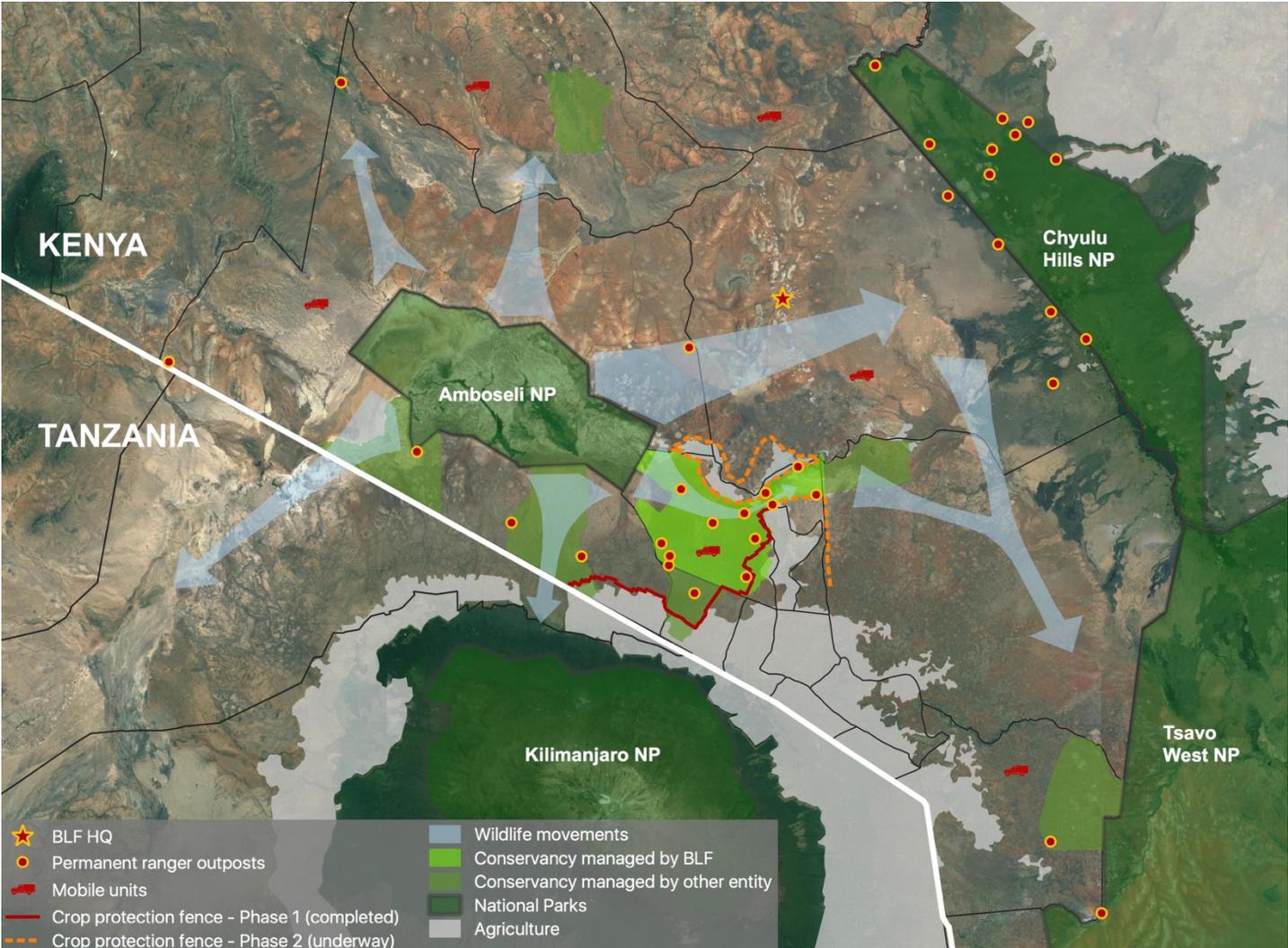
**Big Life Foundation's (Big Life) Area of Operation (AOO)** covers nearly two million acres across the Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro (Greater Amboseli) ecosystem in East Africa. Our rangers help to protect and secure wildlife and critical habitat stretching from the rangelands west of Amboseli to the Chyulu Hills and Tsavo West National Parks in the east, and south to Kilimanjaro National Park. The area is a central connection point for migrating wildlife and contains some of the most important habitat left in Africa. Big Life was the first organization in the region to conduct collaborative cross-border patrols between Kenya and Tanzania.

