



Protecting Elephants and Their Habitats Across the Greater Mara Ecosystem



# 2020 Annual Report



I think I speak for everyone when I say that 2020 was unlike any other year to date in our recent history. Mara Elephant Project was faced with many obstacles; however, our resilience showed through and at the root of that was our exceptional staff. MEP’s rangers worked in increasingly difficult situations, combatting a rise in bushmeat poaching and habitat destruction activities. Not just our rangers, but our support staff across all levels of the organization were critical to ensuring we all survived this year. Just like you, they were dealing with children that were home from school, worry over the effects of the virus and the long-term implications for their communities. I have never been prouder to be the CEO of Mara Elephant Project more than I was this year; we kept everyone safe and employed, we combatted the onslaught of difficulties head on and managed to continue making an impact in our areas of operation.

So, let’s start with some good news, for the first time in recent history, in 2020, the Greater Mara Ecosystem (GME) recorded zero poached elephants; however, our intelligence unit remains vigilant as we also experienced the third highest amount of ivory seized in 2020, all crossing the border from neighboring countries. We are especially indebted to our operational partners who were all facing similar hardships this year and yet, joined us to ensure wildlife, communities and habitat in the Mara were all protected. Personally, who ever thought I’d be recording a hand washing tutorial this year? At MEP though, it was so much more than that. We participated in PPE and food distribution; we built tippy taps and portable handwashing stations in community centers. 2020 was the year we saw firsthand what the human spirit working together can overcome.

Now, to address the elephant in the room. The COVID-19 virus brought tourism to a halt all across Kenya and the Maasai Mara. The income lost affected MEP’s tourism partners and the conservancies we work very closely with to protect wildlife. People with no other options resorted to bushmeat poaching and habitat destruction activities to generate income; conservancies had to lay off lodge staff and combat these rising challenges by fundraising to pay leases. In 2020, we recorded the highest levels of these illegal activities since we began operation; however, we also raised the most money ever in MEP’s history to combat this. Your support allowed us to remain steadfast in our commitment to face these challenges by expanding our presence on the ground. We were able to employ 10 additional Maasai men and women as rangers that were deployed in December to increase our protection of wildlife and wild spaces.

So, as we head into our 10th year of operation in 2021, I say ‘good riddance’ to 2020, but I also acknowledge the impact Mara Elephant Project made in a year no one considered their best. We are committed to helping our tourism and conservancy partners rebuild in 2021.

*Marc Goss*

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Marc Goss  
CEO

Finlay Marrian



# MEP Celebrates the Life of Colin Church

In early 2021, Mara Elephant Project Chairman Colin Church passed away before the Annual Report copy was finalized. Colin played an active role in MEP’s operations and was instrumental in ensuring our organization made it through a challenging year. His guidance will not be easily replaced.

Mara Elephant Project is sad to announce the passing of conservation giant Colin Church on the 16th of March. Up until his death Colin was the chairman of MEP and a founding member of the organization. Colin was a pillar, mentor, and gentleman who did so much for so many. Colin’s passion for wildlife conservation came to the fore in the Aberdare National Park when he led the Rhino Ark with the enormous task of fencing and protecting the Water Tower and the endangered species living there. Colin brought new skills to the conservation space from his business career in public relations. Colin’s contributions to conservation, the environment and the community in Kenya, was recognized when Her Majesty the Queen honored him with the Most

Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2017.

Colin’s leadership at MEP championed the next generation of conservationists, the rangers, who work on the front line. Colin guided our board, mentored



management staff, and pride glowed on the faces of MEP rangers when Colin would visit and congratulate them for their work. To work with, be mentored by, and learn from Colin’s gentle, decent, and steadfast resolve has been an honor.

## MEET MEP’S NEW SENIOR WARDEN

Meet MEP’s new Senior Warden Zakayo Lenaeku. He joined MEP the year it was established in 2011 and had previously worked in Olchoro Conservancy as a ranger tasked with guarding the endangered white rhino. Zakayo worked alongside MEP CEO Marc Goss as a patrol ranger in Mara North Conservancy before moving over to MEP to lead the intelligence unit. As the Head of Intelligence, his efforts have resulted in over 1,670 kg (3,682 lbs.) of ivory seized. Zakayo was promoted to Senior Warden in the first quarter of 2020 and his duties include managing all of MEP’s patrol rangers; he plans operations, organizes their deployments and is Marc’s second in command. Zakayo helps MEP work with communities to mitigate conflict and reduce poaching and he’s helped MEP build a better relationship with local chiefs and community members in the Morijo area to increase protection. MEP’s rangers are all local Maasai men and women working on the front lines to protect the Mara’s wildlife, communities and habitat that they live alongside for future generations.





