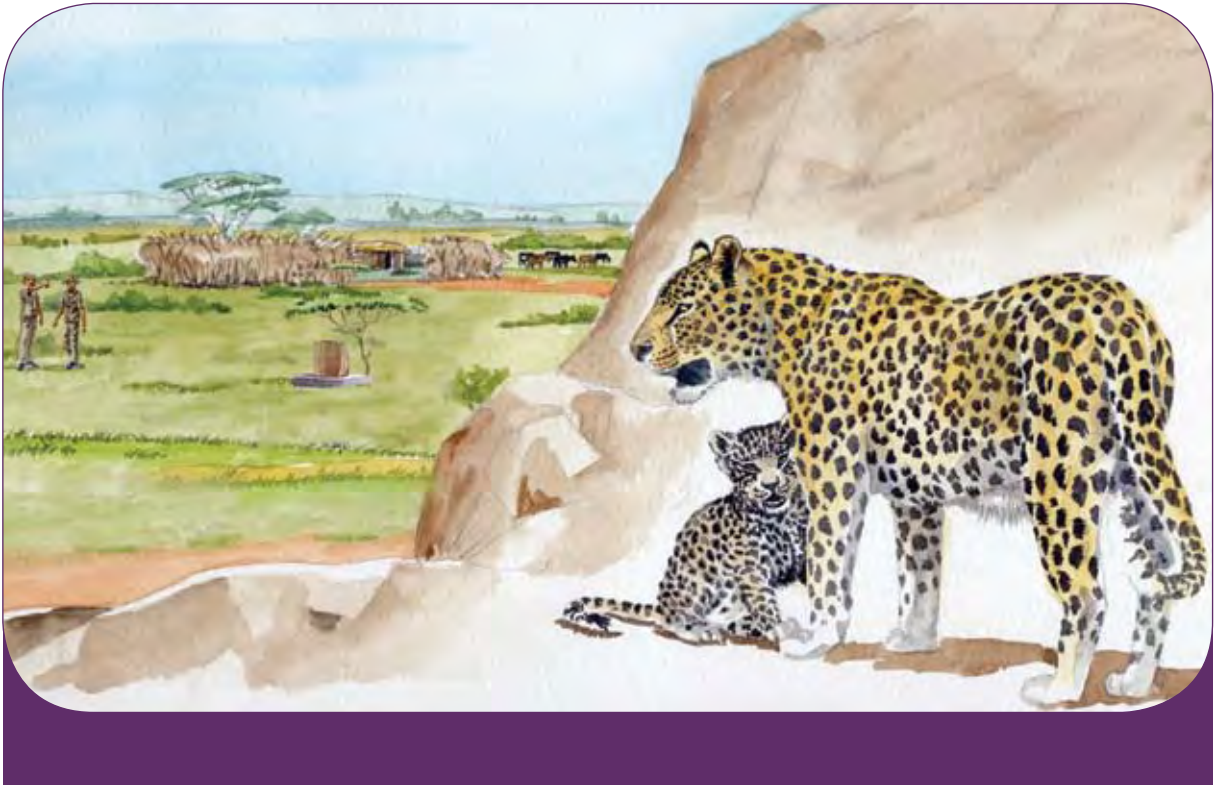


# Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs): benefits, challenges and steps





**W**ildlife can endanger a community's livelihoods and people – or become its greatest natural asset. If you're trying to farm or graze, elephants and lions can wreak havoc. But if you're willing to be flexible and make some effort, the same animals can attract income, jobs, and a link to the outside world.

Where wildlife still roams in significant numbers, governments are allowing communities to create wildlife sanctuaries – particularly in "buffer" areas surrounding national parks or other reserves, and in "corridors" where animals move from one park to another in search of food, water, and mates.

### WHY WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS (WMAS)?

WMAs serve a double purpose. They sustain Africa's unique inheritance of wild animals – a heritage so special that it draws millions of people from around the world every year.

Second, they allow communities to charge fees from these visitors for the privilege of viewing the wildlife and / or overnighting on their land. Previously, nearly all income from visitors went directly to tour operators – often based overseas – and governments.

