



URGENT CHALLENGES

CRITICAL GRAZING AREAS FOR WILDLIFE ARE QUICKLY DISAPPEARING AND THE HEALTH OF TARANGIRE NATIONAL PARK AND THE MAASAI STEPPE IS UNDER THREAT.

The grasslands of the Maasai Steppe's Simanjiro Plains are crucial grazing areas for both wildlife and cattle for the local Maasai. Historically, a fine balance was maintained between the grazing needs of the wildlife and the livestock, but over time hunting, farming, population and other pressures have severely diminished the grazing lands and wildlife numbers. An alarming amount of land has been and is currently being transformed into farms which are marginally productive and often owned by non-village outsiders, with no 'return' going to the local Maasai pastoralists. This has resulted in a severe decline in wildlife numbers and an increase in pressures on Maasai livelihoods and cultural values.

THE ECOSYSTEM: The Tarangire/Maasai Steppe ecosystem comprises 35,000 sq km and is home to both Maasai pastoralists and some of East Africa's signature wildlife. Within this larger ecosystem, Tarangire National Park is a crucial dry season haven, but the park relies on much larger areas where wildlife disperses during the rainy season. During the rains, wildlife such as wildebeest and zebra concentrate on short grass plains, such as the Simanjiro plains which lie east of Tarangire National Park, because of the rich pastures and grazing found there. Many visitors come to view wildlife in Tarangire, but few understand that without the broader ecosystem, the park would not survive. In short – if wildlife in the areas outside of Tarangire decline, then so does the national park itself. Tarangire would become an isolated 'island park' without natural movements of game. This means that the park depends on conservation measures by local communities and landholders, if conservation efforts across the ecosystem as a whole are to succeed.

URGENT SOLUTIONS! SIMANJIRO CONSERVATION EASEMENT (SCE)

MANY CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS HAVE TRIED TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION IN THE MAASAI STEPPE BUT WITH LITTLE SUCCESS AS HABITAT CONTINUES TO BE LOST AND WILDLIFE NUMBERS DECLINE.

So, in 2004, a consortium of concerned tour operators, working collaboratively with several local NGOs, developed a 'Conservation Easement' with Terrat Village, which lies about 50 kilometers east of Tarangire National Park in the Simanjiro plains. The Maasai expressed concerns over losing grazing resources as their land continued to be converted into farms. The tour operators realized the importance to their businesses of wildlife in the wider ecosystem, even though none of them actually operated in the area around Terrat village. Thus, they proposed to contribute \$4500 a year to the village, and in return the village would formally prohibit farming and permanent settlements in a demarcated grazing area. This basically gives the village an incentive to protect a key portion of wildlife habitat- the portion of the Simanjiro plains that falls within Terrat village's legally demarcated village lands. Additionally, \$3500 were earmarked for village scouts for anti-poaching efforts through funds raised by Wildlife Conservation Society. The result is that over 23,000 acres of key grassland habitat has been preserved for the Maasai livestock as well as the wildlife, and the wave of destructive farming pressure has been stopped.

IT'S SUCCESSFUL AND HIGHLY COST-EFFECTIVE

THINK ABOUT IT: \$8,000 PER YEAR TO CONSERVE 23,000 ACRES OF GRASSLAND.

Not just any grasslands, but habitat supporting thousands of wildebeest, zebra, eland, ostrich, giraffes, and hundreds of species of birds and small mammals, as well as the livelihoods of several thousand Maasai. That comes to about \$0.35 per acre annually! And it has been successful. One large illegal farm has been stopped through a village lawsuit and court order, which will discourage future incursions of agriculture into the locally-protected area. In addition, the village scouts have been working to prevent poaching, such as working with law enforcement officials recently to arrest a gang of zebra skin poachers. Some species of wildlife on the plains, such as giraffe, have become noticeably more common and unafraid of vehicles since the project was initiated.

EVERY CENT GOES TO THE LAND

IT IS IMPORTANT TO STRESS THAT EVERY CENT GOES TO THE LAND.

Meaning – no amount of contributions whatsoever is spent on anything else but a straight payment to the easement with the villages. Any other work, such as meetings or even creating the brochure you are reading is done on a volunteer basis by tour operators or members of local NGOs, such as the Ujamaa Community Resource Team, donating their time as a part of their wider organizational missions,

WHY WE NEED YOU TO HELP

MOST LAND REMAINS UNPROTECTED.

The bulk of the grasslands are on the lands of Terrat, Sukuro and Emboreet villages. So far, an easement has been signed with Terrat Village, but this is just a small piece of the larger ecosystem, which continues to be threatened by expanding agriculture in other village areas. Funds are desperately needed to sign an easement with Sukuro Village, whose land encompasses the largest portion of the grasslands, as well as Emboreet grasslands, which are perhaps being lost most rapidly.

THE RESULT

\$24,000 A YEAR IS NOT A LOT OF MONEY TO SECURE:

- Strong, healthy herds of wildebeest, zebra, oryx, gazelles, eland and hartebeest – all contributing to the overall health of the Maasai Steppe ecosystem and Tarangire National Park.
- Strong, healthy herds of livestock sustaining traditional pastoral livelihoods and supporting hundreds of families.
- Strong, healthy grasslands, soils and plant communities over potentially 100,000 acres of Rift Valley savannah.



WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD – WILDEBEEST AMONGST MAIZE FIELDS OR HEALTHY GRASSLANDS FOR CATTLE AND WILDLIFE?



VILLAGE GAME SCOUTS

CONTRIBUTORS

ASILIA CAMPS AND LODGES
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WILDLIFE EXPLORER
TARANGIRE SAFARI LODGE (SINYATI)
TIM CORFIELD

PAYMENT DETAILS—PLEASE HELP!

LOCAL DONATIONS:

THE NATIONAL BANK OF COMMERCE
P.O. BOX 1863, DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA
SWIFT CODE: NLCBTZTX
ACCT: DOROBO & PARTNERS ECO TOURISM
ACCT NO.: 014103000985
ACCT CURRENCY: TANZANIA SHILLINGS

INTERNATIONAL DONATIONS:

USD CHECKS CAN BE PAYABLE TO:
DOROBO FUND FOR TANZANIA
750 SOUTH SECOND ST. #411, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55401-2363
***PLEASE SPECIFY FOR THE PURPOSES OF SIMANJIRO CONSERVATION EASEMENT**
***THE DOROBO FUND IS A U.S. REGISTERED 501C3 NON PROFIT**