



BIG LIFE FOUNDATION

QUARTERLY REPORT **JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH** **2022**



Photo: Jeremy Goss

I'm still coming to grips with the scope and scale of Big Life Foundation's work here in Greater Amboseli. As someone who has lived here his whole life (I spent most of my youth in what is now called Oltiyani Conservancy in the Kimana Wildlife corridor), I thought I knew all about the area, it's people and wildlife, and all the conservation work that goes into keeping the ecosystem the vibrant example it is held up to be. But let me tell you: I had no idea just how much work BLF does on a daily basis, and I am even more convinced now than I was before I joined that what we are doing is a fundamental part of Amboseli's recent relative success.

What the past two years of working for BLF has also taught me is that time is of the essence. We are planning for the long term but only have the short term to put the necessary parts in place. One day, I won't have to hear subdivision mentioned at all (I hope!), but right now it is the first, second, and last agenda of every meeting we attend. Huge progress has been made, with the Mbirikani and Eselengei communities committing significant land areas to conservation. It is our job to make sure that that commitment is rewarded, and it is exciting that we are in the position to do so with the help of all of you – our partners and supporters.

It is at times like this that we need to be sure that we are ready to act swiftly and innovatively to secure habitat and all that depends on it for the long term. But we must also recognise that it is all that we have done before that has gotten us to the position we are in now. Without BLF's rangers, fence, compensation, education, and healthcare programs we wouldn't have a seat at the subdivision table, nor would we have the history of success to build on to recognise and reward the sacrifice Amboseli landowners are making. Only by keeping everything we have been doing going do we have a chance at keeping Amboseli alive, and it is only through doing more for the average landowner that we can begin to see a real chance at long-term success.

I'm very proud to be part of Big Life at this time, and grateful to the people and the work that laid the groundwork for me and my colleagues to build upon.