Each country has different names, laws and policies names for community-owned conservation areas. Some, like Namibia, allow 100 percent of profits to stay in the community. Kenya allows communities to

keep all income, except for taxes, from non-consumptive uses of wildlife on their land.

Tanzania's 1998 Wildlife Policy states that WMAs will ensure that "local people will have full mandate of managing and benefiting from their conservation efforts", although legal ownership of wildlife resources remain with the state. However, the WMA regulations of 2002 state that benefit-sharing will be defined "by circulars issued from time to time". The most recent circular requests that income from conservation-based businesses go directly to the Government, which will then remit a percentage to villages.



*Wildebeest migration*



Wildlife attract tourism

### WHY THIS MODULE?\*

Creating a WMA is a community-led effort. The process is designed to be transparent and involve many local residents representing all local interests.

It is also, however, lengthy, bureaucratic, and costly. Communities will not likely be able to accomplish it without extensive outside expertise, facilitation, and funding.

This module is designed mainly to let community members and leaders know what to expect for both process and results. It does not substitute for government guidelines but should allow communities to follow the guidelines with greater ease and understanding.

Government requirements differ by country and the guidelines included in the module's appendix are for Tanzania. However, suggestions for participatory planning and other activities will likely be valid for most wildlife-rich communities in East and Southern Africa.

### THE PATH TO A WMA

The process takes the community through the following seven phases:

1. Awareness-raising about wildlife, land-use, and common rights
2. Agreeing through the village assembly to proceed
3. Land-use planning and zoning for the WMA
4. Registering a community-based organization (CBO) to become a legally recognized Authorized Association to manage the WMA
5. Gazetting the WMA and obtaining legal rights to wildlife
6. Working with an investor to create a community-based venture
7. Monitoring the WMA

#### DIFFICULT BUT VALUABLE

*The process is long and cumbersome. But the WMA is the only system existing in Tanzania at the moment that gives legal authority for local people over wildlife. Not 100 percent ownership, but the power to manipulate and use wildlife resources for their benefit ....*

*At first people thought WMAs were a ploy to take away their land. But in reality it's just the opposite.*

*Steven Kiruswa,  
Maasai Steppe Heartland Director,  
African Wildlife Foundation, Arusha*

\* The Wildlife Division of Tanzania's Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism has put together a Reference Manual for Implementing Guidelines for the Designation and Management of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in Tanzania. The current Module focuses on critical steps for the community, but does not repeat the manual. Particulars for issues such as which officials to involve, and how to file plans and apply for permissions, make sure to check with the Manual and wildlife authorities.

## CREATING A WMA: BASIC STEPS

### Step 1: Awareness-raising and preparation

Since WMAs will be on communally owned land and communally managed, all members of the community must agree, or “consent” that they would like to proceed. To make a wise choice, people need full information about what a WMA is, the costs and benefits of setting one up, and the official procedures for designating a WMA.

In step 1, a sensitization team works with the community to provide this information and answer all questions and concerns. The sensitization team could include staff from the Wildlife Division, District Council and other government institutions. In addition, a non-governmental organization (NGO), community-based organization (CBO), or consultant is likely to help with sensitization as well as the rest of the process.

#### TAKE CARE OF IT BEFORE IT GOES ...

*I want people to know that if somebody doesn't take care of the wildlife, and other natural resources, they will disappear. WMAs give people a way to take care of these things – the trees, which hold water in the ground and help keep the rivers flowing; the grasses that support our livestock; the soil that supports the grass. And the wild animals, which, if you use the resources wisely, can give you tangible benefits.*

*Seraphino Bichabicha Mawanja,  
District Game Officer, Monduli District, Tanzania*

### Step 2: Agreeing to proceed

Grass-roots education about the pros, cons and procedures of establishing a WMA will help community members decide whether to go ahead or not.

The Village Council recommends that a WMA be created in a particular area, but the community must agree by consensus (Village Assembly) to move forward. It's essential that all voting members, all adults of the villages involved, understand what the WMA will mean and agree to cooperate with zoning and other requirements.

