

Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) Roundtable Discussion



Wildlife Conservation Capacity Development in Central Africa

Brussels, Belgium
28 November 2018



A ranger on patrol in Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Credit: Virunga National Park

Meeting Summary:

On Wednesday, 28 November 2018, 23 participants attending the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, gathered to discuss priorities, gaps, and opportunities for wildlife conservation capacity in the region. Organizations were invited to discuss what they support and why.

Capacity development for wildlife conservation in Central Africa continually needs strengthening to address the growing threats impacting wildlife and their habitats. Central African government agencies, donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and universities regularly support the efforts of individuals, teams, organizations, and constituencies to develop, enhance, and organize their systems, resources, and knowledge to perform functions, solve problems, and achieve wildlife conservation objectives.

Agenda for Roundtable on Wildlife Conservation Capacity Development in Central Africa	
Session Co-Chairs	Dirck Byler , Chief, Africa Branch, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Francis Tarla , Central Africa Bushmeat Action Group (CABAG)/University of Dschang, Cameroon
14:00 – 14:05	Welcome Remarks, Introductions, and Networking - Dirck Byler
14:05 – 14:10	Presentation on Conservation Capacity Development in Africa - Francis Tarla
14:10 – 15:20	Roundtable Discussion <i>Organizations are invited to share their priorities and support for wildlife conservation training and capacity development</i>
15:20 – 15:30	Overview of Capacity Development Landscape and Opportunities for Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships On Wildlife Conservation Training - Dirck Byler

**Welcome:
Dirck Byler, Chief of the Africa Programs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)**

Conservation is a long term proposition. We measure our success in the successful conservation of species and their habitats. Long life cycles of many of the wildlife species we protect require thinking not in 1-3 year grant cycles but rather in decades.

Capacity development is also a long term proposition.. Human and institutional capacity is not created and sustained through attainment of a single degree or completion of a week long training course. Rather, ongoing learning and training is needed by all of us throughout our careers for so many obvious reasons.

The USFWS supports conservation activities worldwide. Core to our mission at the USFWS is providing opportunities for capacity development at all scales - human, organizational, and at the system level that create the conditions for us to thrive and grow.

Unfortunately donors often provide short term project funding to achieve specific short term objectives, however, long term systematic workforce planning is essential to develop capacity for organizations - both within NGOs and government as well as the private sector.

The purpose of today's session is to think long-term. And share our collective efforts to support and develop capacity for conservation within Central Africa. By sharing these efforts, we hope to avoid duplication of effort and learn from each other on new approaches and best practices in capacity building.

We hope for two specific results - greater understanding of the existing initiatives by the group.

Following this meeting we will:

- 1) create a working document that highlights the various ongoing capacity developments members of the CBFP are undertaking.
- 2) establish a working group at CBFP to continue to share ideas and inform each other of opportunities for capacity development in Central Africa.

Presentation:

ROUNDTABLE ON WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAPACITY BUILDING IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Francis Nchembi Tarla – November 28, 2018 – Brussels, Belgium



INTRODUCTION: CAPACITY BUILDING IN CONSERVATION

Definition of Capacity Development

"The ability of individuals, teams, constituencies, organizations and countries to develop, enhance, and organize their systems, resources and knowledge; all reflected in their abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems, and achieve objectives." (Adapted from IUCN and OECD)



FIVE LEVELS OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

- I. Individuals
- II. Teams
- III. Organizations
- IV. Constituency
- V. Systemic



CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Capacity Building Programs in Central Africa in the area of conservation have been executed by various Institutions (participants present that have done so)



ASSESSING CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS



- Indicators of success used in each case (A list from Participants) (*the Number of Persons trained but usually not improved performance or impact*)
- What happens to trainees following the training? (included or not in the Capacity Building Program?)
- NGOs (especially those with an HR Department) vs Government Institutions on the follow-up Trainees

ASSESSING CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS (CONT'D)

- Could definition of a clear career profile for Human Resources within institutions serve as a motivating factor to improve performance (knowledge & skills)
- We observe that there is still an acute insufficiency of human and institutional capacity (quality and quantity) in the domain of wildlife conservation in Central Africa today.



