



SAVE THE ELEPHANTS

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



About SAVE THE ELEPHANTS

Founded by zoologist Iain Douglas-Hamilton more than 25 years ago, Save the Elephants (STE) conducts pioneering research into the ecology and behaviour of elephants, providing hard data on the challenges affecting wild elephants and suggesting solutions for a harmonious future between elephants and humans.

At STE's research station in Samburu National Reserve in northern Kenya, a team of researchers study wild elephants on a daily basis. Over 900 identified elephants have been recorded using the reserves along the Ewaso Ny'iro river over the last two decades, and our intimate knowledge of their family structures and history has opened a rare window into the world of elephants. At a second research station in the Sagalla community in Tsavo, southeastern Kenya, our Human-Elephant Coexistence team is investigating ways for people to live in harmony with elephants in an increasingly crowded landscape.

To help tackle the killing of elephants, the trafficking and the demand for ivory, Save the Elephants and the Wildlife Conservation Network run the Elephant Crisis Fund. By the end of 2020, \$25 million had been granted to 88 partners across 40 countries.

STE works with world-leading partners to develop new technology to track and analyse elephant movements. The resulting systems are helping scientists and protected area managers across the continent to protect elephants and plan for their future, a critical concern in an increasingly populated and developed Africa. We pursue evidence-based conservation with grass-roots community engagement, create solutions and build broad collaborations to secure a future for the elephants in Kenya, and across the continent.

Mission

To secure a future for elephants and sustain the beauty and ecological integrity of the places they live, to promote man's delight in their intelligence and the diversity of their world, and to develop a tolerant relationship between the two species.

Trustees

Fritz Vollrath, *Chairman*
 Marlene McCay
 Ambrose Carey
 Miles Geldard
 Michael Davitz

Cover photo: Malaso feeds on Acacia leaves in Samburu National Reserve. © Jane Wynyard
 Photo (opposite page): Bull elephant, Sarara, in Samburu National Reserve. © Robbie Labanowski

About
**SAVE
 THE
 ELEPHANTS**

OUR IMPACT *in 2020*

FEBRUARY



DR LUCY KING GIVES TED TALK on how bees can keep the peace between elephants and humans.

OVER
2.4 MILLION
PEOPLE WATCHED THE TALK
- the fourth most popular TED talk in 2020!

MARCH

WOMEN'S ENTERPRISE CENTRE construction completed in Tsavo. The centre will help women living with elephants find alternative income projects.



Photos (this page and next) by Jane Wynyard, Naiya Raja, Patrick Freeman and Robbie Labanowski.

COVID LOCKS DOWN THE WORLD

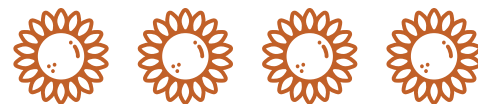


APRIL

34 VILLAGES IN SAMBURU provided with water and HAND WASHING STATIONS.



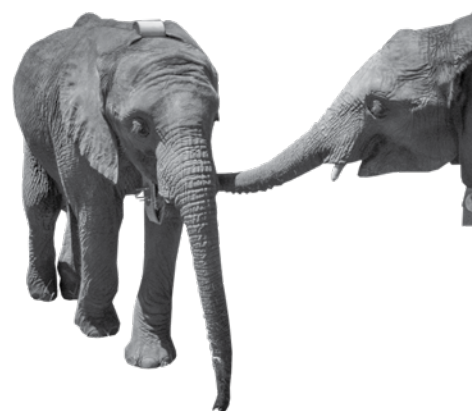
1,229 PEOPLE living in elephant rangelands received REUSABLE FACEMASKS.



129 FARMS PLANT SUNFLOWERS instead of maize - a favourite snack for elephants, in an STE trial to prevent human-elephant conflict.

MAY

STE STARTS TRACKING THIRD COHORT OF RETETI'S ORPHANS before their release to Sera Rhino Sanctuary.



JUNE

80 ELEPHANT SCHOLARS in remote areas RECEIVE EDUCATION CARE PACKAGES AND SOLAR LIGHTS to help them continue learning.



JULY

60 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS benefit from EXTRA TUITION LESSONS during lockdown.



SEPTEMBER

Former elephant scholar, Habiba Abdi, pursues a BSc in Geo-information technology.

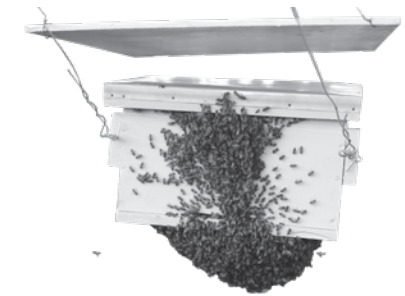
FOUR OUT OF FIVE STE SCHOLARSHIP COLLEGE STUDENTS enrolled in CONSERVATION COURSES IN 2020.



OCTOBER

STE research on crop raiding behaviour reveals **HOW ELEPHANTS NAVIGATE IN A LANDSCAPE OF RISK.**

DECEMBER



ELEPHANTS & BEES PROJECT RECORDS OVER **9,000** BEEHIVES now being used by farmers across

16 AFRICAN and **4** ASIAN COUNTRIES



98 BABY ELEPHANTS BORN IN SAMBURU - the highest birth record since poaching hit the area in 2008.

TRACKED ELEPHANTS LOG

134,640 POSITIONS over 2020 REVEALING THEIR DECISION-MAKING AND HOW THEY USE KENYA'S LANDSCAPES.



With the world still struggling to cope with Covid, scarred by wildfire and scoured by flood, the fundamental importance of living in harmony with nature is becoming more widely understood.