#### WE'VE ALWAYS MANAGED LAND

*“Land management is not a new idea. Traditional Maasai, for instance, have always used a management system. They'd graze livestock in rotation: in the lowlands during the rainy season and uplands in dry season. That way*

*both areas recover. In addition, every warrior – moran – could tell you the indigenous trees, and would protect them if they're used for medicine. Traditionally, Maasai would only cut trees down if building a boma, so the trees could recover. Now, with more and more people living on the land, there's not so much opportunity to move, and people are cutting trees at random. The planning exercises and WMAs help everyone reach a consensus that benefits people, the land, livestock and wildlife too.”*

*Enock Chengullah, Wildlife Officer,  
Tanzania Natural Resources Forum (TNRF)*

### Step 3: Forming a community-based organization (CBO) and Authorized Association (AA)

Since most WMAs will be formed from land from two or more villages, each village elects representatives to a multi-village, community-based organization (CBO). The CBO initially drafts a constitution and creates a strategic plan for the WMA.

The CBO's constitution covers roles and responsibilities, financial management, and methods of solving conflicts.

The strategic plan includes:

- the vision of the community for the WMA;
- how the vision will be accomplished—objectives and activities; and
- how the WMA will be monitored and evaluated.

When fully registered with the government, the CBO will become the Authorized Association (AA) – authorized to manage the WMA and its wildlife.

### Step 4: Land-use planning and zoning for the WMA

Planning is key to a successful WMA. See Module 2 for principles of community-based land-use planning.

Planning for the community's WMA is similar, but may involve more people than village-level planning, since WMAs overlap with several villages at once. In addition, the various villages will also develop a Joint Village Land Use Plan.

In consultation with the community, the AA will create a land-use plan plus a

- General Management Plan or a Resource Management Zone Plan for the WMA, and an
- Environmental Impact Statement on how proposed activities will affect the health of the land, water, wildlife and other resources.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

To help clear up confusion, here are some frequently asked questions about WMAs.

**What exactly is a WMA?**

A Wildlife Management Area is village land agreed on and demarcated by one or more villages, primarily for wildlife conservation and for businesses based on wildlife conservation. When neighboring villages set up a WMA, they

- agree to help protect wildlife;
- have the right to create businesses or contract with others to create businesses based on that wildlife (e.g. tourism facilities); and
- receive income from those businesses and decide collectively how to share it and spend it.

Communities agree on zones within a WMA that allow for

- dry-season grazing and wildlife;
- businesses related to wildlife (e.g. a tourist lodge); and
- other uses, including existing settlements and farming.

**What is a Wildlife Management Area NOT?**

A Wildlife Management Area is **NOT** year-round village pastureland or agricultural land, though there may be zones within the WMA that feature those functions.

Importantly, too, a WMA is **NOT** a national park. Nor is it an extension of a national park, a future national park, district-level reserve, or privately owned conservation area. The villages may license private businesses to build facilities or otherwise operate within parts of the WMA (e.g. a campground; night-time game drives). But the community must agree to these areas and activities, and receive some of the proceeds and possibly other benefits, such as employment.

**Why should we encourage wildlife to increase when they get in our way?**

- Communities can make a substantial amount of money from businesses within WMAs, and WMAs may make communities more attractive to businesses.
- WMAs are the only way undisputed in the law for communities to make income from wildlife in Tanzania.
- The WMA mechanism provides a way for local residents to plan, manage and benefit from their own land.

- The process of planning and administering a WMA gives local communities an added mechanism for resolving disputes, i.e. over use of land and water, wildfires, harvesting of natural resources, and with wildlife.
- Villages can take pride in conserving a timeless heritage found nowhere else in the world.

**Does agreeing to a WMA mean that villages give up land?**

No. In fact you can only create a WMA if your village is securely registered, and the WMA officially registered as well.

However, if you choose to proceed, you would agree to limit or exclude certain activities within certain parts of the WMA. For instance, communities agree that residents will not graze livestock in specific areas, during at least part of the year.

Agreeing to certain zones free of livestock reduces the possibility of human/wildlife conflict, also allows wildlife to rebound, and creates areas of great potential interest to visitors.

**Will all the benefits go to the government?**

No. Currently, investors are requested to pay the Government, but the Government returns a portion to the villages. This requirement is still under debate, and many are hopeful that policy will shift so that investors pay villages directly.

**Why are there so few WMAs?**

WMAs are a relatively new concept in Tanzania. The Tanzania Wildlife Policy of 1998 provides for them, but regulations and guidelines for WMAs were not released until 2002.