APPROACHES TO WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAPACITY BUILDING



- Need to conduct Needs Assessment
- Training designed to address gaps in competencies
- Courses independently developed by training Institutions and proposed to potential clients
- Training in Classroom with some practical lessons in the field
- Participatory Training / Learning approaches

APPROACHES TO WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAPACITY BUILDING (CONT'D)



- Competency-based approaches
- Formation par Alternance
- MENTOR initiative (USFWS) – See *USFWS Factsheet*

THANK YOU

Roundtable Discussion:

Organization	Support for Wildlife Conservation Capacity Development in Central Africa	Priorities and/or Challenges to be Addressed on Capacity Development
<p>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Nancy Gelman</p> <p>www.fws.gov/international</p>	<p>USFWS is premier wildlife agency for the U.S. government. USFWS provides technical and financial assistance through Multinational Species Conservation Funds and Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). USFWS receives half of the CARPE funds (\$17.5 million/year) in conjunction with USAID. USFWS supports landscapes and protected areas, addresses regional threats including illegal commercial bushmeat trade and transhumance as well as capacity development. Capacity Development is central to everything that USFWS supports.</p> <p>USFWS looks at capacity development at five levels. Examples of support include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) At the Individual level, USFWS supports scholarships at wildlife colleges, and training for rangers in protected areas 2) At the Team level, USFWS MENTOR Programs develop transdisciplinary teams of emerging conservationists who spend 18 months together to address threats to species (e.g. manatees, chimps and pangolins) and provide long-term mentoring. 3) At the Organizational level, USFWS has a government to government relationship with <i>Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux</i> (ANPN) in Gabon. USFWS also provides support to local NGOs. 4) At the Constituencies level, USFWS supports projects that try to change hearts & minds about wildlife conservation including environmental education programs and behavior change campaigns. 	<p>USFWS Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Innovative approaches like MENTOR that combine rigorous academic and field-based training, mentoring, learning through experience, and project design and implementation to develop transdisciplinary teams of emerging conservationists over 18 months and provide long term mentoring of conservation champions -Traditional approaches like: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. supporting wildlife colleges 2. systematic long term workforce planning and capacity development for protected areas including the development of Training Needs Assessments (TNA), identification of gaps in performance, and design and implementation of Training Plans. <p>Training Plans are an opportunity for partners and donors to work together to improve performance in a systematic way and strengthen future Central African leaders and conservation champions.</p> <p>On-the-ground training and support for rangers in protected areas has been a hallmark of USFWS' assistance.</p> <p>Everything USFWS does is posted on the website including Notices of Funding Opportunities and project summaries..</p>

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	<p>5) At the Systemic level - USFWS supports updating protected area training policies.</p>	
<p>U.S. State Department, Cassandra Stewart-Clark</p> <p>https://www.state.gov/</p>	<p>The U.S. State Department's Bureau of African Affairs manages bilateral and regional programs on counter-wildlife trafficking, and works with the military to coordinate funding. A snapshot where they work includes the peace keeping account, counter poaching with park rangers, work with security force actors. In the Central African Republic (CAR), the US State Department supports the defence sector with their bilateral funds. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), they provide \$3 million for Garamba National Park. With their Regional-Africa funds, the State Department provides support to stop conflict in Gabon. Previously in Chad and Cameroon, they had supported communication, infrastructure, and training to park rangers (\$6.3 million across landscapes).</p>	<p>US State Department Priorities: Peace-keeping operations, counter poaching with park rangers, and security force actors.</p>
<p>U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), Kirstin Siex</p> <p>https://carpe.umd.edu/</p>	<p>USAID CARPE promotes sustainable natural resource management (NRM), biodiversity conservation and climate change assistance for increased local and national capacity. Capacity is determined by partners determining the needs. (Half of CARPE Funds are managed by USAID and half by USFWS. The budget is about \$40 million/ year.) USAID supports capacity to improve management of 30 million hectares in DRC and ROC, and policy work in 6 countries plus 4 landscapes. FY17 have US government indicators in NRM with training of over 7,700 people over several years including more 60,000 people total. The current phase of USAID CARPE is until 2020.</p>	<p>USAID CARPE Priorities: Local and national capacity for natural resource management and biodiversity conservation, and for addressing climate change.</p>