# The MEP Method

Mara Elephant Project (MEP) was established in 2011 with the mission of protecting elephants and their habitats across the Greater Mara Ecosystem (GME). The GME, an extension of the vast Serengeti ecosystem, is Kenya's most important wildlife area and tourism asset. The Mara-Serengeti ecosystem is one of the last major wildlife refuges on Earth. Most famous for its annual migration of nearly two million wildebeest and zebra, the ecosystem is also home to an estimated 40% of Africa's large mammals. Historically, people and wildlife peacefully co-existed when space for both did not overlap; however, as the human

population has grown, so has livestock and farming, pushing wild animals into smaller spaces. MEP's vision is to see the existence of a stable elephant population co-existing peacefully with people across the GME. For over a decade at MEP, CEO Marc Goss, Kenyan stakeholders and a large team of local Maasai have worked together to build a better future for their families, Africa and the world. Together with MEP's Director of Research & Conservation Dr. Jake Wall, who joined in 2019, we have worked to expand MEP's capability through new renowned scientific programming. MEP is

a remarkable force of talented, dedicated and determined men and women working together 24/7 to save elephants, the GME, Kenyan wildlife and wild spaces for generations to come. While MEP was originally focused on combating elephant poaching, we always looked ahead knowing that human-elephant conflict and habitat loss would be the long-term threats to elephants. Our approach of monitor, evaluate and protect has worked when used in collaboration with partners to protect wildlife, communities and habitat in the Maasai Mara.

## MONITOR



MEP uses cutting edge tools to monitor elephants, rangers and asset movements in real time for threats to wildlife, communities and habitat. These tools include the helicopter, elephant collars and MEP's own instance of EarthRanger.

## EVALUATE



MEP evaluates data to produce outputs like maps, charts and situation reports all to illustrate our patrol efforts and measure our impact. This data is used to build upon MEP's influence with partners and stakeholders.

## PROTECT



MEP employs Maasai rangers in patrol units working tirelessly in unprotected areas of the Mara. Our rangers lead the anti-poaching operations and stop conflict to increase security for wildlife, communities and habitat in the Mara.

# Addressing the Elephant in the Room

The rapid and global spread of the COVID-19 virus has brought with it challenging future implications for conservation, particularly elephant conservation in Kenya. Mara Elephant Project is deeply concerned about the long-term effects of the socio-economic downturn and what that means for the communities we work so closely with to protect Kenya's iconic elephants and the GME. As a frontline conservation organization, MEP reacted in real-time to the rapidly changing environment as a result of COVID-19. Our teams and all of our partners on the ground should be commended for their active continued work within the restrictions they have to comply with. MEP remains steadfast in our support of the national and county government's security and community support mechanisms throughout this crisis. Never in any of our lives have we dealt with anything like what is happening. Over and above our wildlife and habitat conservation work, MEP pledges that we will adapt to meet this, and future challenges and we will do our best to fight this pandemic together.



