

# Uganda's Community Conservation Policy 2019

A new policy to strengthen the conservation of wildlife resources through the active involvement of communities



# In brief

The Uganda Wildlife Authority's Community Conservation Policy 2019 advances Uganda's approach to community engagement and outreach. The policy highlights the strategic role of UWA's Community Conservation Sub-Directorate, alongside law enforcement, to respond to new and growing challenges to biodiversity conservation. One of these challenges is wildlife crime, and the policy sets out six strategies for collaborating with communities to tackle this issue, including through the formulation and implementation of Community-Based Wildlife Crime Prevention Action Plans. The policy also emphasises the critical importance communities can play in providing credible intelligence information about wildlife crime.

## A New Community Conservation Policy 2019 for Uganda

The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) is pleased to introduce its new Community Conservation Policy 2019. It aims to actively involve communities, and address their aspirations, concerns and interests, to secure their support for wildlife conservation while also ensuring they benefit from conservation.

The Community Conservation Policy 2019 advances the policy of 2004, which described community conservation interventions to improve access to resources from protected areas, promote wildlife-based enterprises, share revenue from tourism with local communities, and mitigate human-wildlife conflicts.

The 2019 policy has been developed through stakeholder consultations. It builds on previous experience of implementing the policy of 2004 and provides a new direction for UWA in ensuring effective community involvement in wildlife conservation. First, it places attention on the strategic role of UWA's **Community Conservation Sub-Directorate**, and its teams of dedicated community conservation wardens and rangers across the country, to tackle wildlife crime. Second, it includes a noteworthy



shift towards **strengthened interdepartmental collaboration within UWA**, especially between law enforcement and community conservation teams. Finally, it contains a suite of measures to engage communities living adjacent to protected areas including **human-wildlife conflict management, wildlife-friendly enterprises, and education and awareness raising**.

# What is community conservation?

UWA uses the term community conservation to describe the implementation of programmes and activities that involve interaction with local communities living within and adjacent to protected areas. These activities are commonly called 'community outreach' in other countries and include raising awareness of the importance of protected areas for Uganda, human-wildlife conflict resolution, and benefit sharing from conservation initiatives. UWA's Community Conservation Sub-Directorate implements these programmes to improve outcomes of conservation activities for both people and wildlife.

## Tackling wildlife crime: six strategies

The Community Conservation Policy 2019 sets out six strategies through which it will promote collaboration with local communities to prevent wildlife crime:

1. Develop and implement Community-Based Wildlife Crime Prevention Action Plans
2. Develop and implement joint intelligence and law enforcement programmes with communities
3. Resolve wildlife crime driven by human-wildlife conflict
4. Develop a reporting and record keeping mechanism on wildlife crime intelligence received from communities and UWA departments
5. Establish incentives for communities that report and contribute toward preventing wildlife crime
6. Design education and awareness programmes based on wildlife crime incidences and intelligence.





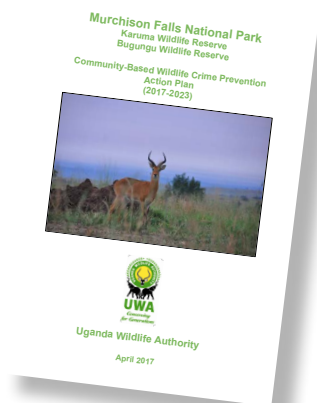
## Murchison Falls National Park Community-Based Wildlife Crime Prevention Action Plan

UWA's Community-Based Wildlife Crime Prevention Action Plan for Murchison Falls National Park provides an example of the implementation of the first strategy outlined in the policy.

This action plan provides a strategic vision to address wildlife crime within the boundaries of the Murchison Fall park and surrounding communities for the period 2017-2023. The plan and its activities are shaped by three guiding principles:

1. Develop effective, long-term relationships with communities
2. Provide positive incentives, and
3. Build effective law enforcement.