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<p><i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ),</i> Makon W. Samuel www.giz.de</p>	<p>GIZ contributes to capacity development at two levels: 1) Regional support to COMIFAC (1 million Euro) 2) Operational support including transborder work with Chad (7 million Euro).</p> <p>Capacity development helps to develop strategies and inform political decision.</p> <p>Systematic efforts improve parks and around parks.</p> <p>Biggest need is implementation of working groups that controls partners.</p> <p>Support to Ecole de Faune, Garoua.</p>	<p>GIZ Priorities: Grow capacity of negotiations and support education and training initiatives</p>
<p>WWF, Bas Verhage www.worldwildlife.org.</p>	<p>WWF Supports: 1) Strengthening law enforcement capacity on the ground. In 2018, WWF has conducted training in priority protected areas including: •Over 250 ranger trained in navigation and combat •Over 50 park staff trained in SMART (including Cybertracker) •Over 80 paramilitary staff trained in legal proceedings and the judiciary •Over 20 magistrates in environmental law 2) Strengthening capacity on adaptive management approach for conservation at colleges and universities including Garoua Wildlife College, Mbalmayo Forestry College and University of Dschang in Cameroon 3) Russell E. Train Education For Nature Program. Special focus on Women in the Congo Basin to include more diverse voices in the conservation discussion and empowering women, in particular, to become a larger part of their conservation communities. Already supported over 140 women to improve their conservation</p>	<p>WWF Challenges identified: •Access to French language programs/courses/conferences affordable for Congo Basin conservationists •Consistency around job placement (often limited term due to lack of sustained funding). •Governments lack of understanding of natural resource protection measures •High turnover in government staff, including park manager and magistrates •Lack of funding for sustained capacity building</p> <p>WWF conducted the largest ever survey of rangers (about 5,000 in 17 countries) highlighting the challenges they face on the ground. Three major gaps identified include: 1) health & safety, 2) training & equipment, and 3) community trust.</p> <p>Key findings on training include: •38 per cent felt they had not received adequate training when they started the</p>

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	<p>credentials. Another 7 women currently being selected. Support an EFN women's alumni group to conduct a community training to combat deforestation. Support institutions and universities to improve their conservation training.</p>	<p>job and refresher training was also not commonly reported;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •59 per cent didn't have access to basic communications devices whilst on patrol, while 45 per cent had to pay for their uniform and 35 per cent bought their own boots. •Latest death toll reached over 100 rangers were killed in the line of duty from July 2017 - 2018, yet almost half (47 per cent) surveyed have no life insurance to safeguard families left behind.1
<p>Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Gaspard Abitsi (WCS-Gabon) www.wcs.org</p>	<p>WCS supports lots of conservation capacity interventions. Current priority is the ECOFAC6, financed by the European Union, a 4 year program addressing the need for structured training materials and the lack of exchange of experiences across countries in Central Africa. Activities include developing training, reference and competencies in 7 countries and then drafting the training curriculum, with certification. Program will work towards developing and professionalizing careers in conservation. The training will be placed at a recognized institution so recognized who will provide certification.</p> <p>Tourism development is important. On tourism, there is traditional know-how, but it's difficult to understand the value so WCS has partnerships with local specialists so can employ local people.</p>	<p>WCS Challenges identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Need to enforce capacity in field •Need to develop national careers so can move up from being ecoguards. <p>Overall WCS sees how training is applied from basic levels to higher level for team leaders. They are working on professionalization of conservationists.</p>
<p>African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Charly Facheux www.awf.org</p>	<p>AWF Supports: A number of training in Central Africa, including a number of trainings in Cameroon and training support in 5 landscapes in DRC. In parks, AWF does training for ecoguards, in SMART and other topics. AWF uses Technical Advisors, especially on how to advocate for park</p>	<p>AWF Challenges identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Training on SMART •Need to understand how much repetition is needed for training. •Training should do systematically after a few years time. •Issue of management including need management training and accounting