In addition, the process for establishing WMAs is not something that a community do either easily, quickly, or by itself.

In 2002 the government authorized 16 pilot WMAs. As of September 2008, 10 had been formally gazetted (according to TNRF).

But interest is growing swiftly, and communities that have established WMAs and conservation-based ventures report substantive benefits and satisfaction.

**Can members of a WMA control hunting?**

At this time, the central government, not the community, issues hunting licenses for residents and for tourists. In

(cont.)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (cont.)

In addition, because most potential WMAs are located in hunting blocks, there have been conflicts between hunting companies and WMA investors who conduct non-hunting safaris. As of this writing, hunting block concessions are scheduled to end in 2009. Many see the termination of current hunting blocks as providing an opportunity to allow communities to fully manage and benefit from local hunting. Debate on this issue is sure to continue.

In the late 1990s, the 19 WMA villages in the *Matumizi Bora ya Maliasili Idodi na Pawaga* (MBOMIPA)<sup>1</sup> project near Ruaha National Park were allowed by the Wildlife Division to sell licenses to resident hunters. MBOMIPA project sold the hunting quotas. In 1997, they began to sell to the highest bidders in a public auction, steadily increasing earnings from about TZS 5 million in 1996 to over TZS 20 million in 2003 (about US\$ 1,000 per village).

**How is a WMA formed?**

Helping the community understand the items addressed above and decide whether to go ahead is the beginning.

Next steps include forming a planning team of residents and facilitators; forming a community-based organization (CBO); getting it officially registered. The planning team will compile information on current uses and potential for a WMA area, solicit community concerns and objectives for the WMA, involve a variety of government and non-governmental stakeholders, produce Environmental Impact Statements, and create a General Management Plan or a Resource Management Zone Plan for the WMA.

In doing so, the team and outside experts will need to

comply with the Wildlife Conservation (Wildlife Management Areas) Regulations of 2002 and the Guidelines for Designation and Management of Wildlife Management Areas of 2002.

**Must a community form a WMA to arrange a CBV?**

No. You can negotiate a good contract with an investor without a WMA, although there may be legal advantages to having a WMA. One of the chief advantages is the possibility of either prohibiting or capturing the income from hunting, although this benefit may be in question at this time. Another advantage is that tourist companies will be attracted to areas in the best condition, with the most wildlife and WMAs help ensure that the scenic and wildlife conditions will be optimum.

However, scholars point to Ololosokwan village in Loliondo District as the most successful case of community income from wildlife in Tanzania, and it is not in a WMA. Well run, community-oriented lodges and campsites pay the Ololosokwan community more than US\$ 55,000 a year from lease and bed-night fees as well as providing jobs, including game scouts. Collectively, seven villages in Loliondo reap US\$ 300,000 a year without a WMA (Nelson, 2007).

<sup>1</sup> *Matumizi Bora ya Maliasili Idodi na Pawaga* stands for Sustainable Use of Natural Resources in Idodi and Pawaga.

These documents describe which activities or types of development people may pursue in different parts of the WMA, and why. All land-use plans must be professionally surveyed and officially registered.

**CONSERVATION VERSUS FARMS**

*“If we reserve our land for trees and other plants, and wildlife: We will get firewood, rain, and keep water in the soil which is also needed for plants to feed cattle during the dry season. If you give that land to individuals to make farms, do you think you’ll get grass again?”*

Noah Teveli,  
Speaker for Burunge Wildlife Management Area

**Step 5: Becoming “gazetted” and obtaining legal rights to wildlife**

On the basis of the various plans the AA applies to the Director of Wildlife to legally gazette the WMA.

Then the AA must apply once again for formal user rights to the wildlife.

These legal recognitions are a key step toward actually benefiting from the wildlife sanctuary. Benefits can be wide-ranging, from fuelwood collection to conservation-based ventures (Table 1).