World leaders are at last seriously discussing climate change, and the extinction of species as never before. As these talks move beyond the theoretical into the practical, they may provide new ways to protect Africa's wild spaces. Tourism has often been the main provider in the past. In future carbon credits and other mechanisms offer hope of a broader path to keeping ecosystems intact.

The situation for elephants across Africa has continued to evolve, with ivory poaching receding in places. Coming into focus is the clash between the rapidly expanding human footprint and beleaguered elephant populations.

To reduce the conflicts between humans and elephants we continue building a toolbox of methods to promote coexistence between our species. This year for the first time, we began sharing and scaling these solutions through the Elephant Crisis Fund across Africa with our partners the Wildlife Conservation Network.

Landscape planning will be critical for creating sustainable solutions for humans and elephants. To this end we continue to strengthen our tracking programme, to understand elephant decisions from their movements, and how they use landscapes to survive.

With local climates becoming extreme and unpredictable and human pressures increasing in the landscapes where elephants still survive, we are grateful for the commitment and passion of our partners and supporters across Kenya, Africa and the world for making common cause to secure a future for elephants.

With best wishes,

Iain Douglas-Hamilton

IAIN DOUGLAS-HAMILTON
FOUNDER

Frank Pope

FRANK POPE
CEO



One of STE's study elephants in Samburu National Reserve. © Robbie Labanowski

CHAIRMANS' LETTER

Twenty-Two was a very strange year. For many of us it is already lost in a haze of conflicting memories. While we cherish the good moments some of us were lucky to have had in the global pause, all at STE are deeply sorry for any grief that many of our team, friends and supporters will have had to endure.

2020 started well with an old friend, Booper the elephant, residing on neighbouring Ol'Jogi. 20 years ago he collaborated with Iain and me in experimentally confirming the hypothesis that elephants remember bee stings long after a painful encounter, and do their best to avoid them.

Shortly afterwards, and for us all rather suddenly, the virus raised its spikes - and in a few weeks the world changed. Luckily STE was able to adapt to the challenges without having to let go of any member of staff. Tourism was hard hit, however, with cascading negative impacts on national parks, reserves and community wildlife areas.



© Digby Vollrath

The international travel restrictions prevented not only tourists but also our scientists from leading their normal, itinerant lives. Researchers studying abroad were confined to their rooms. Benjamin Loloju was studying for an MSc at Cranfield University in the UK. For me it was humbling to experience, first hand, the tremendous resilience and persistent good cheer of this Samburu scientist who, without a single negative word or thought, endured exceptionally trying circumstances.

This, and the strong and consistent support of all our friends, sponsors and donors, encourages me to be rather optimistic about good years ahead, for STE and for the elephants it is our mission to nurture and protect.

FRITZ VOLLRATH
Chairman

Status of **ELEPHANTS**

How the pandemic impacted elephant populations across Africa



Forest elephants play in Dzanga Bai, Dzanga Sangha Protected Area, Central African Republic. © Miguel Bellosa/WWF

Elephants surprised us all in 2020 by coming out of the pandemic relatively unscathed. When the Covid crisis struck in March, there were warnings of a likely breakdown of law and order across Africa and of a massive increase in elephant poaching as wildlife tourism and funding for conservation collapsed. A few isolated cases of poaching not the beginning of a tidal wave.

The happier reality was that the general decrease in elephant poaching observed in 2019 continued into 2020. We believe that the main reasons for this were the ban on ivory sales in China, the dismantling of key trafficking networks, effective coordination between Chinese law enforcement authorities and overseas partners, continued anti-poaching efforts, and depletion of key elephant populations (making it more difficult for poachers to find and kill elephants). When Covid was linked to bats and pangolins in 2020, Chinese law enforcement officials became very active in clamping down on all illegal wildlife trade, including ivory. Potential consumers may have shied away from buying ivory because of concern about the increased penalties for being caught.

There were some local upsurges of poaching and in some Central African forests poaching continues at concerning but not catastrophic levels. In a number of places there were reports of a reduction in local ivory prices, presumably a result of low demand from China, and this seems to have led to a reduced incentive for poachers.



A ranger in the Democratic Republic of Congo holds confiscated elephant ivory. © Chris Thouless

Human-elephant conflict in Africa is on the rise as people and elephants compete for space and resources. © Naiya Raja

When elephant populations recover, they are coming into increasing conflict with human encroachment into what was previously wild habitat. In some places, people are bringing in hunters to kill elephants that they see as a threat; in other situations, people with weapons are simply more likely to use them against any elephants that they come across.

In the Samburu area where Save the Elephant's home base is located, 40 elephants were killed in conflict in 2020, but only four were known to have been killed for their ivory. Killing as a result of conflict is not currently impacting large populations, but for small elephant populations in places like West Africa, even a small number of deaths could be enough to drive them towards extinction.

Because of the Covid pandemic, fewer elephant surveys were carried out than in previous years. However, of the ones that were done, none showed a dramatic decrease in numbers or high numbers of carcasses. This is in stark contrast to previous years.

Several hundred dead elephants found in northern Botswana in March 2020 caused much concern. Speculation was varied: deliberate poisoning of waterholes, or diseases or toxins, possibly exacerbated by climate change, and the impact of cattle veterinary fences. The mortality ceased as quickly as it had started, and the Botswana government said that the cause was cyanobacteria poisoning – although the exact evidence for this was not revealed. There have since been smaller but still unexplained mortality events in Botswana.

While we remain on guard for any resurgence of the ivory crisis, our eyes are on growing future challenges. As human settlement and infrastructure such as roads push further into elephant range, and elephants start to recover from the losses caused by poaching, we expect to see more conflict between people and elephants, and more small elephant populations pushed towards extinction through the loss of habitat. It is our task to try to prevent this from happening, by promoting coexistence between people and elephants, and direct support through the Elephant Crisis Fund.