The wildlife offences that the plan focuses on are hunting of high value species, commercial bushmeat hunting and subsistence bushmeat hunting. The plan details the key target groups engaged in wildlife crime, and intervention options, including building a community intelligence network and supporting community conservation initiatives.



# Community conservation is a key part of UWA's mandate

When the Uganda Wildlife Act Cap. 200 (2000) established UWA, it placed people and communities living alongside wildlife as at the heart of our work. UWA's mission is to:

*“conserve, economically develop and sustainably manage wildlife and protected areas of Uganda in partnership with the neighbouring communities and stakeholders for the benefit of the people of Uganda and the global community”.*

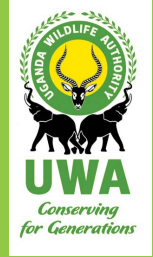
The need to engage communities in UWA's conservation and development programmes is recognised across Uganda's laws, policies and strategies. For example, the Wildlife Policy (2014) under Strategic objective 1(h) and 9(a) emphasises the need to:

*“strengthen protected areas as a focus of local community involvement, pride, ownership and commitment and, where appropriate, a source of socio-economic benefit”.*

The involvement of communities in UWA's conservation efforts is further echoed in the Strategic Plan (2015-2020). The new Community Conservation Policy 2019 advances this, providing clear policy direction for the involvement of communities in the conservation of wildlife inside and, crucially, also outside protected areas.

The overall goal of the policy is to:

*“achieve community appreciation and long-term support for conservation of wildlife resources through active and equitable engagement of communities and stakeholders”.*



# Find out more

Read Uganda's Community Conservation Policy 2019 here:  
<https://pubs.iied.org/G04469>

Read the Murchison Falls National Park Community-Based Wildlife Crime Prevention Action Plan here:  
<https://pubs.iied.org/G04161>

As part of this project, IIED supported UWA staff from the Community Conservation Sub-Directorate to provide training for Community Conservation Wardens. The **training modules** are available online for use/self-study and they include:

1. Introduction to Community Conservation
2. Effective Communication
3. Community Mobilisation
4. Facilitating Community Meetings
5. Undertaking Gender Assessments for Conservation
6. Planning a Community Conservation Intervention
7. Conflict Management
8. Monitoring and Evaluation Reporting

To download these resources, go to:

<https://www.iied.org/peer-learning-resources-for-community-conservation-wardens-uganda>

## Project webpage

The drafting of the Community Conservation Policy 2019 was supported by a project led by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED): Implementing park action plans for community engagement to tackle IWT.

Project publications are posted here:  
[www.iied.org/park-action-plans](http://www.iied.org/park-action-plans)

## Get in touch with project partners

Project convenor: Dilys Roe, [dilys.roe@iied.org](mailto:dilys.roe@iied.org)  
Project leader: Julia Baker, [Julia.Baker2@balfourbeatty.com](mailto:Julia.Baker2@balfourbeatty.com)

Uganda Wildlife Authority: Executive Director, Uganda Wildlife Authority, P.O. Box 3530, Kampala, Uganda  
[info@wildlife.go.ug](mailto:info@wildlife.go.ug)  
[www.ugandawildlife.org](http://www.ugandawildlife.org)

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## Project Materials

### Biodiversity, Natural Resource Management

#### Keywords:

community engagement, illegal wildlife trade, poaching, wildlife crime, conservation

#### Photo credits:

Cover: Community members gather for a Q&A in Kiryandongo (Village Enterprise, 2020)

Page 2: A Village Enterprise business owner selects a piece of fish for a customer (Village Enterprise)

Page 3: Community wildlife scouts tie bandages as part of first aid training in Kyankende (Geoffrey Mwedde, WCS, 2018)

Page 4: Mother and baby elephants at Queen Elizabeth National Park (Tiziana Zoccheddu, 2010)

Page 5: Community leaders meet in Kiryandongo (Village Enterprise)