



## **The Samburu Conservation Research Initiative**

### **Proceedings of the Community, Scientists and Partners Workshop**

**April 5-7<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

**Isiolo, Kenya**

**Bomen Hotel**

Dr Nicholas Oguge, Rachael Dobson and Jessi Flynn

#### **Foreword**

In the final year of support from the Ford Motor Company Fund, there was a need for a comprehensive, outcome-focused gathering of those involved in the Earthwatch Samburu Conservation Research Initiative (SCRI). The SCRI is a community-driven initiative that engages stakeholders at various levels, including local community leaders, local and international researchers, conservation workers and government management representatives to work towards the sustainability of the Samburu-Laikipia landscape of Kenya.

As a means to bring a wide range of representatives from the SCRI together, a *Community, Scientists and Partners Workshop* was held during the dates of April 5-7, 2006 in Isiolo, Kenya, a location best accessible to all participants. The overall goal of the workshop was to strengthen SCRI collaborations as a means to promote increased resource sharing and capacity building to help the SCRI meet its mission of community-driven conservation. Of the 84 invitees, 54 SCRI stakeholders attended the workshop. Representatives included: 16 Samburu community members (15 of which were past recipients of Earthwatch Community Fellowships); 19 stakeholders from various conservation organizations; 15 Earthwatch researchers and field staff; and 4 Earthwatch staff members (see Appendix 1 for a complete list of attendees).

These proceedings summarize the aim and structure of the workshop, feedback shared by workshop participants, suggestions for the way forward and outcomes generated.

#### **Workshop Aim**

The aim of the SCRI Community, Scientists and Partners Workshop was to gather SCRI stakeholders to achieve the following three objectives:

1. Showcase the overall achievements made within the SCRI and the larger SCRI community, including advancements in research and conservation, training programs, resource sharing, local outreach and communication, and capacity building;
2. Conduct an evaluative session that was part of a larger SCRI evaluation; and
3. Hold focus groups with the intention of generating specific outcomes based on collective feedback and brainstorming.

## **Agenda**

### Introduction

The SCRI Community, Scientist and Partners Workshop began Wednesday evening, April 5<sup>th</sup>, with a warm welcome by Dr. Nicholas Oguge, SCRI Field Director. Participants were gathered informally for refreshments, introductions and conversation. The following morning, Thursday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Oguge formally opened the workshop with an introduction to the agenda (see Appendix 2) and an overall review of the SCRI. Dr. Oguge's review provided participants with a deeper understanding of Earthwatch's Conservation Research Initiatives program: the Samburu Conservation Research Initiative background, goals, and a report on progress to date in research and capacity building. Dr. Oguge explained how this workshop was a direct result of the Community Fellows' Reunion Meeting of March 19, 2005, whereby participants requested a strengthening of networks amongst community members and further workshops and/or trainings to increase capacity-building.

### Scientist Presentations

Following Dr. Oguge's introduction, a panel of SCRI scientists presented their findings regarding the pre-determined topic: *How conservation research has benefited the Samburu region*. The panel presentations were facilitated by Nick Oguge and Richard Odhiambo, the SCRI Community Liaison Officer. The research topics discussed included: endangered species conservation, with a focus on Grevy's Zebra; water resources and potability; wildlife habitats and rangecondition; the socio-economic impact of wildlife conservation enterprises; human-carnivore conflicts; and medicinal plants as an important resource for communities. A strong message conveyed by the researchers throughout the panel was the integral role of indigenous knowledge and practice in conservation efforts in Samburu. Samburu communities carry a wealth of information about their resources and what is most needed is a collaborative management effort. Conversely, it was strongly voiced by the audience that scientific data needs to be more readily shared at the local level for management plans to be effective.