A herd of elephants on the move in Samburu National Reserve. © Frank af Petersens

Advances in **RESEARCH**

Building a new generation of conservationists



STE's Head of Field Operations, David Daballen, collects data on elephants in Samburu. Despite Covid, our Long Term Monitoring work continued in Samburu, Buffalo Springs and Shaba National Reserves. © Frank af Petersens

Covid presented a mixed bag of challenges to our research work at Save the Elephants. We were able to continue our long-term monitoring of elephant populations, movements and mortality around our Samburu field base. However, our usual collaborative work with overseas researchers and students suffered. Even the work of Kenyan students was curtailed because of travel restrictions between Nairobi and Samburu for various periods during the year.

On the positive side, several staff were able to pursue higher degrees. Benjamin Loloju completed his MSc at Cranfield University in the UK, Nelson Mwangi started his PhD at Colorado State University in the USA and Maureen Kinanjui started her PhD at the University of Edinburgh.

Before Covid closed down travel, Mickey Pardo, a post-doctoral researcher from Colorado State University, was able to complete a season of fieldwork. His research in Samburu is aimed at discovering whether elephant rumbles are directed towards particular individuals. He is asking whether elephants address each other by name. This is extremely challenging work, since it is difficult to identify which elephant in a group is vocalising and even more difficult to determine who is being addressed. However, early results from the study indicate that elephants may be using different rumbles to address particular elephants.

Lack of travel didn't stop STE staff members and associates from publishing a number of papers in peer reviewed journals in 2020 - eight in total. These covered a wide-ranging set of topics including identification of elephant movement corridors, local attitudes to human-elephant conflict and the use of bee-hive fences to mitigate conflict, the use of machine learning to identify individual elephants, and advances in methods for counting elephants and other wildlife.



Head of Field Operations, David Daballen, mentors Research Assistant, David Lolchuragi in the field. STE is working to build the next generation of elephant researchers through its Kenya Elephant Research Fund. © Jane Wynyard

Save the Elephants is at the heart of monitoring the rewilding of orphaned elephants that have been rescued and hand-reared at the Reteti Elephant Sanctuary in northern Kenya. So far three cohorts, totalling ten orphans, have been released into the fenced Sera Rhino Sanctuary prior to ultimate release into the wild. In collaboration with San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, our staff deployed radio collars on the orphans and have been following their movements with the help of the collars, camera traps and a drone. The current aim is to see how they acclimatize to their semi-wild existence, and interact socially with each other and the wild elephants in the sanctuary.

Save the Elephants is working to build a next generation of Kenyan elephant researchers and conservationists. Often capable students are unable to complete higher degrees because of a lack of funding for university fees and fieldwork. With cuts in government support, there are few bursaries available. In this context STE has launched a new scholarship fund which will support a small number of masters and doctoral students who wish to pursue elephant research as part of their studies. By the end of 2020 we had advertised this opportunity and received a large number of expressions of interest. We issued the first batch of scholarships in 2021.

Elephant TRACKING IN 2020

Protecting elephants through understanding their movements

Elephants often live big lives, covering great distances when the need or desire strikes. Tracking their movements has not only led to fundamental insights into how elephants live and how they make decisions. It has also proved a valuable tool to defend against ivory poaching and now in planning landscapes to preserve connectivity and prevent conflict.

At the start of 2020 Save the Elephants had 85 active collars deployed on elephants across Kenya, and was curating tracking data for a further 344 across the continent and in Asia. Our Elephant Crisis Fund supported the deployment of 21 collars over the year, nine in W, Benin (with African Parks), two in NW Angola (with the Kissama Foundation) and ten in Zambia (with Conservation Lower Zambezi).

Over the course of the year we deployed a further 23 collars across Kenya on a number of projects. These included the re-wilding of Reteti's orphans (with local partners and San Diego Zoo, Wildlife Alliance), and our long-term study in Samburu. We also tracked translocated elephants with the Kenya Wildlife Service and followed the fortunes of elephants in the Tana River Delta and West Pokot with the Northern Rangelands Trust.

Over the course of the year STE co-authored two peer-reviewed papers based on tracking data. One, by Georgia Troup, applied Festus Ihwagi's original work on the tortuosity of elephant paths as a behavioural indicator, while the second by Guillaume Bastille-Rousseau & George Wittemyer developed new analyses to identify critical wildlife habitat and corridors.

EarthRanger, the protected area management system developed by Vulcan on the foundations of STE's original Real-Time Monitoring system, is now deployed in over 100 parks and reserves across the continent. The STE iOS Tracking App is an invaluable tool for understanding and communicating elephant movements.



One of the Reteti orphans, Nadasoit, is fitted with a collar. In 2020, STE collared 23 elephants across Kenya to gain insights into their lives and movement. © Jane Wynyard



Tracking Manager and GIS Specialist, Benjamin Loloju, monitors elephant movement using STE's tracking app. © Jane Wynyard

Elephant TRACKING IN 2020

Annabel from the Royals leads her family to the Ewaso Nyiro River for a drink. © Jane Wynyard

The ELEPHANT CRISIS FUND

Adapting to shifting challenges



A member of Wild Survivors installs a beehive fence in Tanzania. The ECF is supporting human-elephant coexistence projects like these across Africa. © Fran Mahoney

As the Covid crisis developed in the first months of the year, we had anticipated an increase in elephant poaching, and a decline in the ability of many of our partners to provide an effective response.

As mentioned earlier in this report, there was no measurable increase in elephant poaching (although subsistence poaching of other species for meat does seem to have increased) and the decline in poaching levels observed in 2019 was sustained into 2020. In addition, although partners dependent on tourism funding did have reduced income, there was a generous response from other donors.