Benson Leyian
Chief Executive Officer - Big Life Foundation Kenya



WHERE WE WORK

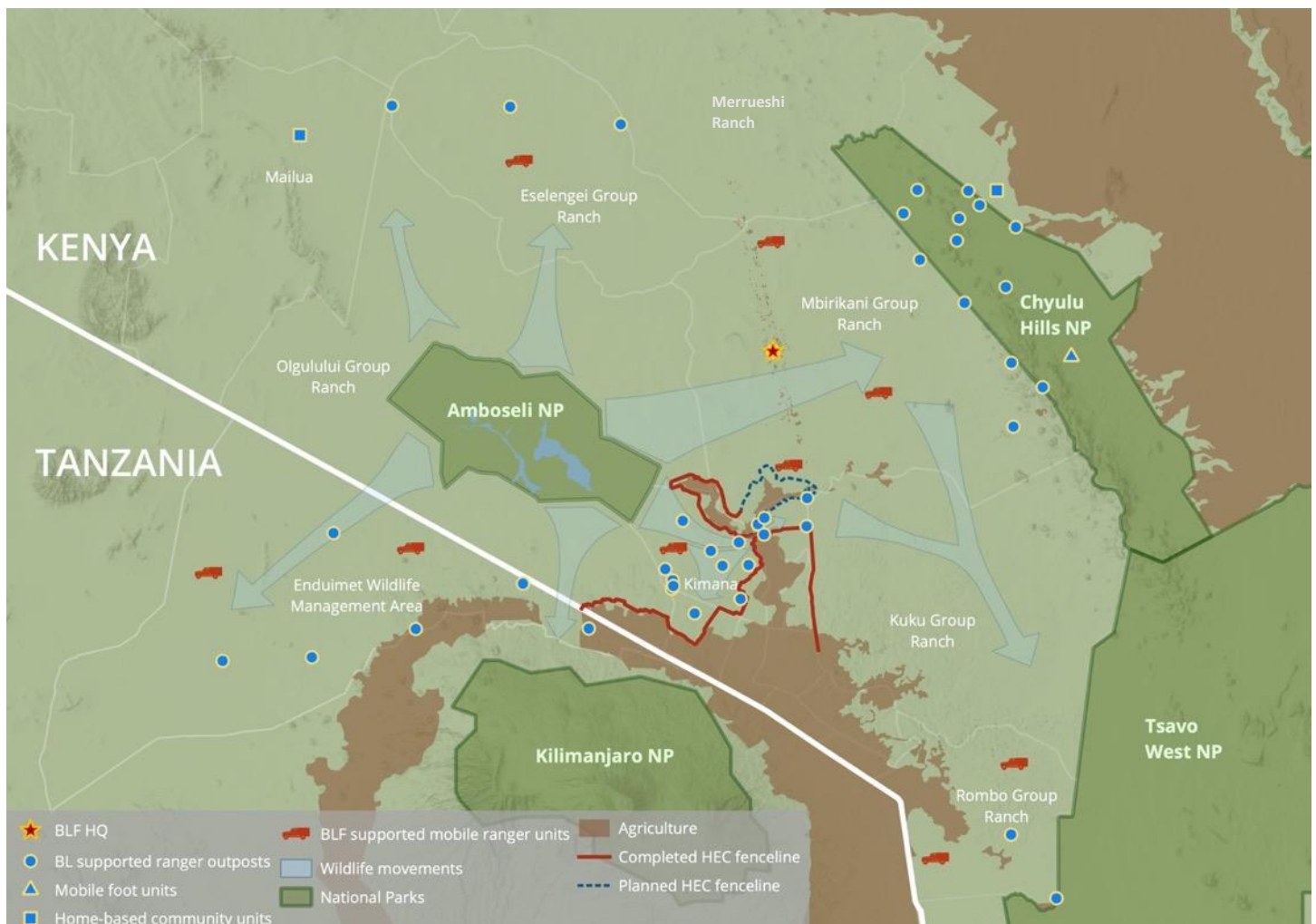
Big Life Foundation's (Big Life) Area of Operation (AOO) covers approximately 1.6 million acres across the Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro (Greater Amboseli) ecosystem in East Africa. Our team of 500+ helps to protect and secure wildlife and critical habitat stretching from the rangelands north of Amboseli 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 ranger presence and regularly patrolled by mobile units, a non-core area where mobile units respond based on need and are actively covered by our intelligence network, and adjacent areas where we provide support as needed. The level of Big Life support provided varies between outposts.

Core AOO: Eselengei Group Ranch, Kimana Area, Mbirikani Group Ranch, Rombo Group Ranch, Chyulu Hills National Park, and Enduimet Wildlife Management Area (Tanzania)

Non-Core AOO: Merrueshi Ranch, Taveta Area

Adjacent*: Kuku Group Ranch, Mailua Ranch, Olgulului Group Ranch, Tsavo West National Park



* Except for intel-related arrests, incidents that occurred in adjacent areas are not reflected in this report.

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 **2022 Q1** ranger activity in Kenya and Tanzania is summarized below:

OVERVIEW

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 activities including anti-poaching and trafficking, conflict mitigation, community support and much more.

Total Staff: 538	Rangers: 352
Ranger Units: 44	Tracker Dogs: 2
Mobile Ranger Units: 9	Permanent Outposts: 32
Aerial Surveillance Hours: 54.5	Rangers Trained: 60
Total Suspects Arrested: 79 YTD Total: 79	Total Arrest Incidents: 41 YTD Total: 41
Kilometers Patrolled This Quarter: On foot: 29,076 By vehicle: 119,040 Q1 TOTAL: 148,116 YTD TOTAL: 148,116	Total Kilometers Patrolled Since Inception (2011): On foot: 1,096,898 By vehicle: 3,339,238 TOTAL: 4,436,136

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.