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	<p>In Faro National Park in Cameroon, AWF supported targeted training on transhumance, which must be handled differently than dealing with poachers.</p> <p>They supported country level training with judiciary and value chain of illegal wildlife trafficking</p> <p>They are doing new training on sniffer dogs at airports and seaports.</p> <p>Training for the future includes teaching teachers in primary schools and training for university graduates. AWF has a two year mentorship program to teach aspiring conservationists how to work on the job so that they can find jobs. AWF has mentored 20 African young professionals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Need training on how to advocate for parks
<p>Zoological Society of London (ZSL), Chris Ransom www.zsl.org</p>	<p>ZSL is active in Cameroon, their primary focus in region.</p> <p>ZSL support Garoua Wildlife College and Mbalmayo Forestry College, University of Doula and University of Yaounde through internships and research programs. They are helping to develop a SMART module at Garoua. ZSL works with government partners on training and resources including ecoguards, customs, judiciary and police. They provide on-going mentoring and contacts for agents. ZSL works with local communities to build their capacity to uptake initiatives.</p> <p>ZSL hosted the USFWS MENTOR-POP (Progress on Pangolins) Program that developed a transdisciplinary team of African and Asian conservationists focused on pangolin field assessments, law enforcement and demand reduction. The MENTOR-POP</p>	<p>ZSL Challenges identified include the need to professionalize protected area staff and establish conservation careers. The need for new online learning including wildlife conservation MOOCs.</p>

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	<p>Fellows are recognized for their work on pangolins with them all continuing to carry out work on pangolins and joining organizations such as ZSL on wildlife law enforcement, WCS and CABAG on bushmeat behavior change, Tayna Center for Conservation Biology on pangolin research, etc.</p> <p>ZSL Edge Program provides 2-year species conservation fellowships with mentoring for young professionals from developing countries.</p> <p>ZSL is working on a new initiative with National Geographic Society on professionalizing conservationists including the development of global standards for park staff, based on the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) competencies, and the development of MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) and accreditation with regional training centers.</p>	
<p>University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA)/ Congo Basin Institute (CBI), Virginia Zaunbrecher</p> <p>https://www.cbi.ucla.edu/</p> <p>https://conservationresearch.net/congo-basin-grant-program.php</p>	<p>UCLA CBI is a capacity building institution that supports participants across their lifecycle. CBI is a network of permanent, multi-disciplinary enterprises focused on innovative, evidence-based solutions to critical development challenges. Located in Cameroon, CBI is dedicated to finding solutions to the interconnected issues of climate change, human disease, food and water security, and loss of biodiversity. CBI is a center for research in Central Africa. They provide short courses and long courses. They provide PhD advisors and support post-doc fellows. They have a new program for young African scientists to provide training on proposal writing and interviewing.</p> <p>They provide Aspire Grant Program, competitive research grants of up to \$5,000</p>	<p>UCLA CBI Priorities are to:</p> <p>Build a pipeline for conservationists to gain education and move up in their careers.</p> <p>Help develop critical thinking and address scientific gaps</p> <p>Work with local and indigenous communities including the Baka on conservation efforts and apply their indigenous knowledge.</p>

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	<p>USD for African graduate students and early career professionals working in the areas of biodiversity, conservation and environmental sustainability in the Congo Basin region.</p>	
<p>Virunga National Park, Ephrem Balole https://virunga.org/</p>	<p>Virunga National Park has lost 175 rangers with another lost on 28 November after an attack. It is a challenge that even though they have a strong staff of rangers who can do their mission to protect park, they risk their lives due to militias and bandits.</p> <p>Virunga has 730 rangers. New rangers are young (ages 18 to 25 years) and have basic school degrees. Virunga also has older rangers who are retiring. Virunga does 5 month training for new rangers with 3 month professional paramilitary training. They then select some who do advanced leadership for 3 months. For now the training is how to protect park. Over the last 10 years, the park sent 6 rangers to Garoua. They now have 30 female rangers many of whom they want to earn at least a diploma for their careers in order to become wardens.</p>	<p>Virunga National Park Challenges identified is that rangers are risking their lives to protect the park.</p> <p>DRC needs wardens. They need a new generation of wardens. They need rangers with field experience to earn degrees and diplomas so that they can be moved up to wardens.</p>
<p>World Resources Institute (WRI), Theodore Trevor www.wri.org</p>	<p>WRI recommends that all training should be based on anthropological tools. Anthropology provide the basis for cultural sensitivities, which is the foundation of behavior change.</p>	<p>WRI identifies the need for anthropological training across conservation careers in Central Africa.</p>
<p>Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS)-CEBioS programme</p>	<p>CEBioS , funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation (DGD), (http://www.biodiv.be/cebios2/) supports ICCN, (RD Congo) and OBPE (Burundi) through academic work with universities in RDC and Burundi, support to development of information platforms (clearing house mechanism of the CBD), MRV and awareness raising calls. We also support the Centre de Surveillance de la</p>	<p>The training is performed on grantees benefiting from a Global Taxonomy Initiative short term grant for 1 month stay at RBINS or another institute in Belgium, mostly on taxonomy. There is also in situ training by our staff of managers and ecogardes on habitat monitoring, with -co-production of lexica about habitats in protected areas. Till now we produced lexica on Kahuzi-Biega,</p>