As the ivory crisis has diminished as a threat to elephants, crises of human-elephant conflict and loss of habitat are emerging. In response the Elephant Crisis Fund has modified its approach, funding activities that address these longer-term challenges in addition to the ivory crisis. We have started to support projects that address human-elephant coexistence and population recovery – helping to maintain elephant-friendly landscapes in areas where poaching is no longer the primary threat.

Save the Elephants has a wealth of knowledge and contacts with people working across Africa on conflict mitigation through coexistence work at the Tsavo field site, and the roll-out of beehive fences in many parts of Africa. In 2020 the ECF issued seven small human-elephant coexistence grants, with the intention of increasing this to 20% of the total in 2021.

Despite the difficulties caused by Covid, which have made it difficult for law courts and law enforcement officers to operate at full capacity, there were a number of major successes against ivory poachers and traffickers supported by the ECF in 2020.

Congo's most notorious poacher, 'Guyvano', was recaptured after killing several hundred elephants, escaping from jail, and severely wounding an eco-guard. In August 2020 he was sentenced to 30 years of hard labor for attempted murder.

In July 2020, traffickers who had been responsible for trafficking ivory, rhino horn, pangolin in Malawi were taken to court following a long-term multi-agency investigation supported in part by the ECF. Nine Chinese nationals and six Malawians were sentenced to a total of 79 years in prison, severely disrupting the activities of their network.

These successes can only be achieved at a high risk to the brave rangers and investigators who work to uphold the law. This sometimes carries the ultimate cost, and in September, two eco-guards in the Okapi Wildlife Reserve in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) lost their lives when their ECF-funded base was attacked by a rebel militia.

The Elephant Crisis Fund is a joint initiative of Save the Elephants and the Wildlife Conservation Network. It was established to provide funding to organisations, both large and small, working to combat the ivory crisis.

Since its establishment in 2014, to the end of 2020, the Elephant Crisis Fund has provided 321 grants totaling \$26,215,681 to 90 grantees working in 40 countries. During the course of 2020, the Elephant Crisis Fund disbursed \$3,536,096 in 37 grants.



Rangers in Okapi Wildlife Reserve in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) undergo training. A number of eco-guards have tragically lost their lives in the line of duty. © Chris Thouless

Covid impacts Tsavo COEXISTENCE

The trials of fieldwork during the pandemic



In 2020, we recorded significantly fewer crop raids in and around beehive fence protected farms like Tabitha's (pictured) in Sagalla. © Jane Wynyard

The Human-Elephant Coexistence team launched into 2020 with a welcome downpour of rain and a buzz in the air for all the work lined up for the year ahead. With conflict cases on the rise over the December crop season, we knew we had a big year of work ahead of us. The tsunami of Covid spreading around the world never broke on our project site in Sagalla but the Kenyan government's lockdown rules forced the camp to close and our disappointed team to be sent away to ride out the wave indoors like the rest of the world.

Despite the challenges of remote management we kept up regular contact with our alliance of hundreds of farmers, community members and teachers, supporting them from a distance but with just as much zeal. From afar, we quickly bought, installed and deployed eight 1,000 litre handwashing tanks throughout the Sagalla communities to aid hand washing, funded the production of 720 facemasks, and co-ordinated the planting of fresh seedlings into our organic elephant-friendly permaculture gardens to keep food production going.



Top: Attendees of a financial literacy training workshop pose for a group photo outside the Women's Enterprise Centre, which has become an important community hub. © Simatwa A. Ngachi. Bottom left: Josephine, a member of the Mlambeni Basket Weavers group, stands outside the Women's Enterprise Centre. © Naiya Raja. Bottom right: Despite the Covid pandemic, our teams were able to stay in touch with and support the local community. © Lucy King

Thankfully we had finished construction of our large Women's Enterprise centre in March 2020, which became an important community hub. With the school support network shut down, we paid for and distributed sanitary wares to 66 vulnerable women and girls previously supported by the education department. Students were stranded at home with no power or computers to access online education, so we installed a printer and funded teachers to do house-to-house support to keep the students engaged.

We were devastated not to be able to harvest our 400+ beehives for honey, as strict evening curfews and social distancing rules dampened the beehive fence farmers' enthusiasm for honey processing. That season we left the honey for our precious honey bees - they deserved the sweet feast for all the work they have been doing to keep our farms safe against elephant crop-raids over the years.

We were fortunate to record only 228 elephant events within the community during 2020, a relief from the intense crop-raids the year before where 822 elephants were recorded inside and around the farms. Perhaps the elephants were enjoying the peace inside the national parks as tourism and infrastructure projects ground to a halt.

Immune from the impacts of the virus, tracking data from our collared elephants continued to flow into our database system, streaming invaluable information on how they were using the massive 42,000 Km² Tsavo ecosystem. A much anticipated re-collaring operation had to be postponed, resulting in several of our collars finally running out of battery life while still on the elephants. This will make their replacement or removal in 2021 more of a challenge.

Northern Kenya

UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT

Seeking solutions to the clash between humans and elephants



A young boy herds livestock in Samburu National Reserve while elephants cross the Ewaso Nyiro river. © David Letitiya

As the threat of poaching has receded in northern Kenya, conflict between humans and elephants has grown. In 2020 in Samburu nearly half as many elephants were shot by herders last year without their tusks being taken as were killed at the height of the poaching outbreak.

Much of this human-elephant conflict (HEC) is due to increased competition for grazing and access to water, as well as encroachment on former elephant rangelands. From agriculture to infrastructure, human activity is reducing the ability of elephants to roam freely. In the ensuing conflict for both space and resources, both human and elephant lives have been lost.