Our AOO is divided into a core area with a permanent security presence, a non-core area that is actively patrolled by mobile units, and adjacent areas where we provide support as needed.

**Core AOO:** Kimana Area, Mbirikani Group Ranch, Olgulului Group Ranch, Rombo Group Ranch, Amboseli National Park, Chyulu Hills National Park

**Non-Core AOO:** Eselengei Group Ranch, Mailua Ranch, Merrueshi Ranch, Taveta Area

**Adjacent:** Enduimet Wildlife Management Area, Kuku Group Ranch, Tsavo West National Park



## WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Big Life strives to prevent the poaching of all wildlife within our area of operation. We track and apprehend poachers and collaborate with local prosecutors to ensure that they are punished to the fullest extent of the law. One of the largest employers of local Maasai in the ecosystem, Big Life's community rangers are expertly trained and well-equipped to tackle a variety of wildlife crimes.

Since our inception, poaching of all animals has dramatically declined in our area of operation.

Our **2018 Q1** activity is summarized below:

### ANTI-POACHING

Big Life employs Maasai rangers from local communities who work collaboratively with a vast informer network and a number of tools to undertake a variety of anti-poaching activities.

Total Field Staff: <b>300+</b>	Trained Rangers: <b>250</b>
Ranger Units: <b>43</b>	Tracker Dogs: <b>3</b>
Mobile Units: <b>6</b>	Permanent Outposts: <b>34</b>
Aerial Surveillance Hours: <b>102</b>	Snares Destroyed: <b>1</b>
Kilometers Patrolled This Quarter: On foot: <b>28,930</b> By vehicle: <b>69,558</b> <b>TOTAL: 98,488</b>	Total Kilometers Patrolled Since Inception: On foot: <b>605,215</b> By vehicle: <b>1,652,751</b> <b>TOTAL: 2,257,966</b>

### WILDLIFE CRIME & ANTI-TRAFFICKING

Following the arrest of suspects by Big Life rangers, our prosecution officer monitors court cases to ensure that maximum penalties are pursued. Meanwhile, Big Life's intelligence team remains actively involved in investigating wildlife trafficking, both in the immediate ecosystem and beyond.

<b>SUSPECTS ARRESTED</b> Poaching - Trophy Possession: <b>28</b> Poaching - Bushmeat: <b>1</b>	<b>RECOVERED ITEMS</b> Ivory: <b>139 kg</b> Rhino Horn: <b>0</b> Animal Skins: <b>17</b> Other: live pangolins ( <b>2</b> ), pangolin scales ( <b>2 kg</b> ), lion teeth ( <b>5</b> )
<b>INCIDENTS</b> Poaching: <b>14</b>	<b>PROSECUTIONS</b> Cases - Concluded: <b>5</b> (unfortunately, all were acquitted but <b>1</b> ) Cases - Ongoing: <b>101</b>

<b>MORTALITIES - ELEPHANT</b> Human-Elephant Conflict: <b>6</b> Poaching: <b>1</b> Natural Causes: <b>1</b> Unknown: <b>1</b>	<b>MORTALITIES - OTHER</b> Human-Wildlife Conflict: <b>1</b> buffalo, etc. Bushmeat Poaching: <b>2</b> giraffe, <u>etc.</u>
<b>INJURIES - ELEPHANT</b> Elephants Injured: <b>11</b> Elephants Treated*: <b>6</b> <i>*Thanks to our partners at David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and Kenya Wildlife Service.</i>	<b>RESCUES - OTHER ANIMALS</b> <b>1</b> zebra, <b>1</b> giraffe, <b>1</b> elephant calf, <b>1</b> impala, <b>1</b> Thompson's gazelle

## RHINO INTENSIVE PROTECTION ZONE

There are **seven** known Eastern black rhinos in Big Life's area of operation. They spend most of their time in the densely-forested Chyulu Hills National Park, protected by dedicated Big Life rangers and the Kenya Wildlife Service. In addition to monitoring and protecting the resident rhinos, Big Life has been working to improve and maintain infrastructure in the rhino area, the goal of which is to achieve Intensive Protection Zone (IPZ) status, which will allow for the future inbound translocation of rhinos from other territories.