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	Biodiversité at UNIKIS, in Kisangani, RDC. (biodiversity research, one health aspects, management, policy etc)	Kibira NP, Bombo Lumene and Pendjari NP. In Virunga NP we work with UNIGOM on edible mushrooms as alternative income. We work on a lexicon in Itombwe PA. MRV training in local workshops concentrates on data collection and reporting to national indicators of NBSAP. CHM training focuses on technical web site development and contents management.
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Next Steps:

- Challenge donors and partners to support long-term workforce capacity development.
- Circulate meeting notes and documents on wildlife conservation capacity development
- Establish a CBFP Working Group on Wildlife Conservation Capacity Development in Central Africa to discuss synergies, share opportunities and resources
- Create a webpage under CBFP to compile relevant training opportunities
- Nancy Gelman (nancy_gelman@fws.gov) has offered to coordinate the CBFP Working Group.

Participant List:

Name	Organization	Email
1. Dirk Byler	USFWS	dirck_byler@fws.gov
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Attachments:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Wildlife Conservation Capacity Development in Central Africa



A ranger on patrol in Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Credit: Virunga National Park

Capacity development is the ability of individuals, teams, organizations, and constituencies to develop and enhance their systems, resources, and knowledge, all reflected in their capability to perform functions, solve problems, and achieve objectives.

— Adapted from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Development of conservation capacity is critical to ensuring individuals and organizations are able to adapt to growing threats impacting wildlife and their habitats. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) employs a strategic threats-based approach to conserve species and habitats in Central Africa. As part of this approach, USFWS works with partners to identify the key competencies necessary to ensure individuals and organizations are achieving at the highest level.

By providing its expertise in the development of wildlife training programs and workforce planning, USFWS supports capacity development at all levels, including individuals, organizations, and legal frameworks.

Equally important to ensuring long-term support of capacity development is the ability to remain nimble and responsive to ensure training programs include the most up-to-date knowledge, the most current methods, and the latest technologies.

USFWS supports long-term mentoring and professional development for emerging conservation champions in Central Africa in order to respond to critical threats to the region's wildlife.

Desired Results for Conservation Capacity in Central Africa

- Identification of training, competencies, and new techniques needed to address threats to wildlife.
- Strengthened workforce capacity for wildlife and protected area management.
- Implementation of training plans for protected area staff to improve performance based on systematic assessments of training needs.
- Development of conservation champions in Africa.
- Transdisciplinary teams of emerging African conservationists to problem-solve key threats to wildlife and habitats.
- Improved institutional and faculty performance at regional wildlife colleges.
- Improved collaboration through networks of institutions.



MENTOR-POP (Progress on Pangolins) Fellows at the 17th Conference of Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Credit: MENTOR-POP

The Five Levels of Capacity Development

1. The Individual Level

Affecting behaviors, knowledge, and skill sets all contribute to capacity development at the individual level. The training process is a critical component, and provides a framework for changes in attitudes, values, and participation.

Scholarships at Garoua Wildlife College:

USFWS supports **individual** capacity development for rangers in its collaboration with Garoua Wildlife College in Cameroon, and the development of training programs to increase capacity for wildlife management and law enforcement among faculty and students. USFWS support has provided 26 scholarships for rangers from three countries in the region.