Elephant movement data, community surveys and HEC incident reports highlight particular conflict hotspots in the Matthews Range, and the Ngilai, Namunyak, Meibae and Naibunga community conservancies. This year we established our first Rapid Response Units in Ngaremara and Meibae to try to break the cycle of misunderstanding and retribution, and to assist the Kenya Wildlife Service in the enormous challenge of addressing the problem.



Top: Conflict between people and elephants has become increasingly popular in northern Kenya. © Hilary Hurt. Bottom left: Hungry elephants (similar to the ones pictured) have broken into farms and raided crops in Ngare Mara close to Samburu National Reserve. © Ryan Wilkie. Bottom right: STE is working with the local community and conservation partners on practical solutions to HEC. © Jane Wynyard

Clashes between humans and elephants in the Samburu county capital in Maralal and in Archer's Post, the town closest to STE's study site, have become more frequent.

Along the Kirsia forest boundary in Maralal, we carried out rapid rural appraisals and participatory mapping with more than 300 farmers in ten study sites. In Archer's Post we are mapping conflict incidences and engaging with affected communities in focused discussions to identify forms of HEC.

Ongoing monitoring of conflict incidents provides an opportunity for us to better understand and manage the conflict, and work towards our long-term goal of harmonious coexistence between our species.

New species, new status FOREST ELEPHANTS

Reclassification brings a revised threat level

The decision to treat African forest and savanna elephants as separate species following fresh research into their genetics, was one of several important steps made by the IUCN's African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG) over the past three years.

The decision meant reassessing their conservation status. On the IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species, forest elephants are now listed as Critically Endangered and savanna elephants as Endangered. When African elephants featured as a single species they were listed as Vulnerable.

Save the Elephant's Dr Ben Okita-Ouma has served as co-Chair of the AfESG alongside Dr Robert Slotow since 2018. The AfESG was established in the 1970s to provide technical expertise relating to the conservation of African Elephants on national, regional and global levels.

Dr Okita-Ouma, who is also STE's Director of Conservation Policy and Planning, said "We hope the assessments will focus appropriate conservation attention for the critically endangered forest elephant and the endangered savanna elephant as we identify and deal with the imminent implications and consequences of this shift."

Membership of the group is increasing, with members representing an ever wider range of skills. Thanks to their energy and skills, and with support from governments and multi-lateral agencies, the AfESG aims to promote conservation of Africa's elephants throughout their range in collaboration.

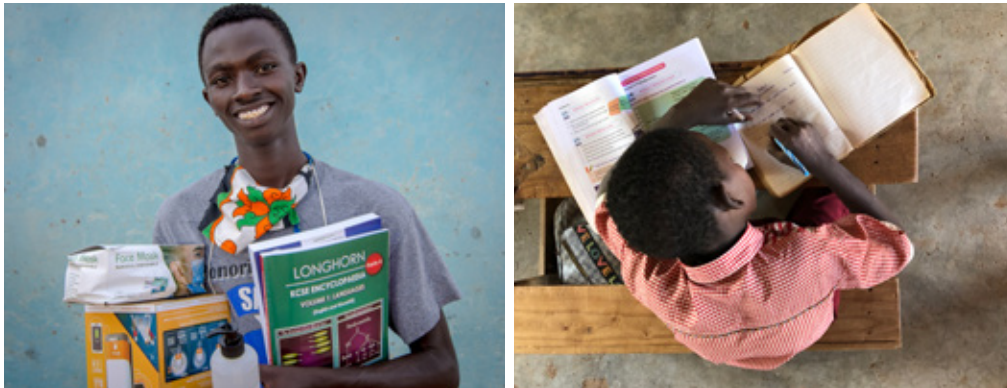
The process of producing the next African Elephant Status Report - the most authoritative estimate of Africa's elephant population - has begun, alongside a revision of the database behind the figures, with the technical and financial support of STE and Vulcan Inc.



Forest elephants are now categorized as 'critically endangered' in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. © Frank af Petersens

New species, new status FOREST ELEPHANTS

A forest elephant in Congo's, Odzala-Kokoua National Park. © Frank af Petersens

*School shutdowns***REMOTE LEARNING****Keeping kids connected at home**

A happy elephant scholar, Saidimu Lejwale, with his education care package. Students including our elephant scholars have had to adapt to learning amidst Covid. © Jane Wynyard

At the start of the pandemic, restricted movement and the closure of all learning institutions affected students across the world. In Kenya, schoolchildren struggled to resume their studies due to lack of electricity, internet access and space to study. Among those affected were our elephant scholars.

The primary focus for the Save the Elephants' education team was to support students to continue studying at home. With timely support from donors, our 80 students in remote areas received care packages tailored to their educational needs.

The packages contained Covid hygiene kits and revision textbooks to help students catch up with the syllabus. Each student received a solar eco-lamp and phone charger to allow for nighttime studying. The lamps were a welcome change from the dim and smokey kerosene lanterns that they often use. For the few college students whose schools were able to set up remote classes, mobile data packages made learning possible.

When education resumed, our partner schools received much-needed emergency feeding, hand-washing stations and reusable face-masks to help manage the spread of Covid.

Beyond the care packages, STE curated Covid-safe learning spaces for high school scholars. These allowed for week-long tutoring and mentorship camps led by our college students who were delighted to be able to assist.

As the pandemic evolved, our education team committed to improving learning and to making school less stressful - and more productive - for elephant scholars.