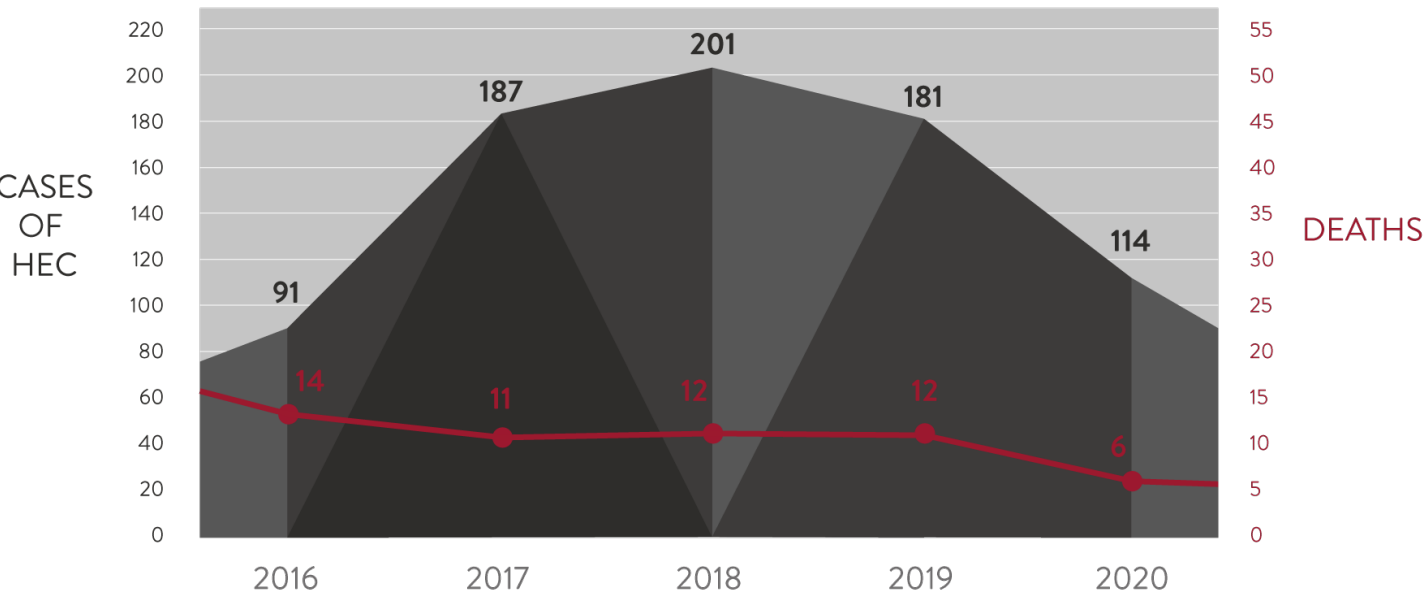
The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how fragile human life can be and has highlighted our abuse of the natural world either through habitat destruction or wildlife consumption. We now know that wildlife meat bought from 'wet markets' in China caused the pandemic. MEP's wildlife protection activities in the Mara, although centered on elephants, extends to other species by providing boots on the ground protection and intelligence gathering. Therefore, MEP is in agreement with the approaches needed to eradicate the illegal wildlife trade and help prevent future outbreaks of zoonotic disease and we intend to extend these activities even further. We see this crisis as an opportunity to positively reframe our relationship with the natural world and, when the pandemic is over, we will be a stronger and more united community in the Mara.