SUSPECTS ARRESTED Poaching - Bushmeat: 19 Poaching Intention: 2 Trophy Possession: 18 Wildlife Trafficking: 2	RECOVERED ITEMS Ivory: 194.6 kg Animal Parts: antelope horns (3), pangolin (live) (1), pangolin scales (3 kg) Snares: 16 Other: bushmeat (683 kg), charcoal bags (15), poison arrows (12), sandalwood (571 kg + 13 bags)
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INCIDENTS Bushmeat Poaching: 11 Poaching Intention: 2 Trophy Possession: 9 Wildlife Trafficking: 1	PROSECUTIONS Cases - Concluded: 1 Cases - Ongoing: 697 suspects
MORTALITIES - ELEPHANT Human-Elephant Conflict: 0 Poaching: 0 Natural Causes: 1 Unknown: 2 (1 suspected natural)	MORTALITIES - OTHER (excluding large predators) Bushmeat Poaching: dik-dik (1), eland (4), giraffe (1), ostrich (1), zebra (5) Other (human-related): buffalo (1), gazelle (2), giraffe (3), ostrich (2), wildebeest (2), zebra (3)
INJURIES - ELEPHANT Elephants Injured: 3 Elephants Treated: 1 (2 not found)	RESCUES/TREATMENTS - OTHER ANIMALS crocodile (1), eland (1), ground hornbill (1), giraffe (3), ostrich (1), wildebeest (1), zebra (1)

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 maintain Intensive Protection Zone (IPZ) status, which will allow for the future inbound translocation of rhinos from other territories.

Rhino Mortalities: 1 (natural)	Rhino Snares Found: 0
Rhino Protection Rangers: 66	Dedicated Rhino Outposts: 10 Dedicated Rhino Units: 10
RHINO MONITORING Direct Sightings: 2 Indirect Sightings (via camera trap): 24 Spoor Sightings: 32	INFRASTRUCTURE Fencing: 70+ km constructed by SWT to date Water Points: 3 maintained Camera traps: 45

NOTABLE UPDATES (click to read):

- African worked ivory confiscated for the first time with ivory dealers' [arrest](#)
- GIRAFFE [RESCUED](#) FROM A TANGLE (with a fence)



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 **2022 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: 42 Crop-Raiding Incidents Involving Elephants: 36	Acres Damaged: 24.4 Acres Damaged by Elephants: 20.4
Crop Raids Prevented by Big Life: 42	Elephant Retaliatory Hunts Attempted: 2 Retaliatory Hunts Stopped: 2
Crop-Protection Rangers: 24 Crop-Protection Fence Constructed to Date: 100 km Crop-Protection Fence Maintenance Workers: 32	Non-crop-raiding, elephant-related incidents: 8 <i>*including water tanks/pipes damaged by elephants, boma destruction, etc.</i>

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 in Kenya 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 manages the PCF on Mbirikani Group Ranch, Eselengei Group Ranch, and the Kimana Conservancy. Given the success of this program, the goal is to continue expanding the PCF across the entire ecosystem.

The second part of Big Life’s predator protection program in Kenya is the Maasai Olympics, which was established in 2012 as an alternative 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 games are planned for December 2022.

Lion Mortalities: 0 Lion Mortalities in Violation of PCF: 0	Lion Retaliatory Hunts Attempted: 1 Retaliatory Hunts Stopped: 1
Compensation Issued for: 93 Cows: \$16,490 321 Sheep/Goats: \$9,302 6 Donkey: \$210 Q1 TOTAL: \$26,002 YTD TOTAL: \$26,002	Livestock Killed by Predators: Cheetah: 42 Hyena: 239 Jackal: 43 Leopard: 1 Lion: 95
Additional Predator Mortalities: Cheetah: 1 - <i>unknown</i> Hyena: 3 - <i>HWC (2), unknown (1)</i>	Other: 1 incident of problematic predators moved away from bomas to avoid depredation (by chasing or translocation)

ADDITIONAL WILDLIFE CONFLICT

Humans Injured: 7	Wildlife Responsible for Injuries: buffalo (3), elephant (1), snake (3)
Humans Killed: 1	Wildlife Responsible for Deaths: buffalo

NOTABLE UPDATES (click to read):

- TOLSTOY SPEARED AND [TREATED](#)
- THE SADDEST DAY - [Tolstoy passes](#) away from his injury



SECURING WILDLIFE HABITAT

The Amboseli ecosystem is one of our planet's surviving natural treasures. It is also home to almost 200,000 people. Big Life and our partners have taken on some of the most complex conservation challenges and been successful. But the demands of an increasing human population, and unplanned development, have already blocked some key wildlife corridors and habitats. If this continues, space will run out, decimating Amboseli's wildlife populations and depriving human communities of the natural resources that they rely on.