Augustino Lemaramba - one of 80 Samburu students to receive care packages at the start of the Covid pandemic. © Jane Wynyard

Northern Wildlife Vet Unit VET OPERATIONS

The challenge of operating across Kenya's semi-arid rangelands



Kenya Wildlife Service vet, Dr Michael Njoroge and his team. © Jane Wynyard

Northern Kenya is made up of a vast, wild and untamed landscape that is home to numerous endangered wildlife species. Elephants, lions, zebra and giraffe are threatened by poaching, land degradation, rapid development, and disease, and until recently there was no wildlife vet dedicated to the region.

In 2018, Save the Elephants partnered with Ewaso Lions and Grevy's Zebra Trust and found support from a generous group of supporters which allowed us to enter an agreement with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) to assign a vet to our area. The Northern Kenya Wildlife Veterinary Unit was born!

Led by KWS Veterinarian, Dr Michael Njoroge, the unit includes two KWS Capture rangers and a driver. The team was recently joined by Dr Sharon Mulindi to assist in collecting, storing and analyzing samples taken during field interventions and help run the veterinary research laboratory, also based in Samburu.

The team operates from a custom-made vehicle that contains equipment and tools necessary to treat injured or sick animals, and enjoys an increasingly-well equipped lab at STE's Research camp in Samburu.

During 2020, the vet unit responded to 90 wildlife cases, from more than ten different species. These included elephant, lion, Grevy's zebra, Burchell's zebra, oryx, mountain bongo, eland, lesser kudu, monkey, ostrich and reticulated giraffe. Intervention included treatment for injuries, postmortem examination, rescues of orphaned or abandoned animals, and collaring exercises. The vet unit traversed six different counties to complete these operations.

NEWS

Understanding Conflict

In 2020, we sent teams to human-elephant conflict hotspots across Kenya to talk to local communities and get a better understanding of the issues they face. In Maralal, we listened to the frustration of farmers whose crops had been destroyed by elephants. In Lake Jipe, Tsavo, we discovered people and elephants co-existing in an unusual fashion, with elephants traveling right through villages to reach the lake. In Archer's Post, we heard stories of elephants raiding urban gardens. This data will help us in our efforts to create a world where elephants and humans can coexist in harmony.

(To read about our work to reduce human-elephant conflict, go to Page 19)



Elephants and livestock graze in Lake Jipe, Tsavo © Naiya Raja

Conflict First Responders

Conflict between elephants and farmers is one thing. Clashes with pastoralists is quite another. Our first Rapid Response Unit is now in action with STE's John Leruso and Lesayie Lerongoi trained in conflict resolution and in Meibae working with the communities there.

(To read about our work to reduce human-elephant conflict, go to Page 19)



John (front) and Lesayie (back) on their rapid response motorcycle. © Jane Wynyard

Connection Re-established

Last year, we tracked a young collared female, Koya (aged 23), setting off with her young family across what was recently a danger zone in northern Kenya. It's the first time we've recorded a female elephant risking this journey. Koya's decision suggests that elephants, once fragmented by ivory poaching and conflict, are exploring and reconnecting again. A key priority for 2021 and beyond is to create and preserve connectivity and ensure human settlements don't choke off passageways for elephants.

(Read more about our tracking work, go to Page 14)



Koya and her family in Marsabit, northern Kenya.
© Frank Pope

A Baby Boom

2020 saw another baby boom in Samburu - another promising sign that elephants are starting to feel safe again. When elephants are under stress they struggle to breed. However, last year, close to 100 calves were born in the reserve, the highest birth rate since 2008.



Several families welcomed new calves into their herd. © Robbie Labanowski

Farewell Tim The Tusker

We said goodbye to one of the last remaining great tuskers in Kenya last year - the iconic Tim, who died of natural causes. Tim was a renowned crop-raider with a notorious taste for tomatoes. He was attacked several times by angry victims of his raids but always managed to escape. In 2016, Save the Elephants collaborated with other conservation partners to track Tim, try to keep him out of mischief and to learn more about how to prevent conflict from threatening such magnificent elephants.



The iconic tusker Tim was an adventurous elephant. © Ryan Wilkie

New Trustee Joins Our Herd

In June 2020, we welcomed Michael A. Davitz to our board of Trustees. A physician-scientist and attorney, Michael has had a long association with STE starting in the 1970s he made an inventory of ivory at the Wildlife Division in Tanzania with our founder, Iain Douglas-Hamilton. Michael is a registered U.S. patent attorney as well as a physician with over 15 years' experience in biomedical research, and more than 20 years' experience providing strategic counseling to clients around the world in all aspects of intellectual property law. Michael has published over 25 papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals such as Science and Nature and is a highly sought-after public speaker on patent-related issues in the U.S. We are delighted to have Michael on our board!

Our Team At TED!

Two of our senior team took to the TED stage in 2020, delivering impressive talks that captivated audiences around the globe. In February, Dr Lucy King spoke at TEDwoman in Palm Springs on how bees can keep the peace between elephants and humans. By September, over 2.4 M people had watched the talk. In August, the Chairman of our Scientific Board, George Wittemyer, gave a powerful TEDx Mile High presentation on how to stop the next pandemic before it begins.



Lucy (left) and George (right) shared ideas worth spreading during their TED talks. © Jasmina Tomic/TED and David Daballen

The Elephant Queen On Tour

Communities in remote Kenya will soon get the chance to see the award-winning documentary, The Elephant Queen, when the mobile cinema unit rolls out complete with a huge inflatable screen. The film, which launched on Apple+ TV in 2019, follows an elephant herd's gruelling migration across Tsavo led by matriarch Athena. The Elephant Queen has been translated into Maa and Swahili ahead of its initial six month tour which kicks off in October 2021. Over 170 screenings are planned with over 30 different organisations, to help forge new empathy for elephants among the people who live with them.