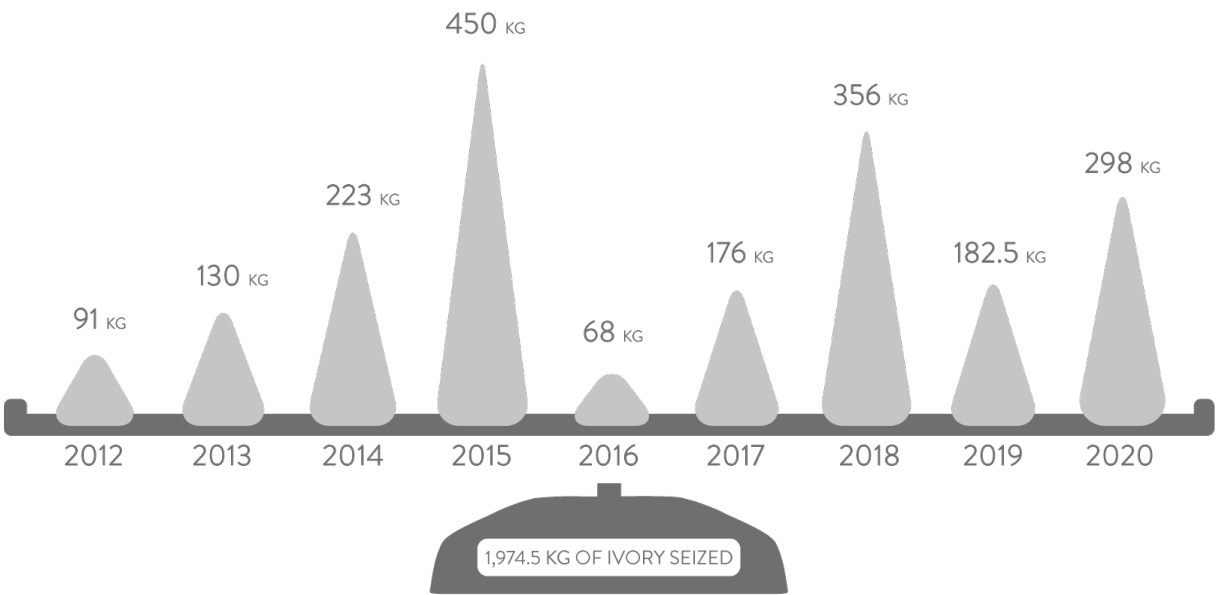


# IN THE LAST 9 YEARS:

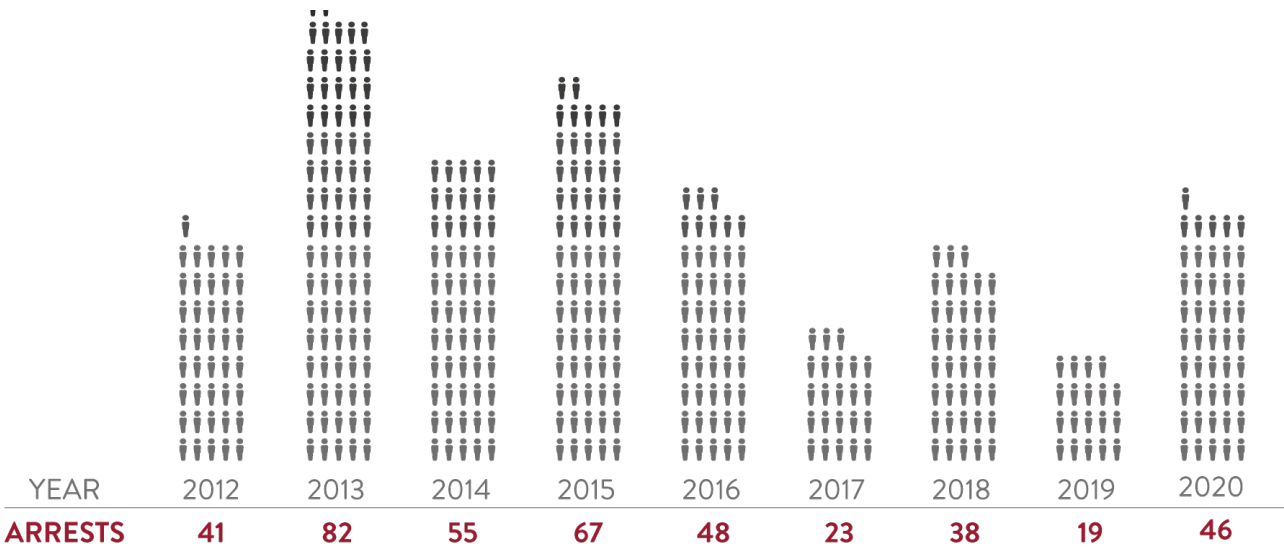
As the human population and development grows in the Mara, MEP’s HEC response has increased while MEP’s mitigation efforts have **kept the elephant death rate steady**.



MEP has intelligence officers who have been at the center of many arrests and seizures alongside KWS resulting in **1,974.5 kg (4,353 lbs.) of ivory seized**.



MEP’s rangers along with government partners have **arrested a total of 419 ivory or bushmeat poachers since 2012**.



# IN 2020

**MEP** rangers have played a key role in support of government partners and we have seized **298 kg (657 lbs.) of ivory**. (third highest amount in 9 years)



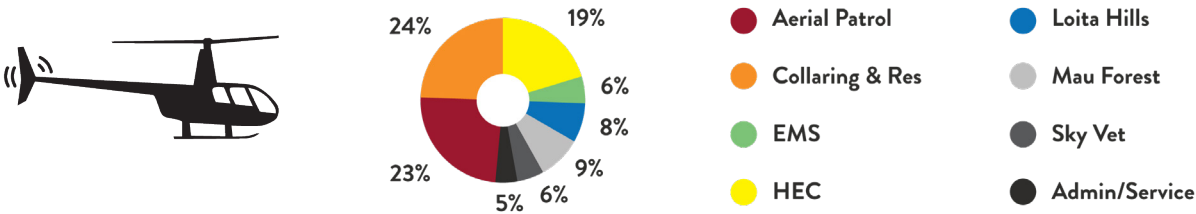


IN 2020

MEP rangers covered a total of:



The Karen Blixen Camp Trust helicopter was flown a total of **252.5 hours** in 2020.