Big Life is 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 land-use planning and 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.

Our **2022 Q1** activity is summarized below:

LAND-USE PLANNING & SUBDIVISION

This work has recently accelerated as a process called 'land subdivision' is sweeping Amboseli, fragmenting large tracts of community-owned land into thousands of small, privately-owned parcels. Resultant land sales, land-use conversion, and fencing have the potential to destroy this irreplaceable ecosystem. Big Life is supporting our partner communities by investing in proper land-use plans, using spatial planning to create area designations for all land-use types (e.g. settlement, agriculture, rangeland, and conservancy/wildlife corridors). The outcomes are extremely positive, communities are reserving large areas for wildlife conservation and livestock grazing, and a series of corridors will connect these habitats across the ecosystem.

CONSERVANCY DEVELOPMENT & LAND LEASES

Big Life believes that land belongs best in the hands of its traditional owners, but widespread land sales as a result of subdivision have the potential to destroy large areas of natural habitat, and result in landless communities. Our involvement in the land subdivision processes has ensured that important wildlife habitats are protected, but things don't stop there. The next critical step is to develop revenue streams from these areas, or risk their eventual conversion to other land-uses.

Conservation land lease agreements are a way of ensuring continued local ownership AND generating the financial returns that those landowners need. These lease agreements are willingly entered into by both parties, the terms of which restrict land conversion and fencing in exchange for annual lease payments.

Kimana Conservancies (ALOCA): The Kimana Ranch subdivided two decades ago, and while some landowners sold their parcels, the majority came together to form six 'Kimana Conservancies', which border Amboseli NP and protect the first section of the Kimana Wildlife Corridor.

With support from Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, Big Life has lease agreements with hundreds of landowners in the conservancies, protecting thousands of acres of critical wildlife habitat. These lease payments are intended to limit destructive development of the land, other than that which is compatible with conservation and pastoralism, and made possible thanks to the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust.

Kimana Sanctuary, at the easternmost part of the Kimana Corridor, was one of the first community-owned and run wildlife conservancies in East Africa. After years of mismanagement, at the request of the community, Big Life took over management in 2017. With support from the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and D.N. Batten Foundation, Big Life set about getting the Sanctuary back on its feet. It now acts as an important dispersal area for many wildlife moving to and from Amboseli National Park. And more recently, an [exciting new partnership](#) with Angama will increase the tourism revenue, allowing the Sanctuary to become self-sufficient, simultaneously covering the costs of its protection and increasing income to its landowners.

<p>ALOCA: Land Owners benefitting from lease fees: 333 Number of acres protected: 20,008 Tourism road network: 51.3 km built to date Other: Documentation provided to issue new title deeds; Student scholarships from KWS distributed; 12 Big Life scholarships allocated to students</p>	<p>Eselengei Group Ranch: Other: Assisting subdivision land-use plan development; Lease agreement negotiated and landowners beginning to sign</p>
<p>Kimana Sanctuary: Land Owners benefitting from lease fees: 844 Number of acres protected: 5,700 Paying visitor days: 1,184</p>	<p>Mbirikani Group Ranch: Other: Assisting subdivision land-use plan development; Co-op for the management of communal grazing land in development</p>

NOTABLE UPDATES (click to read):

- AMBOSELI'S LOST WORLD – The Chyulu Hills & [REDD+ Project](#)
- HIDDEN WATER OF THE [CHYULU HILLS](#)



RANGELANDS MANAGEMENT

Amboseli’s arid rangelands are hurting. High stocking rates of livestock animals, and the breakdown of traditional rotational grazing practices, has resulted in unsustainable pressure on the savannah grasses, and over-harvesting of natural resources in all forms has degraded habitats. Big Life is working to combat these threats to the ecosystem.