Rhino Mortalities: <b>0</b>	Rhino Snares Destroyed: <b>0</b>
Rhino Protection Rangers: <b>51</b>	Dedicated Rhino Outposts: <b>5</b>
<b>RHINO MONITORING</b> Direct Sightings: <b>0</b> Indirect Sightings (via camera traps): <b>13</b> Spoor Sightings: <b>78</b>	<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b> Fencing: <b>40 km</b> constructed by DSWT Water Points: <b>3</b> maintained

### NOTABLE UPDATES:

- [Hong Kong](#) is following [China's](#) lead in closing its commercial ivory market. Related, the [United Kingdom](#) is tightening its laws on ivory sales.
- The death of [Sudan](#), the last male Northern white rhino, was a heartbreaking reminder of the fragility of many endangered species.



**HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT MITIGATION**

Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) takes three primary forms across Big Life’s area of operation: crops raided by wildlife, particularly elephants; livestock killed by predators, such as lions; and humans injured or killed due to living in close proximity with wildlife.

Our **2018 Q1** activity is summarized below:

**HUMAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICT MITIGATION**

Poaching continues to pose a significant threat, but many elephants face an even bigger challenge: conflict with humans. As the human population increases, so do competing land uses, such as farming and cattle grazing. As humans compete for limited resources like water, land, and grass for livestock, we further encroach onto what were once wild lands. With less space to share, people and animals now come into direct contact at an alarming rate and often with deadly results.

Crop-Raiding Incidents: <b>115</b>	Acres Damaged: <b>47</b>
Crop-Raiding Incidents Involving Elephants: <b>80</b>	Acres Damaged by Elephants: <b>43</b>
Crop Raids Prevented by Big Life: <b>59</b>	Elephant Retaliatory Hunts Prevented by Big Life: <b>1</b>
Crop-Protection Rangers: <b>24</b>	Non-crop-raiding, elephant-related incidents: <b>7</b>
Crop-Protection Fence Constructed to Date: <b>53 km</b>	*including water tanks/pipes damaged by elephants, boma destruction, etc.
Crop-Protection Fence Maintenance Workers: <b>20</b>	

**PREDATOR PROTECTION**

Big Life protects vulnerable predators in the ecosystem in collaboration with partners and local communities. The core component of Big Life’s predator protection program is livestock compensation, which reduces the motivation for retaliatory killing in response to livestock depredation.

The Predator Compensation Fund (PCF) pays Maasai livestock owners a portion of the value of their livestock lost to predators, on the condition that no predators are killed in retaliation. Big Life currently manages the PCF on Mbirikani and Olgulului Group Ranches, and is expanding to Eselengei Group Ranch. Given the success of this program, the goal is to expand the PCF across the entire ecosystem.

The second part of Big Life’s predator protection program is the Maasai Olympics, which was established in 2012 as a replacement for the traditional killing of lions. At the Maasai Olympics, young warriors can compete for recognition, prove bravery, and attract girlfriends through a sports competition based on traditional warrior skills. The next Maasai Olympics finals are scheduled to take place on **December 15, 2018**.

