

World Wide Fund for Nature - WWF

Beyond Tourism and Trophy Hunting

Newsletter - May 2023



Beyond Tourism and Trophy Hunting

The shocks to the tourism sector resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic show how vulnerable a conservation model based on tourism can be, putting jobs and conservation efforts at risk. In response to this challenge, the 'Beyond Tourism programme' was launched in October 2021, with the key objective of establishing a coordinated approach towards developing conservation-finance models that are less dependent on tourism and hunting (although it is expected that tourism will continue to be an essential source of sustained revenue).

The timeline proposed for this initial stage of the programme is five years, during which we aim to have developed and tested a range of models at the landscape level, have leveraged adequate finance for scaling these up, as well as laid the ground for systemic-level change through policy engagement and the establishment of coordination mechanisms.



In This Newsletter

This newsletter outlines some of the programme's achievements over the past year. In particular, it presents:

- An update and case studies from the piloting and evidence-building work in our priority landscapes, namely, a case study by our partner TechnoServe, who are embarking on a project along the slopes of Mount Rwenzori, a case study on non-timber products in the Ruvuma Transboundary Landscape, a case study on the 'Beyond Tourism' opportunities in the SOKNOT landscape, and a report on the wildlife credits business model.
- A Recap on the Beyond Tourism Learning and Exchange Workshop
- An update on the innovative ventures of the winners of the Beyond Tourism Innovation Challenge, namely, Home of The Gorillas, Shaba, Green Pesa and MN Foods.



Piloting and Evidence Building in our Priority Landscapes

Early-stage identification and viability assessment work was undertaken as part of the Beyond Tourism programme in association with the Luc Hoffmann Institute, the African Leadership University and Nelson Mandela University.

Based on these general assessments, detailed feasibility studies and early-stage pilots are underway in the Southern Kenya – Northern Mozambique (SOKNOT), the Greater Virunga and Ruvuma landscapes exploring nature-based ventures as a means of alternative livelihoods for communities.

An overview of case studies from our respective landscape teams is presented on the following pages.



Case Study by our partner TechnoServe: VINES Project Along the Slopes of Mt Rwenzori



Overview

The VINES program is a five-year, \$13 million USDA Food for Progress project led by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) designed to increase the supply of high-quality Ugandan vanilla, a crop that is generally considered compatible with forest conservation. TechnoServe oversees the program's market analysis, business planning, farmer business capacity building, agripreneur and youth training, input supply, and business relationship management. TechnoServe is responsible for improving the productivity of 16,000 farmers and 800 supply chain actors, including 245 micro youth entrepreneurs, 75 processor extension agents, 400 commercial farmers and other Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

Strategic Focus

At the micro-enterprise level, the project is working with entrepreneurs to strengthen business, finance, and soft skills of commercially oriented farmers, fee-for-service and commission-based extension agents, and other agri-prenuers, with a focus on youth and women, supporting them to launch or grow their businesses and expand access to services for vanilla farmers.

Part of TechnoServe's support is designed to build the capacity of actors along the vanilla value chain to strengthen and grow their businesses, enhance efficiency, and increase profitability by improving the Vanilla Agroforestry Ecosystem. This work directly involves youth actively participating in the project by providing services along the value chain. TechnoServe trains the youth in entrepreneurship using our Strengthening Rural Youth Through Entrepreneurship Development Curriculum (STRYDE), which has been utilized to build the capacity of youth across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Key Findings

The project has so far built the capacity of 162 youth under the STRYDE program (51% female while 49% male), of which entrepreneurs (100%) are engaged in at least one income-earning activity. Examples of youth-led enterprises that will support improved agricultural productivity include managing tree nurseries or providing extension services at a fee.

All youth-led businesses aim to improve the vanilla crop's productivity to ultimately result in improved household income for the vanilla farming communities along the slopes of the Rwenzori mountains.



Landscape Case Study: Non-timber Products in the Ruvuma Transboundary Landscape



Overview

In contrast to other parts of East Africa, tourism in the Ruvuma landscape is relatively underdeveloped. Therefore, finding alternative sources of income and benefits for communities living in and around the region's conservation areas is paramount. Within this context, the sustainable utilization and enterprise development of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) has emerged as a potential avenue enabling communities to benefit from the conservation areas while maintaining ecological integrity.

Key Findings from the NFTP Study

- Forest-based self-employment contributes significantly to the livelihoods of the people in the landscape. Forest-based enterprises contribute 17.5% of the household income across the landscape, equivalent to 45,854 TZS p.a., especially from firewood, medicine, wild vegetables and fruits.
- There are no formal NFTP extraction/harvesting and conservation plans in the general management plan of the Wildlife Management Areas and Village Forest Land Reserves.
- The NTFPs in the landscape include tubers, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, bee products, and woody products.
- Markets exist for these NTFPs as most of them sell instantly. There is also a growing market for these products, especially among the urban middle class.