**Below are highlights of scientific presentations by Earthwatch scientists:**

#### **a) Conservation of Grevy's Zebras (*Equus grevyi*) in Samburu, Kenya**

Dr. Paul Muoria, Prof Dan Rubenstein, Dr Nick Oguge and Dr Philip Muruthi  
Key Points

1. This study has revealed that the majority of Grevy's zebras are found in community areas with only less than 15 % in the protected area. Therefore, the future of this species lies with working with the local community.
2. The study has documented the temporal and spatial distribution of this endangered equid. Thus providing information which can be employed for their long term conservation through assisting the local communities formulate well informed natural resource management plans. For example, at Ngutuk Ongiron Group Ranch, Grevy's zebras were encountered at a monthly average of 170 (range 11 – 619) individuals between January and October 2005.
3. This study has also shown that Grevy's zebra is selective in its habitat use and at each group ranch, concentrate only within delimited areas.
4. Above information will be useful for the group ranch in the development of a natural resource management (NRM) plan.
5. Information on the numbers and use of space in different times of the year is important in developing an overall conservation management programme for the landscape.

#### **b) Unraveling the relationship between Grevy's and plain zebra in Lewa Wildlife conservancy.**

Prof Dan Rubenstein, Joseph Kirathe and Dr Nick Oguge

## Key Points

1. Previous data have shown how plains and Grevy's zebra interact naturally as they use rangelands in Lewa range since they have similar habitat preferences.
2. Grevy's and plains zebras compete for grazing resources, and the plains appear to be better competitors in large herd grazing aggregation (Rubenstein *et al.*, 2004).
3. In the last year or so, there were indications that both species aggregated more often with little seasonal habitat preferences, which mitigates extensive competition.
4. Preliminary data shows that both species tend to drink during early morning hours in Lewa. Since Lewa provides a less human influenced environment in Grevy's zebra range, it may be inferred that this is their natural pattern. This puts them in conflict with pastoral communities who tend to visit watering points with their livestock at similar hours in this landscape.
5. There is need, as part of community education and awareness programme, to get this information and its implications clearly to communities.
6. Predation is still a big threat to the survival of Grevy's population in Lewa. This is due to low survival rates of foals and hence low recruitment rates. Parasite infestation in foals may contribute a great deal to their survival rates. Means and ways need to be devised to boost recruitments rates and thus ensure population build-up.

## c) Samburu communities, water and wildlife

Dr Alexander Njue and Dr Kiplagat Kotut

### Key points

1. This study has collected 126 water samples from dams, laggas, streams, boreholes and rivers over a period of 1 year from July 2004 to July 2005 in 5 sampling intervals. During the same period, 48 samples were collected from institutions, i.e. schools hospitals and churches. Around Lewa, 31 samples were collected. Water samples are analysed for physico-chemical parameters and microbial composition.
2. Fecal contamination have been detected in samples from dams (1000%), rivers (90%), boreholes (0%), laggas (98%), streams (20%), and piped system (2%).
3. Pathogens of clinical significance isolated so far include *Shigella flexineri*, *Shigella boydii*, *Shigella dysenteriae*, *Salmonella* spp (non typhi), *Aeromonas hydrophilla*, *Vibrio cholera* (non ogawa strain).
4. By identifying when and where water resources have become critical, intervention measures including provision of alternative water sources (boreholes, piped water from permanent springs such as Buffalo Springs) can be explored as viable alternatives. Human-Wildlife conflict can be anticipated and preventative measures put in place.
5. Identification of contaminated water will reduce related health hazards for man, livestock and wildlife.
6. The aggregation and concentration of both livestock and wildlife close to watering points during dry seasons, with the attendant vegetation and soil degradation, can be reduced through informed location of artificial watering points.
7. The project is also assessing baseline information on aquatic biodiversity.

## d) Wildlife Habitats of Samburu

Dr Donald Ogweno, Fred Atieno and Dr Alexander Njue

## Key points

1. The striking feature of the vegetation in the landscape is differences in range conditions in community pasture land and the protected area at Lewa. Areas around Wamba have relatively low abundance and cover of grasses in the herb layer, and a higher cover of woody vegetation. Herbs and forbs dominate the herbaceous layer, and only a few unpalatable grasses with a ground cover of 5 percent occur. This is unlike Lewa, where there is over 70 percent grass cover at almost every site. This indicates that the habitat in Wamba is more favourable to browsers and less favourable to grazers such as the Grevy's zebra, while the habitat in Lewa is favourable to both grazers and browsers.
2. The most common grass species in Wamba area are *Terapogon* spp., *Aristida* spp., *Pennisetum* spp., *Eragrostis* spp., and *Sporobolus* spp. In Lewa, the most abundant species is *Pennisetum struminium*, with an average 50 percent cover, followed by *Themeda triandra*, *Hyperrhenia* spp., *Pennisetum mezianum*, and *Cymbopogon* spp.