MEP rangers have played a key role in support of government partners and we have:



Deploying Drones in 2020



Despite the challenges of 2020, MEP received some welcomed news in July. MEP CEO Marc Goss received approval from the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) and the Ministry of Defense to once again legally fly drones in order to mitigate conflict in the areas surrounding the Mara.

We’ve been developing our drone program since September 2012 when Marc bought a simple drone to test in the Mara. What he discovered was that when we flew it toward some elephants the effect was startling; the whole herd bunched up and ran away from the noise.

In just a short time drone technology improved so fast that field use became a reality. Once deployed in the field, we discovered that drones were a cheap and effective technology for rangers to use. The drones were a combination of portable, easy to operate and effective as a tactic that rangers could use to move elephants out of unwanted areas. The sound of a flying drone, similar to a swarm of bees, elicits an immediate flight response from elephants. We then chivvy the family of elephants back to safety.

MEP started a training program for rangers to safely mitigate human-elephant conflict in Tanzania with the support of Lori Price while Kenya was still

sorting out the drone regulations. The curriculum was designed so that rangers could pick up the necessary skills to safely and effectively fly drones as a tool to push elephants out of community land. At the time, MEP trained eight of our rangers to fly drones, creating a core group of rangers that were able to fly and maintain them in the field. MEP also has a “Drone Flying Manual” that has allowed us to take the knowledge we have using drones to combat human-elephant conflict and share it with other organizations in Africa.

Our program was halted when, in 2014, Kenya instituted a ban on the use of drones, which put us on hold until late 2017 when the KCAA approved Marc’s license to operate two drones in the field. This, however, was grounded again in 2018 when the KCAA announced a nationwide stop to operating all drones until the legislations was again amended. The July 2020 approval for MEP is for a period of one year and will help us characterize the effectiveness of drones to mitigate conflict, run some demonstrations for our conservation partners, and showcase this work publicly. What we need to work on now is getting further permits for our rangers to be able to fly and explore drone use for other applications such as mapping, census work, habitat monitoring and security tasks.



# Team Reports

## 2020 RESEARCH & TRACKING REPORT



Like the rest of the world, COVID-19 caused MEP's Research Department to slow our field work starting in March; however, by the end of 2020 we had three full-time field assistants mapping fences, roads and landcover ground-truthing points across the GME using motorbikes and our Njia app. Knowing where fences are helps us both from an operational standpoint to mitigate conflict and in analyzing data collected, we can better understand how elephants are impacted by the proliferation of new fencing across the Mara. Overall, in 2020, MEP's research field assistants mapped **2,171.6 km (1,349 miles)** of fences divided out into electrical, wire and other. The Research Department has been actively developing the landscape dynamics database using the data and developing an agricultural layer and land cover map in conjunction with researchers at Grumeti. We've submitted a paper in collaboration with Peter Tyrell from Oxford/SORALO describing the database system and public data, including the most up-to-date information, can be downloaded in

different formats from ArcGIS online.

We also now have 15 types of field events and corresponding field forms that are recorded by our rangers during their operations and input into EarthRanger. The event forms, such as snare or human-elephant conflict reports, are allowing us to monitor key metrics such as levels of poaching or conflict hotspots and the EarthRanger system makes collection of these data straightforward. It also has a powerful interface to watch the data feeds either on the big screen at MEP HQ or on our phones while out in the field. Vulcan released the 'ER Tracks' mobile app for Android on the Google Play Store, which gives MEP the ability to track rangers and vehicles cheaply and easily, and even offline using a simple Android phone. Additionally, we've now been able to extract collar battery voltage information that compares voltage over the current month versus the historical statistics which allows us to see if a collar is approaching the end of its lifetime and needs to

be replaced. In the third quarter of 2020, the MEP Research Department started reporting on deforestation in the three forested areas that MEP is operating in: Loita, Mau and Nyakweri. Using GLAD Deforestation alerts now available within the MEP EarthRanger platform, we can track the current rate of loss in these forests; for example, the Nyakweri Forest has reached approximately 1 event per square kilometer – nearly twelve times the rate of forest loss as the Loita Forest. In May, we kicked off a project to develop a database and photo management system for elephant ID photos. The goal is to develop a streamlined workflow to acquire field photos of elephants and ID them based on historic photos stored in the database or log a new individual based on the sighting information.