Conclusions

Generally, NFTP enterprise development in the Ruvuma landscape has a considerable potential to enable communities to benefit from the resource-rich forest areas while maintaining adequate conservation.

In particular, investments in beekeeping products, weaving materials, fruit harvesting, bush meat harvesting, trophy harvesting and other items depending on the trade linkages and market access can generate significant income, decent jobs and livelihoods in the landscape. The study conducted for the Ruvuma landscape lays out a series of actions to develop this potential.



Landscape Case Study: Beyond Tourism Opportunities in the SOKNOT landscape



Context

The goal of WWF and AEF's work in SOKNOT is that Wildlife and habitats in the SOKNOT landscape are sustainably connected and conserved, benefitting people and contributing to economic growth in Tanzania and Kenya.

While tourism in the SOKNOT landscape is an essential source of income, the benefits thereof are not equally shared. It is crucial, therefore, to expand the scope of economic opportunities from "living with nature" beyond tourism dependency.

Strategic Approach

Over the past year, the landscape teams have been systematically exploring Beyond Tourism Opportunities. This included several consultancies and participatory scoping work with communities in the area.

The team was also strengthened by adding a community enterprise development manager through the Land-for-Life programme.

Beyond Tourism Models

The main Beyond Tourism opportunities being pursued by the landscape team are:

- Sunflower production - work on intensification (improved seeds etc.), combined with land use planning
- Sustainable livestock management: Goat fattening and improved breeds
- NTFPs: Tamarind, baobab, Amarula, basket weaving,
- Carbon finance
- Wildlife Credits

The most advanced model is that of Wildlife Credits. Based on the pilot in Namibia ([see further in this newsletter](#)), WWF Kenya has been advancing the concept under the SOKNOT programme. A test phase of the Wildlife Credits programme is being run in the Mara-Siana Conservancy. A planning workshop was organized in December 2022 in the Masai-Mara, with participation from the conservancies, which resulted in an agreed workplan for a pilot phase.

Wildlife Credits: a Viable Business Model for Sustainable Community-based Conservation



Namibia Wildlife Credits

Over the past years, WWF Namibia has been developing, together with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and the Conservancies network in Namibia, the Wildlife Credits Model. The "Wildlife Credits" model recognizes the importance of empowering local communities at the forefront of conservation in the fight against global biodiversity degradation.

Wildlife Credits is a conservation performance payment model that channels payments directly to the local communities in exchange for successful conservation achievements such as winning more space for wildlife, increasing sightings of iconic species, and improving habitat quality.

The model has been tested for a while, with several conservancies in Namibia involved, demonstrating clear proof of concept. Thanks to the pro bono support of Deloitte, an Artificial-Intelligence-based monitoring system has been developed that combines remote (satellite) data with on-the-ground data into a dashboard type of verification system.

SOKNOT Wildlife Credits

The Wildlife Credits pilot programme in the SOKNOT landscape is building on the experiences of Namibia. Funding has recently been secured from the Darwin Innovation Fund grant to set up the enabling conditions for a wildlife credits model in Kitenden corridor. The corridor, which runs from Amboseli to Mount Kilimanjaro will ensure that a favored route that the approximately 1600 elephants have used for millennia to move across the Tanzanian border is secured from habitat fragmentation and potential conflicts with local communities.

The project aims to create a new and sustainable source of income from wildlife conservation that is not dependent on tourism and to benefit the communities that are wildlife custodians directly. It will build, therein, on the land lease system, a form of Wildlife Credits piloted in the Mara, which helped secure 35,000 acres in Oloisukut and Siana conservancies. The programme will be upscaled to 17 conservancies in the Mara, covering 3,000 km², and eventually to Southern Kenya - Northern Tanzania landscape, covering another 130,000 km².

To learn more of these projects and the successful implementation of wildlife credits, click below.

[READ MORE](#) 

Landscape Case Study: Certified Gorilla Friendly™ Success Story in the Virunga Landscape



Background

The Certified Gorilla Friendly program was created by the Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network (WFEN) to protect mountain gorillas and their habitat. The program aims to certify tourism-based entities and park-edge community enterprises contributing to conservation efforts. In 2016, the program was integrated into a Darwin Initiative-funded project to develop pro-poor tourism products and services around Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda. Training on the Certified Gorilla Friendly standards was provided to 15 park-edge community enterprises. At the project's close-out, nine community enterprises were recommended for certification, and in 2023, they completed the final certification stage. The program has also been applied to park-edge communities around Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda.