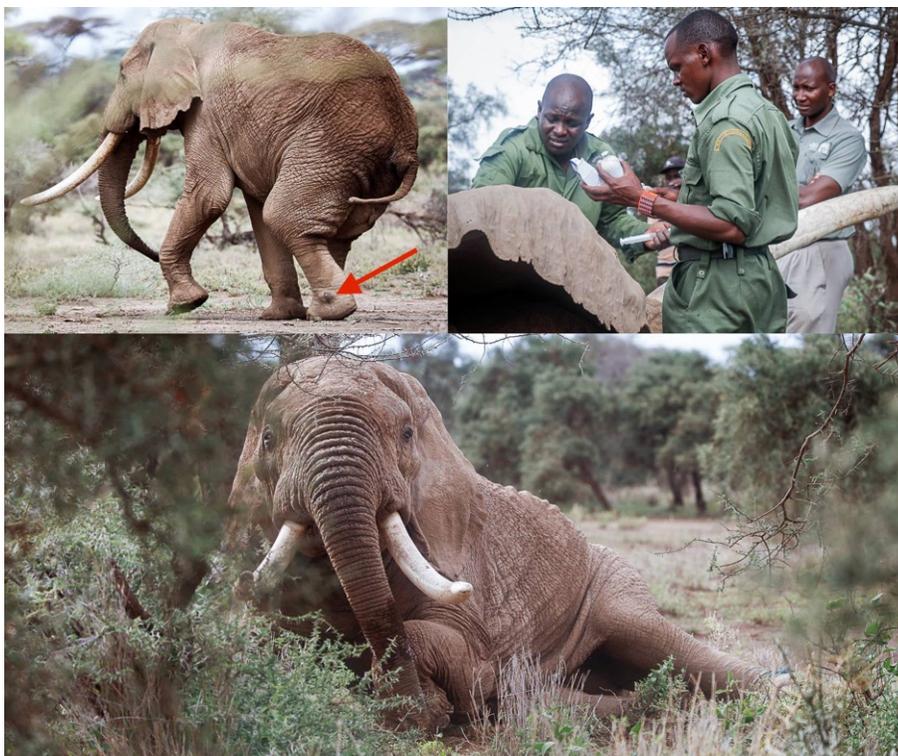
Lion Mortalities: <b>3</b> cubs – in <b>1</b> incident Lion Mortalities in Violation of the PCF: <b>0</b> Lion Retaliatory Hunts Prevented*: <b>2</b> <i>*In collaboration with our partners at Lion Guardians and Kenya Wildlife Service.</i>	Maasai Olympics Engagement Meetings: <b>8</b> People engaged: <b>1,075</b>
Compensation Issued for: <b>210</b> Cows: \$23,159 <b>543</b> Sheep/Goats: \$15,438 <b>7</b> Donkeys: \$251 <b>TOTAL: \$38,848</b>	Livestock Killed by Predators: Cheetah: <b>105</b> Hyena: <b>460</b> Jackal: <b>80</b> Leopard: <b>6</b> Lion: <b>108</b>
Additional Predator Mortalities: Hyena: <b>1</b> Leopard: <b>2</b>	Other A cow was killed by an elephant.

## GENERAL WILDLIFE CONFLICT

Humans Injured: <b>11</b>	Wildlife Responsible for Human Injuries: Buffalo ( <b>1</b> ), Elephant ( <b>1</b> ), Leopard ( <b>5</b> ), Lion ( <b>1</b> ), Ostrich ( <b>1</b> ), Snake ( <b>2</b> )
Humans Killed: <b>1</b>	Wildlife Responsible for Human Deaths: Buffalo ( <b>1</b> )

### NOTABLE UPDATES:

- American journalist Bill Kurtis produced [a short film](#) about Big Life's electric fence project.
- [Ulysses](#) received a second treatment as a result of a spear wound caused by HEC (*below*).



## SECURING WILDLIFE HABITAT

The human-wildlife conflict in the ecosystem is a direct result of wildlife and local communities competing for limited resources on the same shrinking land areas. In order to reduce conflict, wildlife habitat must be strategically protected, an increasingly urgent program focus for Big Life.

Our **2018 Q1** activity is summarized below:

## CONSERVANCY DEVELOPMENT

Big Life's engagement in conservancy development is composed of two specific parts. The first is paying annual leases to owners of 60-acre parcels of land located in the Kimana Corridor. These lease payments are intended to limit destructive development of the land, other than that which is compatible with conservation and pastoralism. The second involves working with local communities to protect land that is strategically important either as wildlife movement corridors or dispersal areas, but is also valuable to the local livestock economy as a grazing resource. This protection can be achieved through the establishment of conservancies, including the legal and management systems necessary for their effective functioning, and assisting to develop income-generating opportunities such as tourism.

**Kimana Sanctuary**, at the easternmost part of the Kimana Corridor, is an area frequented by Amboseli's biggest bull elephants, including known tuskers like Tim. Thanks to support from the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and the D.N. Batten Foundation, Big Life rangers are working to [secure this special place](#).



## RANGELANDS MANAGEMENT

The Maasai are traditionally a pastoralist society, their wealth directly associated with their livestock. Large herds of cows, sheep, and goats graze across the ecosystem continually. Managing the impacts of grazing on the rangelands for the overall health of the ecosystem has become a major program focus.