## **e) Studies of Indigenous Knowledge on Medicinal Plants use and Conservation among the Samburu in Northern Kenya**

Dr Callistus Ogot, Prof. Paul Okemo and Prof. Isaiah Ndiege

This was presented as a proposal with the following objectives:

1. To collect indigenous knowledge on traditional medicinal plants use and conservation among the Samburu
2. To develop a database for medicinal plants in the Samburu-Laikipia landscape area
3. To determine the abundance and distribution of medicinal plants, and assess species statuses
4. To establish harvesting impacts and causes of threats to medicinal plants
5. To determine spatial and temporal scale of marketing and economic value of medicinal plants
6. To validate the efficacy of traditional medicinal remedies
7. To establish the active principles of selected medicinal plants
8. To explore avenues for sustainable use and management of medicinal plants

## **f) The Big Cats of Samburu: Their Ecology and Conservation, and the Economic Impacts of Livestock Depredation**

Dr. Samuel Andanje, Dr. William Ogara and Dr. Nicholas Ogue

Also presented as a proposal with following objectives

1. To characterise the nature and frequency of the conflicts per locality
2. To study the ecology of the conflict species including temporal and spatial habitat use, prey base and diets of wildlife and livestock
3. To determine the herding practices and their influence on spatial and temporal frequency and intensity of depredation (number of people, presence of dogs, nature of habitat e.g. lagga, forests grass/shrub land)
4. To study the biology and health parameters of the predator species in the study area including morphometrics, and disease pathogens
5. To identify mitigation measures and recommend policy dimensions (boma designs, herding practices, importance of predators in their ecosystem, issues on ecotourism)
6. To characterize the knowledge, attitude and the practices (KAP) of the communities in the study area in relation to the wildlife (feeding, migration patterns, and conflict areas)

### Community Fellowship Program Overview

After lunch, Rachael Dobson, Community Fellowship Program Manager from the Earthwatch headquarters in the US, gave a presentation on the Earthwatch Community Fellowship Program worldwide. The audience learned that the 27 Samburu Community Fellows to date are part of a larger, global network of over 250 fellows representing 13 countries. Rachael emphasized the importance of community members in carrying forward the message of conservation and she praised the Samburu Community Fellows for undertaking this responsibility. The fellows were reminded to utilize the network of stakeholders involved in the SCRI for further support in their efforts. It was mentioned that some of the fellows walked over 40 km in the rain to attend the workshop, which is testament to their dedication to Earthwatch, to conservation and to their communities.

### Community Fellow Presentations

The afternoon followed with a panel of Samburu Community Fellows presenting their community-based outreach efforts, facilitated by James Munyugi of Northern Rangeland Trust. The Samburu communities represented were: Lodungo'kwe/Sesia; Ngutuk Ongi'ron; Namunyak; Nkaroni; Koiya; Nareda; Il Ngwesi; Sera; and Ngilai West. Overall, the fellows expressed an enormous amount of gratitude for their Earthwatch expedition experience and the opportunities it availed. Many of the fellows have initiated - or taken lead roles in strengthening - local conservancies and youth groups dedicated to issues of conservation, land-use management, health and security. The fellows also expressed a strong desire for continued trainings on management issues, such as the GIS, para-ecology and natural resource management workshops recently conducted by Earthwatch and partnering facilitators.

### SCRI Evaluation

To close the first day of the workshop, Jessi Flynn, Earthwatch Conservation Program Officer based in the US, briefly discussed her role in conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the SCRI to: 1) gauge the learning, actions and impacts of the SCRI within the SCRI community; and 2) carry out a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities; and Threats (SWOT) assessment. As one part of this holistic effort, Jessi handed out an evaluation form to the representatives of partner organizations who were present. The partners completed the forms and then reconvened over refreshments with Jessi for an evaluative discussion about the Samburu CRI. Outside of the workshop, Jessi also conducted interviews with researchers, Community Fellows, EW staff and various community stakeholders.