Community Development

The launch of the Gorilla Friendly Pledge in 2021 increased public awareness of the need for responsible gorilla tourism and resulted in over 1200 members of the public taking the pledge before their gorilla trekking experience. To raise the program profile, a workshop was successfully carried out in 2022, resulting in more enterprises taking the Gorilla Friendly Pledge and several enterprises applying for Certified Gorilla Friendly Tourism certification. The program standards have led to the development of innovative environmental and livelihood solutions among the engaged entities, such as recycling plastic waste into eco-bricks to construct water tanks.



Beyond Tourism Learning and Exchange Workshop



A Beyond Tourism Learning and Exchange Workshop was held from 27- 29 March 2023 in Fort Portal, Uganda. The workshop was primarily geared towards facilitating the exchange of ideas, experiences and lessons learnt between Africa's priority transboundary landscapes, SOKNOT, RUVUMA and GVL. Based on the opportunities identified by the landscape teams, the key topics covered were:

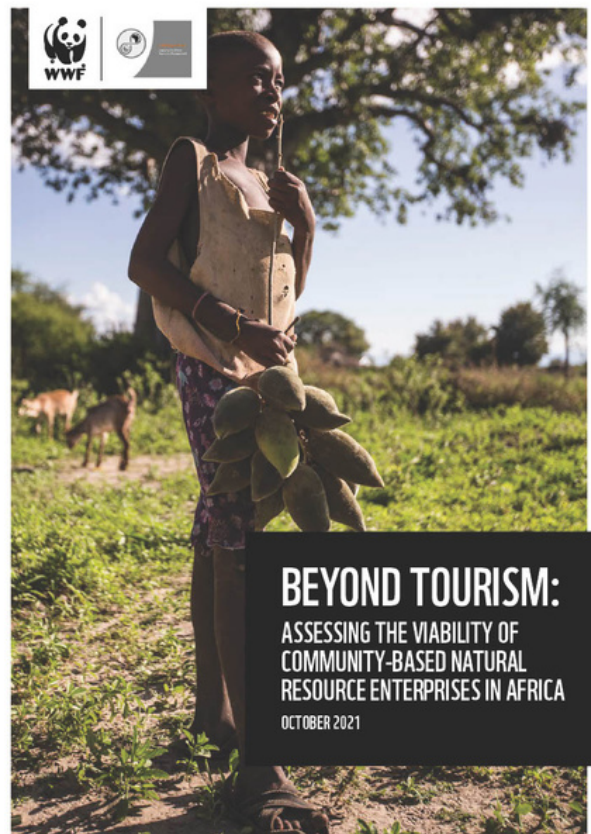
- Carbon Finance
- sustainable biotrade in non-timber forest products (NTFPs)

Participants included the landscape coordinators, WWF staff with keen interest and expertise in the alternative livelihoods identified and external experts from South Pole, Boston Consulting Group, Wildlife Enterprise Network, TechnoServe and B'Ayoba. Key outputs from the workshop included the identification of opportunities for all 3 landscapes, detailed next steps on proposal development and resource mobilization.

After several virtual meetings during the COVID period, the workshop was a first physical encounter of the landscape teams under the Beyond Tourism and Hunting initiative.



Beyond Tourism Innovation Challenge



The 2020/21 Beyond Tourism Innovation Challenge saw over 300 applications, and 15 winners were selected and engaged in the incubation process. Four models within the WWF priority landscapes were chosen from the Beyond Tourism Innovation Challenge to receive financial and technical support to test on the ground. These were:

- GreenPesa: Formerly known as Forest Pesa
- Home of the Gorillas
- MN Foods – Conservation Condiments
- Shaba

As with any form of innovation, the success rate of these projects varies, but all four winners have demonstrated a certain level of success.

An update on the current state of each of the Beyond Tourism Innovation Challenge winners is presented on the following pages.

Case Study: Home Of The Gorillas



HOME OF THE GORILLAS

Context

The Naturalist, a Ugandan conservation company that participated in the Beyond Tourism Challenge, launched the Home of the Gorillas Initiative in 2021. Working in Uganda, which is also home to more than 50% of the world's remaining mountain Gorillas, The Naturalist is leveraging technology to enable global community engagement with the gorillas, thereby achieving alternative channels to fund gorilla conservation.