2. The Team Level

At the team level, capacity development influences relationships between individuals, improves communication within and outside of groups of professionals, and increases access to mentoring and networking capabilities.

MENTOR Programs:

At the **team** level, the USFWS MENTOR Programs develop transdisciplinary teams of conservation practitioners to address complex threats. Through academic and field-based training and experiential learning, these programs have developed leaders in pangolin, manatee, great ape, and forest protection, as well as a team of professionals to respond to the threat of the commercial bushmeat trade to protected species.

3. The Organizational Level

Capacity development at the organizational level functions systematically to improve performance and adaptability, including on issues such as strategy, access to information, and overall resources.

The Government of Gabon:

USFWS works at the **organizational** level directly with the government of Gabon to develop the capacity of the country's national parks agency, *Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux* (ANPN). Gabon contains approximately half of Africa's remaining forest elephants, important populations of gorillas and chimpanzees, and is one of the world's most productive marine ecosystems.

4. The Constituency Level

At the constituency level, capacity development moves beyond the individual and focuses on influencing community and societal change. Information sharing, education, the media, and awareness campaigns are important facets of these actions.

Local Communities:

Engagement with local communities is an important aspect of capacity development at the **constituency** level. Examples include the ongoing support of conservation efforts through community-based ecotourism and education in the Lake Region of Gabon.

5. The Systemic Level

Systemic capacity development affects the frameworks in which these previous levels operate, including policy, laws and regulations, and relationships, allowing for increased capability to respond and adapt to large-scale challenges.

Protected Area Management:

USFWS promotes **systemic** level capacity through its support of protected areas that are essential to the survival of wildlife in Central Africa. Through development of competence-based training needs assessments, implementation of training plans, review of organizational structure, identification of emerging leaders, and thorough evaluation methods, USFWS supports regional partners in establishing and effectively managing these critical protected areas.

USFWS supports improved workforce capacity in protected areas through systematic assessment of training needs and implementation of training plans.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
International Affairs
<http://www.fws.gov/international>



Military officer in Minkebe National Park, Gabon. Credit: William Kanapaux/USFWS



Local leaders meeting in Cameroon. Credit: Dirk Byler/USFWS



MENTOR-FOREST Fellows conducting fieldwork. Credit: Lauriane Besse Strait/USFWS

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



The MENTOR Program:

Team training for Africa's emerging conservation leaders



MENTOR-FOREST fellows conducting fieldwork. Credit: Lauriane Basse-Strait / USFWS

Capacity development is a fundamental objective of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in Africa. The MENTOR Fellowship programs provide an important mechanism for achieving this objective. MENTOR programs combine rigorous academic and field-based training, mentoring, learning through experience, and project design and implementation.

This novel approach brings together teams of future African conservation leaders to act upon major threats facing wildlife populations. Since 2008, USFWS has invested about \$1.47 million in four programs that enroll promising professionals from different regions across Africa.

Through MENTOR, which stands for Mentoring for ENvironmental Training in Outreach and Resource conservation, trans-disciplinary teams work to solve challenging problems with multiple underlying factors. Collaborating with governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), fellows gain valuable insights into the threat they are learning to address while also expanding their professional networks to prepare for careers beyond the program.

In 2008, USFWS launched its first program, MENTOR/BEAN (Bushmeat-

free Eastern Africa Network) to tackle bushmeat consumption in Eastern Africa. The College of African Wildlife Management, in Mweka, Tanzania, and the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group worked side by side on the 18-month program, which brought together eight Fellows from Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The Fellows conducted national-level bushmeat analysis and field assignments, and tested pilot projects for reducing bushmeat consumption through holistic awareness, livelihood alternatives, and law enforcement campaigns in their home countries.

Accomplishments by Fellows after completing the program include

Why develop MENTOR programs?

Successful wildlife conservation requires that countries develop the capacity to effectively manage their natural resources in the face of numerous threats. The USFWS MENTOR Fellowship programs play an important role in capacity development by providing high-level training and field experience to teams of young African professionals who are committed to becoming conservation leaders. Graduating Fellows offer new skills and expertise to strengthen ongoing conservation efforts and help organizations achieve innovative results.