### Partner Presentations

On Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, the final day of the workshop, Dr. Richard Odhiambo, SCRI Community Liaison Officer based in the Earthwatch Nairobi office, gave a brief welcome and overview of the day's agenda. Dr. Odhiambo then introduced a panel of SCRI partner representatives to present on the pre-determined topic: *Working towards conservation in Samburu; how do we work together towards the common goal of sustainability?* The panel was facilitated by Dr. Nick Oguge, and presenters included NGO and Governmental representatives from the African Wildlife Foundation, Cheetah Conservation Fund, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Kenya Wildlife Service, the National Environmental Management Authority, Ngare Ndare Forest Trust, Northern Rangeland Trust, and Save the Elephants. Each presented an overall background of their organizational mission and strategy and described how they could specifically contribute to and benefit from the SCRI network.

The common emphasis throughout the panel was the integral involvement of the local community in conservation efforts on the ground. All of the partner organizations are engaged in community education, capacitation, and/or development efforts towards conservation. Many voiced the desire for stronger collaboration as a means to avoid duplication of these efforts, and the Earthwatch SCRI was unanimously praised for its role in bringing together these NGO and Governmental representatives in this light. Specific opportunities for collaboration mentioned were: joint research programs and/or projects; information exchange; mobilization and sharing of resources; identification of research issues/gaps; collaborative monitoring programs and capacity building at different levels. There was also a strong message towards the need for increased resource sharing of Earthwatch scientific research findings with partner organizations.

### Focus Group Activity

After morning tea, Rachael Dobson introduced the afternoon focus group activity. The purpose of the focus group activity was to involve the SCRI stakeholders in a collective brainstorming exercise as a means to generate the following outcomes: 1) an educational mechanism or product to promote basic conservation awareness in local communities; 2) a stronger network amongst SCRI stakeholders to promote the better sharing of resources; and 3) a basic action plan for the next steps to take to achieve these outcomes.

Following the lunch break, the workshop participants were randomly divided into two groups, each consisting of a mix of community members, scientists and partner representatives. The purpose of creating two sub-groups was to allow for more productive discussion and greater participation by each member. Both groups were given the same mission of brainstorming the above three topics, and a moderator was selected for each group to facilitate the discussion and take notes on large flip chart paper.

### Focus Group Discussion and Results

The two sub-groups convened separately for nearly 2 hours, then broke for afternoon tea, and reconvened as a whole to present their findings to one another. Each group shared their discussion points and offered their ideas for next steps. Dr. Nick Oguge facilitated this discussion. It was collectively determined that the Samburu Community Fellows would create a Task Force to drive an educational outreach effort within their communities. The fellows would reconvene on May 3, 2006 to select the Task Force members and determine specific goals. Dr. Richard Odhiambo will facilitate this effort. A Fellows and Partners meeting would then be held on a later date to develop an educational outreach product (eg: posters, calendars, brochures, etc) with a focus on human-wildlife interaction. On another level, the formulation of an "SCRI Scientist Committee" to be lead by Dr. Oguge was suggested as a means to share scientific results and allow for more regular dissemination to the partners and communities. (The summary and results of the focus group activity can be found in Appendix 2.)

### The Way Forward

The workshop was brought to a close by Dr. Nick Oguge, who summarized the workshop proceedings and facilitated a discussion regarding the way forward. Over the course of the workshop, participants suggested mechanisms to help strengthen communication and collaboration amongst all SCRI stakeholders. The following were suggested as the best collaborative mechanisms moving forward:

- An SCRI E-Newsletter (~2 pages in length; some hard copies for those with limited access to email), which gives regular updates on SCRI events and outcomes within the landscape.
- A database of all SCRI Partner organizations with ongoing programs categorized, contact information, calendar of events, notification of publications and reports, etc.
- Use/sharing of existing resources, such as: databases; templates; website tools; etc.
- Greater collaboration with Community Fellows to help implement, monitor and provide feedback on the effectiveness of community-based conservation initiatives.
- Increased involvement of Community Fellows in other conservation initiatives, such as: photo competitions; cross-cultural exchanges; field trips; best practice exposure; trainings; and other relevant opportunities.