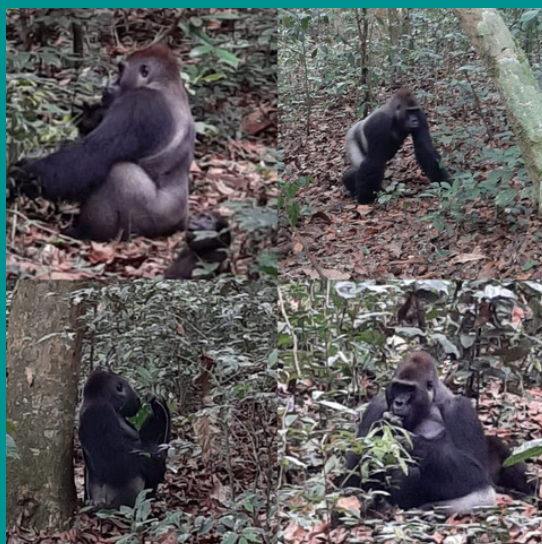
Approach

Home of Gorillas' mission is to use technology in particular gamification, virtual reality, augmented reality and e-commerce to generate non-trekking revenues towards Gorilla conservation in Bwindi, Uganda. The model is based on a mobile phone app, with related internet portal, that allows individuals to virtually join and follow gorilla families in the wild. A subscription fee provides for a sustainable source of income for the system.

Pivoting The Strategy

After winning the Beyond Tourism Innovation challenge, The Naturalist managed to operationalize its enterprise, develop a mobile phone app and launch its platform in January 2021. The enterprise also managed to secure an exclusive 5 - year contract to run non-trekking revenue generation activity with The Uganda Wildlife Authority.

READ MORE 



Case Study: Shaba - From Marketplace to Sustainable Brand



Beauty in sustainability

Shaba, also a winner of the Beyond Tourism Innovation Challenge, is a Kenyan startup that began as a marketplace for eco-friendly products made by rural artisans. However, the founders soon realized they could create more impact and value by designing their products and collaborating with local communities to produce them. After a successful pivot, Shaba has become a sustainable brand offering stylish and affordable sisal bags to retailers and customers.

Local Partnerships for global value

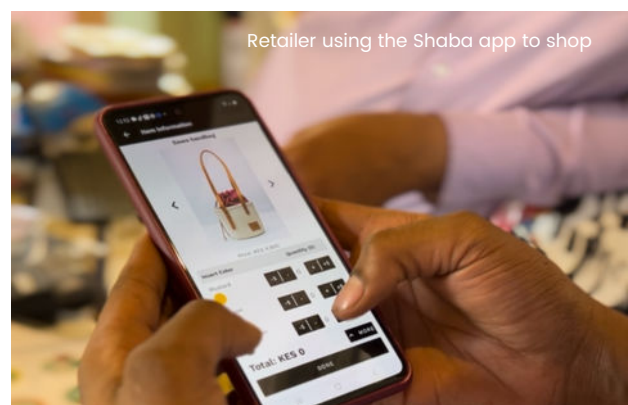
Shaba partners with local communities with experience in sisal weaving but need access to markets and technology. Shaba provides the communities with training, materials, and fair compensation while ensuring the production process is environmentally and socially responsible.

Shaba leveraged the power of digital technology to sell the bags. Using a simple app, retailers and individual customers can order and pay for the bags, which are then delivered to their doorstep. This makes the buying process more convenient and allows Shaba to track sales and customer feedback in real time, which helps them improve their products.

The key to Shaba's success was a combination of design thinking, community engagement, and digital innovation. By designing its own products, Shaba differentiates itself from other eco-brands and create a consistent aesthetic that resonated with customers. The sisal bags, made from natural fibres that are biodegradable and renewable, also have a unique cultural appeal, as sisal has been used for centuries in Kenya for weaving and other crafts.

Overall, Shaba's success can be attributed to its ability to combine sustainability, culture, and technology into a compelling value proposition. By creating a sustainable brand that empowers communities and leverages digital tools, Shaba not only generates revenue, but also creates social and environmental impact.

<https://www.theshaba.com/>



Retailer using the Shaba app to shop

Other Innovation Challenge Winners



Green Pesa

Green Pesa's original venture was based on developing a carbon-finance-based micro-finance model that would secure funding from the carbon markets to reward small-scale forest conservation. While innovative, the viability analysis of the model supported through the Innovation Challenge proved the model non-viable.

In the meantime, Green Pesa has evolved into a Kenyan-based environmental sustainability consulting firm that provides technical advisory and consulting services on various environmental sustainability issues, including climate change solutions, renewable energy and energy efficiency services, integrated water management, and biodiversity conservation solutions.

For more information: <https://www.greenpesa.com/>



MN Foods

MN Foods, trading as Healthy Pi, is working with rural and Batwa women farmer groups living in proximity to National parks to grow chilli as input for condiment production.

The Healthy Pi brand is a Ugandan food processing brand that is deliberately working with women farmers to increase the value from their farm produce. Every farm-based raw material used in the product range is grown by women farmers.

Healthy Pi's current product range includes mainly chilli-based products, but future product diversification is foreseen.

For more information: <http://thehealthypi.com/>

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Thank you for your partnership with the Beyond Tourism Programme

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