Our **2022 Q1** activity is summarized below:

LAND

Rangers actively protect the land by fighting against illegal habitat destruction activities such as logging or charcoal production, sand and water extraction, and combatting bushfires. Rangers also enforce protected area rules in conservancies and national parks, where encroachment activities like trespassing, settlement, and grazing are illegal and harmful to critical ecosystem habitats.

Lastly, since 2017, we’ve partnered with local communities, partner NGOs, and local government to implement a [carbon credit program](#) in the Chyulu Hills to protect it from deforestation and overgrazing. The program generates significant income for the management of the Chyulu Hills National Park and creates benefits for surrounding communities.

Suspects Arrested* for Habitat Destruction: 28 Habitat Destruction Arrest Incidents: 12 <i>*Sometimes released depending on severity of crime</i>	Non-Arrest Habitat Destruction Incidents: 11
	Incidents of Community Grazing and Conservancy Rules Enforcement: 5

RESTORATION

Overgrazing in an arid environment has resulted in large areas without a protective covering; soils are eroding and gullies scar the landscape. The little rain that does fall runs straight off the hard surfaces, depriving the land of moisture and resulting in a downward spiral. Large areas have been rendered unproductive, with negative impacts for both wildlife and people.

Thanks to support from Conservation International and Apple Inc., Big Life is working with the Mbirikani community to restore 10,000 acres of rangeland back to health.

Rangeland Restoration Area: 9,460 acres	Total acres reseeded: 70 to date
Bunds installed to stop erosion: 24,538 to date	Number of people employed: 151

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, healthcare and income-generating initiatives, and also lesser-known activities, such as growing food for local students through a sustainable farming project, using ranger vehicles as ambulances, arresting criminals for community crimes (e.g., theft), conducting human and/or livestock search and rescue operations, and more.

Community Crime Incidents: 2	Suspects Arrested: 2
Human Search and Rescue Incidents: 3	Livestock Search Incidents: 2
Other Community Support Incidents: 7 - <i>emergency transport (2), assault response (1), euthanized rabid dog (1), overnight shelter (1), transport after HWC incident (1), theft response (1)</i>	
Bee Hives: 125 in 6 apiaries Honey Harvested: 120 kg from 25 hives	Sustainable Farms: 1

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 **2022 Q1** activity is summarized below:

Long-Term Student Scholarships Awarded: 442 Boys: 154 Girls: 288	Students Reached by Conservation Lessons: 1,703
One-Time Student Scholarships Awarded: 36	School Visits: 46
Amount paid in Scholarships: \$68,429	National Park Trips: 2 (45 students)
Tertiary-Level Graduates: 0	Teachers' Salaries Paid: 7

NOTABLE UPDATES (click to read):

- Big Life's [beehives](#) vs A VERY HUNGRY HONEY BADGER



HEALTHCARE

Big Life works in partnership with the Kajiado South Sub-County Department of Health to implement backpack nurse outreaches focused on the provision of family planning, immunization and antenatal services, to run educational community meetings discussing many sexual and reproductive health and rights topics, and to support a team of Community Health Volunteers across the Great Amboseli ecosystem. Big Life is also now working with the Ministry of Education and the Kajiado South Sub-County Department of Health to improve sexual and reproductive health and rights education in schools and for the youth and adolescent community.

Our **2022 Q1** activity is summarized below:

Back-Pack Medical Outreaches: 54	CHV Household Visits: 6,922
Family Planning Dialogue Days: 67	People De-wormed: 1,694
Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights school talks: 20	Immunizations Administered: 3,620
Child Right Club Meetings: 40	Family Planning Services Provided: 1,231
	People Reached with Family Planning Information: 21,334
	People receiving primary healthcare: 1,061

NOTABLE UPDATES (click to read):

- VACCINES IN THE BUSH – Big Life’s mobile [healthcare program](#) assists local communities



Thank you to our wonderful partners and supporters for helping make our work possible. 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