### **Summary and Outcomes**

The SCRI Community, Scientists and Partners Workshop was highly successful in achieving its mission of bringing SCRI stakeholders together to strengthen collaborations and promote greater resource sharing. The event allowed for networking during formal presentations and discussions, as well as during informal meals and social time. The overall take-home message from the workshop was two-fold: 1) there is a strong need for scientific findings to be more accessible for stakeholders to make informed planning and management

decisions; and 2) there is a strong need for increased involvement and capacitation of community members in conservation initiatives. Earthwatch was highly praised for the SCRI approach of facilitating this on-the-ground, multi-stakeholder-driven conservation effort.

Further to its mission, the workshop produced specific outcomes, which are summarized as follows:

Immediate Outcomes:

1. A Community Fellows Task Force, consisting of representatives from each community within the Samburu-Laikipia region, to drive an educational, conservation-based outreach initiative
2. An organized effort between Community Fellows and partner organizations to develop an outreach product that emphasizes the significance of human-wildlife interaction to local communities

Medium to Long-term Outcomes:

3. An SCRI Scientist Committee, which will allow for the sharing of data for dissemination to the partner organizations and communities
4. An SCRI E-newsletter to provide updates on all stakeholder activities, publications and events

These outcomes are the result of collective input from SCRI stakeholders at all levels (local, regional and national), and indeed, they will require the active participation of all stakeholders to bring to fruition. While this requires consistent effort and communication on behalf of all SCRI members, the desire for success was clearly articulated by the workshop participants.

## Appendix 1

### Participants at the Earthwatch SCRI Community, Scientists and Partners Workshop

Bomen Hotel, Isiolo, Kenya, 6-8 April, 2006

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## Appendix 2

### **Samburu CRI Community, Scientists, and Partners Workshop Focus Group Activity Summary and Results**

**Mission:** To bring scientists, partners, and community fellows together to brainstorm specific educational mechanism(s) to carry out in the fellow's communities.

- Goals:**
- 1) To create an educational mechanism or product to promote basic conservation awareness in local communities
  - 2) To develop a stronger network amongst scientists, partners, and community fellows to promote the better sharing of resources
  - 3) To create a basic action plan with next steps to take to carry out educational methods

#### **Questions to be explored:**

- 1) Who are the audiences to involve?  
Ex: Schools; Elders; Barazas; Conservancies; etc?
- 2) Who are the key liaisons (influential people) in the community to involve?  
Ex: Teachers; Chiefs; District Officers; other leaders; etc?
- 3) What is the most effective and realistic educational mechanism?  
Ex: Posters; Videos; School Contests; Consultation; Training of scouts; etc? Please be specific and realistic: utilize existing resources.
- 4) Who are the most relevant partner organizations to collaborate with on facilitation of educational mechanism delivery?
- 5) NEXT STEPS: Devise a basic action plan.

#### **Summary of Focus Group Outcomes and Next Steps:**

##### **I. Who are the Key Audiences to involve?**

- Conservation organizations – Trusts
- Schools – both students and teachers
- Barazas
- Village groups – honey, grazing, beadwork, etc.
- Elders – community decision-makers
- CBOs
- Conservancy staff (tourism and management)
- Natural resources management committees
- Morani committee
- School environmental clubs
- School competition programs such as drama, music, festivals
- Women's groups, especially ones with environmental projects
- Youth groups

- Theatre and entertainment groups
- Cultural ceremonies in community villages – eg: Morani dances with Nkolionto
- Churches and Religious groups
- Game scouts
- Government institutions
- Private institutions – eg: Missions

## **II. Who are the Key Liaisons (influential people) to involve?**

- Chiefs - administrators
- Elders
- Other Community Fellows
- Civic leaders – Councillors
- Conservancy Managers/trustees/chairman
- Education Officers
- Teachers
- Extension Officers based in the area
- KWS Community Officer
- Other conservation organizations/NGOs
- Opinion leaders in area
- Religious leaders
- Health workers
- Social workers