TABLE 1. OPPORTUNITIES AND WEAKNESSES, AS SEEN BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND OFFICIALS, TO BE DETAILED IN RESOURCE ZONE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR LOIKISALE WMA

STRENGTHS/OPPORTUNITIES	Olkononoi (wildlife corridor)	Embarneti (permanent residences)	Ronjoo (temporary living dry season)
Dead fuel wood collection	✓		✓
Photo game viewing safaris	✓	✓	✓
Research	✓	✓	✓
Bee keeping	✓	✓	✓
Cattle grazing and wildlife conservation	✓	✓	✓
Water dams (cattle and wildlife)	✓		
Education and training	✓		
Nature trails (hiking)	✓		✓
Silkworm farming	✓		
Ranger posts	✓		✓
Orinjosoi (seed collection)	✓		✓
General uses			
Temporary camping			✓
Hotels/lodge			✓
Permanent tented camps			✓
River sand mining			✓
Fishing		✓	✓
Picnic sites		✓	✓
Fly camp			✓
Farming		✓	
Game drives		✓	
<b>WEAKNESSES</b>			
		<b>Critical factors for the success of Loikisale WMA and RZMP</b>	
1. Trespass across the WMA by lorries collecting murram	1. Entrepreneurship skills		
2. Low skills in community for natural resources management	2. Income generating projects		
3. Laxity in law enforcement	3. Investment in camps, hotels and lodges		
4. Poaching for food	4. Promotion and access to markets		
5. Low environmental conservation	5. Mini ranch development for better livestock		
	6. Construction of airstrip		
	7. Cultural training centre		
	8. Training of new leadership and retraining of existing leaders		
	9. Continuous performance monitoring and term evaluations		
	10. Infrastructure and resources		
	11. Water		
	12. Transport means		
	13. Office and working tools		



**BENEFITS IN BURUNGE**

*The WMA is keeping the environment healthy, which attracts both wild animals and investors. This making of a WMA will provide an everlasting process of environmental care and of getting income. The WMA gets an investor for everyone. In the first year of Burunge, the WMA villages made 34 million shillings (Tanzanian). In the second year, we made 76 million.*

*Noah Teveli*

**Step 6: Creating a conservation-based venture (CBV)**

Now the community may create a conservation-based venture, (also called "wildlife-based business", or "conservation enterprise," that is located inside or uses the resources of the WMA. Examples are nature trails, fishing camps, beehives, or simply the right to visit for photographic safaris or cultural tourism.

The CBV is often a partnership or "joint venture" between the community and a private investor. The investor provides capital, business expertise, training and jobs in return for permission to use WMA land.

Module 3 contains details on selecting, negotiating and sharing benefits from CBV.

**Step 7: Continued monitoring**

During the process of formation, a Board of Trustees plus a number of committees and officers of the AA will have been elected. These officials continue the work of monitoring the WMA, making sure plans are implemented and zones are respected, and keeping the community and wildlife secure. Such working committees include an executive committee, finance, planning, environmental, and security committees. Checks and balances are put in place with community members and local authorities so that management remains transparent.

Game scouts from the community, usually trained and paid by the investors are in charge of security and report poachers or other violators of the law (Box 1).

**NEW VALUES**

*"Poaching used to be a serious problem in Enduimet. But since we have the WMA, it has gone down by 20 to 30 percent. Formerly, if poachers were seen, nobody bothered to do anything. Now, many villagers, if they hear news about poachers, will apprehend them. There are cases of trophies being collected by*

**BOX 1. THE VITAL ROLE OF GAME SCOUTS**

Game scouts play a key role in WMAs and nature-based businesses.

- They protect the communities' lands and wildlife against poaching, tree-cutting, grazing or building in non-designated areas, and encroachment from other villages.
- They help the village enforce the zones its members have agreed on. They protect against/ report human-wildlife conflicts.
- They provide security to villagers
- They help maintain in top shape the resources on which the community and the community's businesses depend.
- Experts suggest that the game scout team works best when scouts:
  - See themselves as part of the business – the security branch.
  - Are well trained in handling conflicts; emergency rescue; data collection, and use of Geographical Positioning System (computerized mapping) equipment, with regular update training ....
  - Are equipped with radio handsets or cell phones, and GPS handsets.
  - Are supervised and have a base.
  - Report to the Village Game Ranger or other officials.
  - If part of a CBV, are employed and paid by the investor, from earnings of the business.

Things to watch out for include possible conflicts with community members, since game scouts come from the community and may need to take action against friends or family.

