

Conservancies established for ecosystem management at the boundaries of wildlife and pastoral systems: ILRI outcome story 2009

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Independent groups have established four new conservancies to manage the land at the boundaries of national wildlife reserves in Kenya using the results of ILRI research on livestock and land management implemented with pastoral communities living on the reserve boundaries.

In 2004 ILRI's MTP included the output target: *"Better information and processes for the development of improved management and policy options for sustainable land use and management in pastoral and agropastoral systems in East Africa, ecosystem services and livelihood assets and strategies"*. The research was implemented in Kenya and Tanzania and built upon the interactions between wildlife, land use and socioeconomic trends data to trigger debate on ecosystem changes. Research provided empirical evidence on the declines in wildlife numbers (Ogutu et al., 2009) meaning that the land available for sustenance had shrunk to the extent that the Mara residents relied more on livestock to survive. Implementing research into these issues included developing innovative strategies for community and policy maker engagement to foster common understanding of the biological and social issues (Reid et al., 2009; www.reto-o-reto.org). Coming up with practical solutions necessitated involving sharing research knowledge with a broad group of diverse local stakeholders who relied in different ways on the lands, livestock and wildlife including the local pastoralist community, councilors from Narok County Council, officials of the Ministries of Tourism, Wildlife and Forestry, Environment, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Local Government and the private sector in the form of hotel entrepreneurs. This helped bring better understanding of the interactions between livestock and wildlife among the Mara community members from which a conservancy model was developed that would provide an avenue for better land management, integration of livestock and wildlife and generate additional income to support the pastoral lifestyle.

The Olare Orok community in Koiyaki group ranch was the first to adopt the conservancy model (www.oocmara.com). This group of 147 Maasai landowners with 22,000 acres of land to conserve benefited from the conservancy which allowed them to communally control their land resources and to partner with tourism investors to ensure sustainable use of the natural resources. The initiative has been further strengthened through the inclusion of a payment for ecosystem services scheme. Other communities have also recognized the value of the approach to managing land, livestock and wildlife to the benefit of all, and adopted the conservancy model. Three (3) additional conservancies similar to Koiyaki, have been established as a result of ILRI work (attached). Together, the four conservancies secure a total area of some 90,000Ha (350 sq. km) for conservation. This generates an annual income of some US\$ 3million to about 1,000 local households. The uptake of the conservancy model has been highlighted in a number of media reports (evidence attached). The conservancy model that has emanated from ILRI's research has the potential to be adopted in other areas where there are increasing concerns over livestock based livelihoods, wildlife and the natural resources on which they depend in boundary regions where these have significant interactions.

References

- Ogutu, J.O., Piepho, H.-P., Dublin, H.T., Bhola, N. and Reid, R.S. 2009. Dynamics of Mara–Serengeti ungulates in relation to land use changes. *Journal of Zoology*. v. 278(1):1-14. <http://mahider.ilri.org/handle/10568/273>
- Reid, R.S., Nkedianye, D., Said, M.Y., Kaelo, D., Neselle, M., Makui, O., Onetu, L., Kiruswa, S., Ole Kamuaro, N., Kristjanson, P., Ogutu, J., BurnSilver, S.B., Goldman, M.J., Boone, R.B., Galvin, K.A., Dickson, N.M. and Clark, W.C. 2009. Evolution of models to support community and policy action with science: Balancing pastoral livelihoods and

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wildlife conservation in savannas of East Africa. IN: Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS).
<http://mahider.ilri.org/handle/10568/492>

Evidence provided to the CGIAR:

Documentary on CNN's 60 Minutes program in October 2009 quoting Robin Reid who was heading the project at ILRI. Colorado State University was a key partner in the research. The program is found at
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/10/02/60minutes/main5359753.shtml?tag=mncol;lst;3>

<http://www.maratriangle.org/>

<http://www.earthwitness.net/2009/04/maasai-mara-wildlife-on-brink.html> documents *Maasai Mara-Wildlife on the brink*, a news article published online in *Earthwitness*. This was one of more than 30 media articles both local and overseas that covered ILRI's Maasai Mara Study in 2009

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