The Elephant Queen, created by top wildlife filmmakers Mark Deeble and Vicky Stone, premiered in the ancient Greek theatre of Taormina in Sicily. Photo courtesy of Victoria Stone

Inspiring Young Minds

Save the Elephants prides itself on fostering local talent and creating new job opportunities for Kenyans. In 2020, we launched our Elephant Research Fund. The sponsorship, aimed at aspiring young Kenyans who wish to advance their careers in conservation. So far we've welcomed two new grantees - Marian Karanja (left) from Kenyatta University will be exploring the variations in elephant tusk weights and whether poaching is a contributory factor. Loise Kuria from Karatina University will be looking into diet selection and seasonal adjustments of elephants.



Kenya Elephant Research Fund grantees, Marian Karanja and Loise Wangui. © Festus Ihwagi

Learning Abroad

In 2020, after spending almost a year in Lockdown in the UK, STE's Tracking Manager and GIS Specialist, Benjamin Loloju returned to Samburu from Cranfield University in the UK where he has been pursuing his MSc in Geographical Information Management. Nelson Mwangi left for Colorado State University to pursue a PhD in Ecology while Maureen is pursuing a PhD in Conservation Science at the University of Edinburgh. Esther Serem, scored a Merit in her MSc in Wildlife Management from Newcastle and a distinction in her MSc thesis. Adding these new skills and experience to our staff will be a great boost to our organisation and our long-term efforts to secure a future for elephants.



Clockwise left to right, Benjamin, Nelson, Esther and Maureen. © Robbie Labanowski, Jane Wynyard, Adams Kipchumba and Naiya Raja.



A keeper with orphaned elephants at Reteti Elephant Sanctuary in northern Kenya. © Jane Wynyard

New Centre For Reteti

We're excited to be working with the Samburu-led orphan elephant rewilding project, the Reteti Elephant Sanctuary in northern Kenya. We will help develop a world-class education centre to showcase the wonder of elephants and the importance of their place on our planet. Save the Elephants and the team at Reteti are partnering with MASS Design, a unique, award-winning nonprofit firm, on the project. The centre will introduce visitors to the world of elephants, the challenges of survival and the work of raising and rewilding orphans. The centre, expected to open in 2022, is designed to engage both local and global visitors in elephant conservation.



Orphaned elephants at Reteti Elephant Sanctuary enjoy their milk bottles. © Robbie Labanowski

Virtual Look At Elephants' World

Samburu elephants and STE's David Daballen have become virtual stars in an award-winning cinematic film series for Facebook's Oculus. In the three-part nature series Ecosphere, viewers travel through the savannahs of Kenya, Africa, the rainforest of Borneo, Malaysia and the coral reefs of Raja Ampat in Indonesia. Here, viewers can experience close encounters with elephants, orangutans and manta rays along with the people who work to protect the animals and their habitats. The series was filmed in glorious VR by a team from Silverback Films and PHORIA in Samburu and Reteti last year.



David in the field with elephants. © Jane Wynyard

Bracelets Supporting Elephants

In 2020 we partnered with Wildlife Collections who launched a line of exclusive elephant bracelets in support of Save the Elephants. Each bracelet comes with a postcard that introduces customers to a tracked elephant via a QR code that directs them to our website where they can learn more about their elephant's story and follow their journey. The bracelets have been hugely popular. Thank you Wildlife Collections!



Proceeds from Wildlife Collections' elephant bracelets help protect elephants in the field. © Jane Wynyard

Appelbe Award: Nasuulu Head Ranger Recognised

In 2020, Francis Galgitele - Head Ranger of Nasuulu Conservancy that neighbours Samburu National Reserve, was the recipient of the Appelbe Award, a £500 cash prize. The award, gifted by one of STE's founding trustees Felix Appelbe, annually recognises an individual who has shown outstanding passion, commitment and accomplishment working for Samburu's wildlife. In 2012, Francis managed the Nasuulu ranger force, a unit made up of four different tribes. He has become an expert negotiator and peacemaker, bridging the gap between tribes. Francis's life has been threatened by poachers and bandits, but his dedication to the job and those who serve beneath him never wavers. The aim of the annual prize is to encourage local people to work for the common conservation cause.



Francis Galgitele (left with KWS senior warden, Martin Ngathe) was the Felix Appelbe award recipient in 2020. © Simatwa A. Ngachi



Hurricane's adorable calf shows us his happy side. © Robbie Labanowski

2020 Scientific Publications

Bastille-Rousseau, G., Wittemyer, G., (2020) **Characterizing the landscape of movement to identify critical wildlife habitat and corridors.** *Conservation Biology*, Volume 0, No. 0, 1–14 © 2020 Society for Conservation Biology DOI: 10.1111/cobi.13519

Branco M.S, P.S., Merkle, J.A., Pringle, R.M., King, L., Tindall, T., Stalmans, M., Long, R.A., (2020) **An experimental test of community-based strategies for mitigating human–wildlife conflict around protected areas.** *Conservation Letters*. 2019;e12679. [wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/conl](https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.12679) 1 of 8 <https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.12679>

Butler, K., M., (2020) **Behaviour and crop-raiding patterns of Asian Elephants (*Elephas maximus*): Can beehive fences help mitigate human-elephant conflict in Sri Lanka?** *B.Sc.(Ecology and Sustainability) (Hons.)*, M. Env A thesis submitted in total fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy (Environmental Science) Faculty of Science School of Environmental and Life Sciences University of Newcastle New South Wales, Australia August 2019

Uno, K. T., Fisher, D. C., Wittemyer, G., Douglas-Hamilton, I., Carpenter, N., Omondi, P., Cerling, T. E., (2020) **Forward and inverse methods for extracting climate and diet information from stable isotope profiles in proboscidean molars.** *Quaternary International*, Volume 557, 2020, Pages 92-109, ISSN 1040-6182