*"What can happen is, say the community gets the first cheque in January and all the money is spent by May. Human beings forget quickly. In June it's easy to think, 'We aren't getting anything out of this. We might as well let the cows graze where they want.' It's the game scouts' job to drive the cows out of the no-grazing zones, and remind people of the agreement."*

*Ben Mwangela,  
Manager, Enterprise Services,  
AWF, Kenya*

*villagers and brought to the office to be taken away by the Wildlife Division. This makes me think that people are now more friendly to conservation than before.”*

*Joseph Lendi,  
Honourary Secretary, Enduimet WMA*

## BURUNGE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

Burunge was named one of the original WMA pilot areas.

The area consists of nine villages, about 45,000 residents and a critical corridor for thousands of wild animals traveling between Lake Manyara and Tarangire National Parks.

Not everyone was happy about the idea of creating a WMA (see Module 5 on Conflict). African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), the facilitation NGO, began with education, engaging key members of the nine villages and conducting village-level seminars on the benefits of conserving wildlife and promoting their region as a tourism destination.

After scores of meetings and a couple of years of following the bureaucratic requirements, Burunge WMA was officially gazetted and awarded user rights for wildlife.

The villages agreed to shift settlements, and livestock away from key migration areas to minimize human-wildlife conflict. They created other zones for year-round grazing, and dry-season grazing.

Today the Burunge WMA nets about \$230,000 a year from two safari lodges, the Maramboi Tented Lodge and Lake Burunge Tented Lodge. The area was already benefiting, but fees have increased. More lodges are under construction as well. The funding supports numerous community development projects including health services and the construction of three schools.

In addition, residents have found work in these conservation-based businesses. The WMA also employs more than 40 village game scouts who have received formal vocational training. Game scouts coordinate anti-poaching and wildlife monitoring patrols, and contribute to the region's security.

Conflicts continue, however, and two villages have opted out of the WMA, claiming they had not agreed to it. Discussions are ongoing.

## MWADA WOMEN'S GROUP, BURUNGE

The Mwada Women's Group, specializing in baskets and other woven goods, runs a market banda inside Burunge WMA. Visitors to the WMA become the group's customers, supplementing orders from hotels and other businesses, and trade fairs.

Before the formation of the women's group, some of the women had spent their days in difficult and poorly paid farm labour.

While some of the women had been making baskets for years, training organized by the African Wildlife Foundation helped them upgrade skills and designs. A basket might have fetched TZS 1,000 before; today women can earn TZS 10,000 or more.

“The baskets are so beautiful, some customers even bargain UP,” says Josephine Simons, the group's facilitator from AWF. “I heard a woman say the other day: 10,000? That's not enough. I'll pay you 15,000!”

The group's 30 members act as a board, representing the women of Mwada village. A portion of the proceeds goes to collective savings, another part to the group, and the rest to individuals. Collective savings means the group can make loans to members for school fees or emergencies.

The opportunity to earn cash means a lot to local households. “When one woman's husband died, the in-laws grabbed her land. She remained with only a hut and her five children. But fortunately she had savings from her basket sales. She leased four acres to plant maize. After cultivating for a season, and continuing to make baskets, she was able to buy her own land – five acres in Mwada.”

The group is now forming a pottery business as well.

## Key points to remember

**1** The process for creating a WMA is long, bureaucratic and arduous. Estimates for the cost of establishment range from \$100,000 to over \$250,000—clearly an impossibility for local villages without considerable outside support. Communities will therefore need to establish joint-ventures with appropriate private investors as well as partner with a broker organization to help facilitate the process.

**2** Government laws, policies and circulars often contradict each other, creating confusion over rights, responsibilities, and benefits. They change in ways that seem either arbitrary or counter to the spirit of community conservation. Communities have to be aware of this and will need to constantly monitor changes to the regulations.

**3** Hunting blocks now take precedence over non-consumptive utilization, even within WMAs. Hunting constrains photographic safaris and other CBVs. Hunting may be more appropriate in more remote parks with fewer potential non-consumptive tourism clients. It is less so in highly popular areas, such as Tanzania's northern circuit, where income from photo safaris can outpace that from hunting because of sheer numbers.

## Key points to remember

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