## **III. What are the most realistic and effective Educational Mechanisms?**

- Visual aids – eg: posters for schools; slides and videos for Morans and Elders
- Posters (ICE materials) in local languages for common areas
- Story-telling for primary school children
- Demonstrations – seminars; displays; hands-on field days; “demonstration plots”
- Educational picnics/outings/field trips – for various groups (not just schools)
- Training of Trainers/Community Facilitators
- Workshops
- Barazas for the public
- Exposure tours – exchanges with other communities for best practice examples
- Strengthening of school conservation clubs
- Themed events
- Vernacular radio stations
- School media competitions – awards scheme
- Ceremonial / informal recordings
- Simple brochures
- Adopt animals and plants in school activities like clubs / sports / houses, etc.
- Calendar illustrations
- Talks/demonstrations during evening dances

## **IV. Which Partners can be collaborated with to develop and deliver these mechanisms?**

- Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) – field trips, videos, Education Dept
- Other NGOs: EW (Community Liaison Officer, Scientists), AWF (connections with private sector – ecotourism), NRT (Community Outreach Officer, collaborations between conservancies), LWF / SWF

(Forums), STE (Mpala, conservation/elephant materials, Educational opportunities), CCF (cheetah materials, posters, activity sheets), LEWA (wildlife materials, skits), EWC, GOK

- National Museums of Kenya
- Community Conservancies
- County Councils
- Provincial Administration
- NEMA – can provide informative magazines, trainings by Education Dept
- Ministry of Education – oversees school curricula
- Ministry of Water
- Ministry of Veterinary Services
- Ministry of Public Health
- Forestry Dept
- CBOs
- Radio stations
- African Environmental Film Foundation
- National Reserves - Protected areas in Samburu, Isiolo, etc.
- Universities
- Donor organizations / individuals
- Private sector players – eg. ecotourism

## V. Next Steps

→ Chosen Conservation Topics for Educational Outreach:

1. Wildlife Conservation/Security
2. Land Degradation (over-stocking)
3. Water Contamination

Action	Inputs/Outputs
Hold Community Fellows meeting on 3 <sup>rd</sup> May, 2006 in Wamba to arrange a Community Fellow Task Force comprised of fellows representing each community. Develop an Action Plan.	Dr. Richard Odhiambo to coordinate fellows meeting and facilitate the Fellows Task Force Action Plan. The action plan will identify the educational material(s), key partners, and mechanism for outreach. Clear goals and timeline to be determined. A Fellows and Partners meeting date and location to be determined – invitation sent by Richard
Hold Fellows/Partners meeting to package and standardize the information → Develop the outreach material(s): posters, brochures, demonstrations, calendars, playing cards, etc.	Richard to coordinate and facilitate meeting with Task Force and key partners to help develop the material(s)
Educational outreach material(s) developed	Earthwatch to help collate and produce materials
Educational materials brought before Chiefs, Elders, and Councillors	Task Force to present materials to key leaders as a first step
Educational materials announced at barazas (Samburu community gatherings)	Task Force to present materials at barazas
Educational materials presented in schools	Task Force to present materials to Education Officers and teachers for delivery in schools
Next 4 Community Fellows selected	1 teacher from each of the 4 Samburu regions will be selected by the communities for an Earthwatch

	expedition in late August 2006. Task Force to coordinate. Richard to administer application and award process.
Ongoing events coverage by media - eg. radio, newspapers, etc.	Task Force and Partners liaise with event managers and radio programs, etc.
Coordinated location within landscape – Community Resource Centre to be completed in Wamba	Earthwatch and Richard to oversee Community Resource Centre development
Regular regional review sessions (semi-annual) established	Earthwatch and Richard to provide coordination and facilitation of semi-annual review sessions of Task Force and overall CRI collaborations
PI (Earthwatch Scientists) committees to be developed	Dr. Nick Oguge to lead this; Fellows and partners to be incorporated