Kinyanjui, M.W., Raja, N.R., Ewan J Brennan, E. J., King, L. E., Tiller, L. N., (2020) **Local attitudes and perceived threats of human-elephant conflict: a case study at Lake Jipe, Kenya.** *Pachyderm* No. 61 July 2019–June 2020

Lamprey, R., Ochanda, D., Brett, R., Tumwesigye, C., Douglas-Hamilton, I., (2020) **Cameras replace human observers in multi-species aerial counts in Murchison Falls, Uganda.** *Remote Sensing in Ecology and Conservation* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd on behalf of Zoological Society of London <https://zslpublications.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/rse2.154>doi: 10.1002/rse2.154

Troup, G., Doran, B., Au, J., King, L.E., Douglas-Hamilton, I., Heinsohn, R., (2020) **Movement tortuosity and speed reveal the trade-offs of crop raiding for African elephants.** *Animal Behaviour* 168 (2020) 97e108 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2020.08.009>

Van de Water, A., King, L. E., Arkajak, R., Arkajak, J., van Doormaal, N., Ceccarelli, V., Sluiter, L., Doornwaard, S. M., Praet, V., Owen, D., Matteson, K., (2020) **Beehive fences as a sustainable local solution to human-elephant conflict in Thailand.** *Conservation Science and Practice*. 2020;e260 <https://doi.org/10.1111/csp2.260>

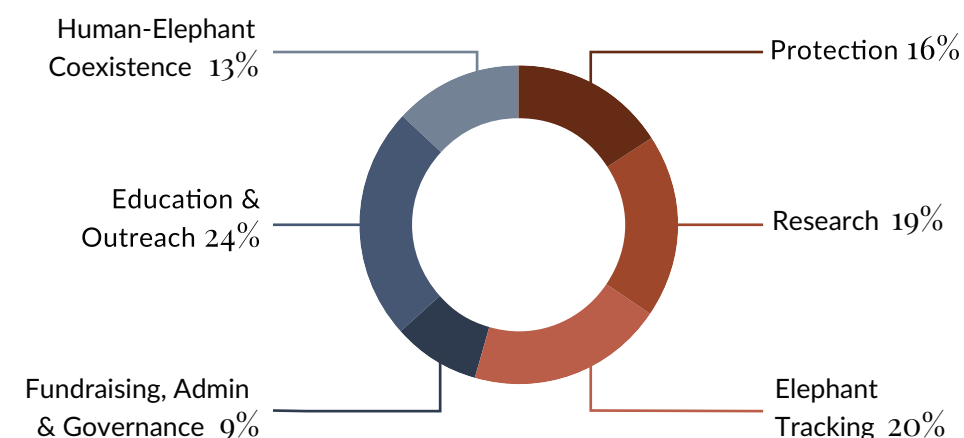
Weideman, H., Stewart, C., Parham, J., Holmberg, J., Flynn, K., Calambokidis, J., Paul, D. B., Bedetti, A., Henley, M., Pope, F., Lepirei, J. (2020) **Extracting identifying contours for African elephants and humpback whales using a learned appearance model.** 2020 IEEE Winter Conference on Applications of Computer Vision (WACV)

Finance

2020 Revenue & Expenses

	UNAUDITED	AUDITED
	2020	2019
REVENUE (US\$)		
Donations	4,188,988	5,193,761
TOTAL REVENUE	4,188,988	5,193,761
EXPENSES (US\$)		
Protection	556,248	606,297
Research	653,398	707,934
Elephant Tracking	709,896	581,269
Fundraising, Admin & Governance	299,416	289,991
Education & Outreach	828,149	817,357
Human-Elephant Coexistence	442,897	474,927
TOTAL EXPENSES	3,490,005	3,477,775
SURPLUS FOR 2020	698,983	1,715,986

Analysis of 2020 Expenditure





Save The Elephants Supporters

Save the Elephants is deeply grateful to you all for contributing financially to our shared mission from 1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020. We are thankful for every single gift including those of you who chose to remain anonymous.

Thank you for your dedication to securing a future for elephants.

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Apple Inc	Wildlife Collections
Mary S. Boardman Fund for Conservation	Anonymous (1)

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LEGACIES LIVE ON

We acknowledge the supporters from whom we have received a gift in their will this year, and express our appreciation to their family and friends for their thoughtful generosity.

These gifts are an expression of their lifelong passion for elephants and we are truly grateful for their visionary support.

Estate of Leslie Henry Gaskins	Estate of Ralph Philbrook Estate of Lilian Florence Rayner	Estate of Arthur Stromberg
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To find out how to include Save the Elephants in your bequest plans, contact Pooja Dutt, Director, Major Gifts at pooja@savetheelephants.org

ADDITIONAL GRATITUDE

We would also like to thank the entire team at Elephant Watch Camp led by Saba and Oriá Douglas-Hamilton, for their continued support of Save the Elephants.

We are also grateful to the Wildlife Conservation Network for its long-running partnership that not only supports our US administration and governance, but also provides tools, ideas, resources and training to help us succeed.

Last, but certainly not least, we thank all the volunteers who have generously donated many hours, days and months of their time and talents to Save the Elephants over the past year. You know who you are!



A mother and her calf in Samburu National Reserve. © Robbie Labanowski

Every effort has been made to list current and accurate information. If you see an omission or error, we would love to hear from you. Please email us at donate@savetheelephants.org

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© Robbie Labanowski

Elephants need you. Those born today could live up to more than 60 years but they face increasingly fierce competition for habitat and resources. Agriculture, infrastructure and other human impacts are expanding fast, threatening giant lives and creating conflict. Help us protect elephants and create peaceful coexistence between our species.

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