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EAST AFRICA **ENVIRONMENT**

East Africa is endowed with a wealth of natural resources, including some of the most spectacular wildlife and ecosystems in the world. When managed effectively and equitably, these vast yet fragile land, water and wildlife resources can contribute to the national economy and improve the lives of local communities. However, the pressure of growing human populations coupled with changing weather patterns, rampant wildlife poaching and trafficking, and disjointed management of shared natural resources threatens the conservation of this natural ‘capital.’

USAID is improving the ability of regional intergovernmental organizations to lead the responsible use of natural resources and position member states and communities to leverage the benefits of conservation.

COUNTERING WILDLIFE CRIME

Poaching and wildlife trafficking in East Africa are at critical levels, part of a global trend that leads to significant losses of wildlife each year. In response to this trans-boundary threat, USAID is supporting the East African Community (EAC) to develop a regional strategy to combat wildlife trafficking, and to harmonize and adopt effective policies, laws, and strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of wildlife resources.

USAID's five-year partnership with the U.S. Department of the Interior is coordinating efforts to address wildlife trafficking, and providing expertise and training on wildlife protection, law enforcement, and prosecution at national levels in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

USAID works with the EAC Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) and member states to coordinate the management of water and land resources in the Lake Victoria and Mara River basins.

Lake Victoria, the largest tropical lake in the world, and its satellite lakes, rivers and wetlands constitute the Lake Victoria Basin. Kenya and Tanzania jointly manage the Mara River Basin, which flows directly into Lake Victoria. Citizens of five East African countries including Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda share the resources of these two river basins. Its ecosystems are world-renowned for their rich biodiversity and are critically important for sustaining wildlife populations.

WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION & HYGIENE (WASH)

In East Africa, access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation is still inadequate, especially in peri-urban and urban areas. USAID is providing institutional support to the LVBC, local authorities and water utilities to increase access to water and sanitation services through more efficient management practices and a reduction in non-revenue water, or water that is processed and supplied by water utility providers but is lost due to leaks, theft or metering errors.

ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE VARIABILITY

Trends such as increasing temperatures, erratic intensity and frequency of rainfall, and extreme weather events such as floods and droughts, are projected to intensify. Without an effective response, these conditions will continue to threaten regional development gains and economic stability. USAID supports the development and use of data tools that improve the ability of regional organizations and member states to identify vulnerabilities and plan for and respond to the impact of current and future climate variability.

BUDGET \$4.5 million

REGIONAL PARTNERS

EAC Climate Change Coordination Unit and Lake Victoria Basin Commission, IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre, and Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development, U.S. Geological Survey Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET)

ACHIEVEMENT SNAPSHOTS

- 214,354 hectares of biological significance placed under improved management
- 20 new laws, policies, agreements or regulations to improve natural resource management were proposed and adopted or implemented
- Developed the Wildlife Information and Landscape Database (WILD) mobile app that allows rangers in 10 conservancies in Kenya and Tanzania to collect and share data on wildlife sightings, poaching, human wildlife conflict and other activities
- Supported the negotiation and implementation of the first trans-boundary agreement to manage the Mara River Basin between Kenya and Tanzania
- Reduced non-revenue water in select districts in Uganda that resulted in more than 1,500 new water customers over a twelve-month period
- Developed an affordable, weather-indexed insurance plan for Kenyan farmers to reduce the risk of crop losses associated with adverse weather events
- Supported the development of Geospatial Climate Outlook Forecast, a statistical software tool that provides updates of seasonal rainfall to improve regional forecasts and improve decision-making

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