Our 2018 Q1 activity is summarized below:

### LAND

Big Life has helped to establish a sustainable farming program, in addition to helping develop a grazing plan to manage livestock movements and improve the condition of existing pasture. Rangers also actively protect the land by fighting against habitat destruction such as illegal logging or charcoaling. Lastly, we've partnered with local communities, partner NGO's, and government to implement a [carbon credit program](#) in the Chyulu Hills to protect it from deforestation and overgrazing.

Suspects Arrested for Habitat Destruction: <b>43</b> Habitat Destruction Incidents: <b>19</b>	Sustainable Farms: <b>2</b> Sustainable Farming Project Managers: <b>2</b>
Incidents of community grazing and conservancy rules enforcement: <b>20</b>	

### WATER

Water is one of the most precious resources in the African bush. Big Life rangers actively work to reduce illegal water extraction and ensure that river systems are free and flowing.

Total Rainfall (at HQ) This Quarter: <b>304 mm</b>	Water-Related Incidents: <b>1</b>
Liters of Fuel Provided for Pumping Water to Both Community and Wildlife (to reduce conflict): <b>135</b>	Water Points Constructed or Repaired: <b>0</b>



## COMMUNITY

Winning the hearts and minds of the community and providing a mutual benefit through conservation is the only way to protect wildlife and wild lands far into the future. To that end, Big Life provides a number of services in support of the community generally, including education and healthcare initiatives, but also: using ranger vehicles as ambulances, arresting criminals for community crimes like theft, conducting human search and rescue, livestock search and rescue, and more.

Community Crime Incidents: <b>9</b>	Suspects Arrested: <b>17</b>
Human Search and Rescue Incidents: <b>4</b>	Livestock Search and Rescue Incidents: <b>4</b>

## EDUCATION

Big Life invests in the future of participating communities by funding teachers' salaries, providing scholarship funds for local students, and implementing conservation-specific curriculum in classrooms and communities.

Our **2018 Q1** activity is summarized below:

Teachers' Salaries Paid: <b>32</b>	Student Scholarships Sponsored: <b>207</b> Boys: <b>108</b> Girls: <b>99</b>
Tertiary-Level Graduates: <b>0</b>	People Reached by Conservation Curriculum: <b>1,717</b> (some students more than once)



### NOTABLE UPDATES:

- Big Life sponsors field trips each quarter into Amboseli National Park for 30 students and 6 teachers, many of whom have never visited a national park before, and many of whom may never have had a positive encounter with wildlife. This quarter's field trip was cancelled due to unusually heavy rains.

## HEALTHCARE

Big Life works in partnership with Dandelion Africa to facilitate mobile health clinics focused on healthcare and family planning. Additional services provided include cancer screening, HIV testing, and counseling.

Our **2018 Q1** activity is summarized below:

Mobile health clinics conducted: **2**



We are grateful for the support of our partners, including:

## Field Partners

- African Conservation Centre
- African Wildlife Foundation
- Amboseli Ecosystem Trust
- Amboseli Landowners Conservancy Association
- Amboseli Trust for Elephants
- Association of Private Land Rhino Sanctuaries
- Chyulu Hills Conservation Trust
- Conservation International
- Dandelion Africa
- The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust
- Enduimet Wildlife Management Area
- European Development Fund
- Global Environment Facility
- Honeyguide Foundation
- International Fund for Animal Welfare
- Kenya Wildlife Service
- Kenya Wildlife Trust
- Kilimanjaro Community Conservation and Development Trust
- Kinetic Six
- Lion Guardians
- Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust
- Porini Eselengei Camp
- Ranger Campus
- Satao Elerai Safari Camp
- Save the Elephants
- Space for Giants
- The Thin Green Line Foundation
- US Agency for International Development
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- WildAid
- Wildlife Conservation Network
- WildlifeDirect
- Zoological Society of London

## Corporate Partners

- 1% for the Planet
- Chester Zoo
- Elephant Gin
- Great Plains Conservation / ol Donyo Lodge
- LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
- The Original Ker & Downey Safaris
- Tawi Lodge
- Tortilis Camp
- Zoo Basel

**Together we can save wildlife and wild lands - now and for future generations. Please consider making a life-saving [donation](#) to support the critical programs mentioned in this report. Thank you for your support.**

