



XV WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS

Building a Green, Healthy and Resilient Future with Forests

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Scope and objectives

The Sustainable Wildlife Management (SWM) Programme aims to improve the conservation and sustainable use of wildlife in forest, savannah and wetland ecosystems in member countries of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). Our work focuses on how to reconcile the challenges of wildlife conservation with food security and rural socio-economic development, particularly where rural communities use wildlife in their diet and to supplement their income, and where it is part of their culture. The SWM Programme is working in 15 countries, namely Botswana, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Gabon, Guyana, Madagascar, Mali, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Congo, Senegal, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

To achieve robust, community-based sustainable wildlife management, the SWM Programme is promoting a framework that encompasses a better understanding of the environment and its resources, community rights, governance, management, and reduces rural dependency on unsustainable natural resource use. These components represent the minimum prerequisites: if one is missing, sustainable use is unlikely to be achieved.

Innovative approach

Community-based sustainable wildlife management (CB-SWM) is a collective social process by which resident rights holders agree to hunt or fish in a defined geographic area in ways that maintain animal populations at stable levels over many decades. The structure of rights-holder groups will vary from place to place, and may consist of individual families, clans, villages, wards or others.

Six key components for sustainable wildlife management systems



Understanding the environment and its use

"Communities need to know the abundance of wildlife, including fish, in their environment, if these animal populations are stable or declining, and how they are currently used by the community."

- KNOWING THE NUMBER OF ANIMALS, how fast they can reproduce, and what factors control their rate of reproduction is the foundation for determining the level of sustainable wildlife use and is a key component of adaptive management.
- UNDERSTANDING the use of wildlife and its importance for local livelihoods and wellbeing will ensure that wildlife is managed in a way that sustainably fulfils community needs.



Social cohesion to manage as a community

"Working together is critical."

- SHARING a common purpose is key to manage wildlife and to take collective action through:
 - o COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE when communities have similar hunting practices or wildlife use;
 - o COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST when communities share mutual interest (e.g., a fishing or hunting cooperative).



Devolution of exclusionary rights

"Stewardship is predicated on the recognition and respect of communities' rights to their resources."

- Resident rights-holding communities must have legal authority and resource rights/tenure to:
 - o USE resources in their customary lands;
 - o EXCLUDE non-rights holders from hunting and fishing within their territories.



Effective governance systems

"Communities need recognized governance groups."

- EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS should be in place for rights-holding communities to exercise their authority.
- LEGITIMACY, TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW and CAPACITY to sustainably manage wildlife are essential attributes for governance groups.
- WORKING IN COLLABORATION with technical practitioners can be beneficial.



Local-level management by a competent authority

"Empowered communities are the most appropriate level of organization for CB-SWM."

- The PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY holds that most social and political decisions should be dealt with a level of organization consistent with their resolution.
- Communities should have the AUTHORITY to manage, hunt or fish the wildlife in their resident area, since wildlife populations are typically confined to a specific place.



Sustainable solutions for growth and increasing aspirations

"Producing alternative sources of food and income."

- ALTERNATIVE SOURCES of food and income may be required to meet basic needs and evolving aspirations.

Conclusions

Around the world, overhunting for wild meat is threatening hundreds of wildlife species with extinction. As animal populations decline, many rural communities are being left without sufficient protein. This situation is becoming more critical as the demand for wild meat grows in towns and cities. Communities use wild animals in different ways and for different purposes. The use of wildlife and its importance for local livelihoods and wellbeing need to be fully understood to ensure that wildlife is managed in a way that fulfils community needs in a sustainable manner.

The six components are critical to achieve robust community-based sustainable wildlife management. This approach, which has been published as a Technical Brief, is the result of a concerted and collaborative effort by experts from the SWM Programme and is the basis for all SWM Programme activities in the fifteen countries participating in the initiative. Taking action now to support communities to prepare for the future is essential if wildlife populations are to persist at ecologically functional densities, and to continue to play a role in the wellbeing and cultural identity of local communities.



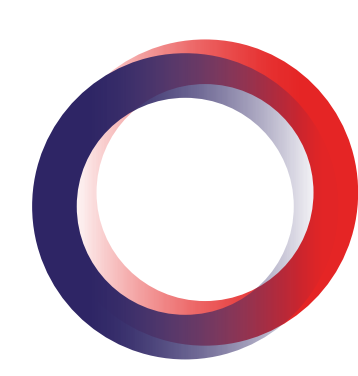
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SWM-programme@fao.org
www.swm-programme.info