MENTOR/BEAN Fellows conduct a meeting on bushmeat awareness with Maasai community members. Credit: Evanson Kariuki.

MENTOR programs address major threats to wildlife

While each MENTOR program has a unique focus, all MENTOR programs directly or indirectly address common threats faced by wildlife populations.

Commercial bushmeat trade

Commercial demand for bushmeat poses the single greatest threat to the majority of animals in Africa. A thriving commercial trade often emerges around logging concessions and other work camps. Growing demand for preferred species such as pangolin makes the problem worse. MENTOR/BEAN tackled the bushmeat trade in East Africa, where it was an underappreciated threat. MENTOR-Manatee will conduct bushmeat awareness campaigns on manatees and other protected species in Central Africa.

Extractive industries

Unregulated logging, mining, oil exploration and intensive agriculture threaten wildlife by destroying and degrading habitats. They create roads that attract poachers, new human settlements and conversion of forest into agricultural land. As the global demand for Central Africa's resources continues to grow, vulnerable wildlife populations and habitats will be placed at greater risk. MENTOR FOREST focused on promoting better management by extractive industries in wildlife areas.

Disease

Frequent contact between wildlife and humans increases the odds that emerging infectious diseases will take a toll on humans and wildlife alike. Ebola, for instance, is a grave threat to both humans and apes. Apes are also vulnerable to diseases spread by humans, such as influenza and tuberculosis. MENTOR-PACE helps build the next generation of conservation experts who will focus on a range of threats to chimpanzees, including transmission of disease between humans and great apes.

Threats to freshwater systems

Freshwater species such as manatees face significant threats from incidental capture in fishing nets as well as hydroelectric and agricultural dams that can isolate and trap individual animals. MENTOR-Manatee Fellows will contribute knowledge on this least-studied mammal in Africa about their distribution, behavior and ecology.

From Fiscal Year 2008 to 2014, USFWS has provided \$1.47 million in support to MENTOR conservation projects, leveraging an additional \$384,000 in matching funds.

MENTOR-FOREST Fellows conduct fieldwork in Gabon.

Credit: Lauriane Bemo-Streit / USFWS



developing a national anti-trafficking NGO in Uganda and training rangers for anti-poaching patrols in Tanzania.

The second program, MENTOR-FOREST, focused on mitigating the negative effects of extractive industries on wildlife and forests. This program, launched in collaboration with Gabon's national park agency (ANPN) and the National School of Forestry (ENEF) in 2012, brought together nine Fellows from Gabon and the Republic of Congo to develop new approaches to forest stewardship in the Congo Basin.

The Fellows formed two teams that developed and tested best-practice guidelines with ANPN and private industries engaged in logging, mining and oil production. Guidelines and tools produced by Fellows are already in use by ANPN's Environmental Evaluation and Compliance Division. Accomplishments by Fellows completing the program include working for ANPN on environmental auditing.

MENTOR-Manatee, led by the Sea to Shore Alliance, officially begins in July



Conservation of great apes is central to the new MENTOR-PACE program, hosted by Njala University in Sierra Leone.

Credit: Direk Bylar / USFWS

June 2015

2015 in Gabon. This two-year program will provide mentoring for eight Central African nationals. Fellows will enroll in separate educational programs based on their chosen areas of study and gather in teams for field work and additional on-the-ground training. These teams will collect data to document the extent of manatee hunting for bushmeat and will lead educational outreach activities for manatee conservation.

MENTOR-PACE (Protecting Apes and Conserving Ecosystems) will begin in fall 2015 at Njala University in Sierra Leone. The 18-month program seeks to strengthen conservation leadership in Sierra Leone and Liberia for addressing threats to the western chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes verus*) and the Upper Guinean forest ecosystem. This program will mentor 10 Fellows through a targeted conservation action and training program. It will also establish a foundation for chimpanzee conservation science and facilitate collaborative exchanges between the two countries.

USFWS plans to continue the MENTOR series with additional programs in order to develop new teams of African conservation professionals who can work together to address threats to wildlife and their habitats and implement effective conservation actions.

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