In 2020, KWS and MEP collared **eight** total elephants. The year began by deploying two new elephant collars onto one female and one male elephant in the Shimba/Mwaluganje ecosystem. The Shimba elephants were badly affected by poaching in the last decade and reconnaissance of the area conducted with KWS indicates poaching is still an issue. In June, KWS and MEP collared two elephants in response to conflict and conducted four elephant collaring operations in the second half of the year. Two new elephant collars were deployed in an area known as the Sand River corridor. Previous data has shown elephant connectivity from the Mara to the Loita Forest through this area in the south-eastern portion of the GME. Our goal is to collect more movement data from more elephants in the area and use the data to help in landscape planning to maintain connectivity along this southern route. Unfortunately, in 2020, we lost both collared elephants Namunyak and Caroline who passed away from natural causes.

## 2020 RANGER & OPERATIONS REPORT

Mara Elephant Project rangers remained adaptive and ready throughout the year for the growing threats to wildlife, communities and habitat in the Mara due to COVID-19. As was projected, we saw concrete evidence of an increase in bushmeat poaching and habitat destruction and continuing our efforts alongside partners proved crucial in response. It's amazing that in 2020 MEP was not only able to retain our full complement of rangers through these difficult times, which has led to a record number of arrests and recoveries, but also add an additional 10 rangers to increase protection in the Loita Hills. In the second half of 2020, we saw the highest levels of bushmeat poaching and habitat destruction since our inception; however, we have also been frustrating logging operations, arresting bushmeat poachers, and continuing the protection of wildlife, communities and habitat.

The MEP intelligence unit and KWS continue to root out ivory being brought into Kenya across neighboring borders. In 2020, successful operations led by the MEP intelligence team recovered a total of **298 kg (657 lbs.) of ivory** and arrested 18 suspects. Rangers were hard at work in the forest areas of the Mau, Loita and Nyakweri removing bushmeat snares regularly during their patrols and arresting bushmeat poachers, destroying poacher's camps and confiscating bushmeat. In 2020, MEP rangers removed 460 snares, which doubled from 2019, and arrested 28 bushmeat poaching suspects. We also seized a record 379 kg (836 lbs.) of bushmeat, more than four times the amount seized in 2019.

While remaining vigilant about poaching, MEP rangers continued to shutdown other illegal activities in the Mara alongside partners. The halt of tourist generated revenue due to COVID-19 has meant more people are out of work,

which results in food insecurity and an increase in illegal activities. Our joint patrols with KWS, Kenya Forest Service (KFS), Bongo Surveillance Project (BSP) and many of the conservancies in the Mara were key to our successes in 2020 as was the support from Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (SWT), Lori Price and Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF). The three forest areas we work in took a real hit with the increase in illegal activities and as a result, we increased our efforts in 2020. In total, in 2020, we destroyed 233 kilns, confiscated 26 chainsaws and 597 bags of charcoal, more than double from what was confiscated in 2019. We also recovered 90 trees illegally cut down, 21,288 posts and 1,904 pieces of timber. The intelligence gathered and efforts to arrest suspects, confiscate timbers and destroy kilns all contributes to raising the opportunity cost for people partaking in these illegal activities in hopes that we'll see this critically important habitat maintained.

As the situation got worse in the Mara, MEP rangers continued to help when

called to improve food security in the rural communities we work in. To this end, there were **114** total incidents of human-elephant conflict in 2020 where MEP rangers responded to help secure community's fences and crops. Most were mitigated using ranger's vehicles, firecrackers or drums; however, as COVID restrictions increased, the Karen Blixen Camp Trust helicopter was called in frequently to move elephants out of settlements and was essential during this time of limited contact for quickly and effectively responding to conflict while maintaining recommended isolation.

While our work is very serious, there were also some stories in 2020 that had very happy endings. In March, MEP rangers participated in two baby elephant rescues and in October, MEP rangers helped rescue a baby giraffe. In November, MEP alongside many partners helped rescue an elephant trapped in a sewage soak pit. Finally, in December, a MEP ranger team won their division in the Ultra MARathon.



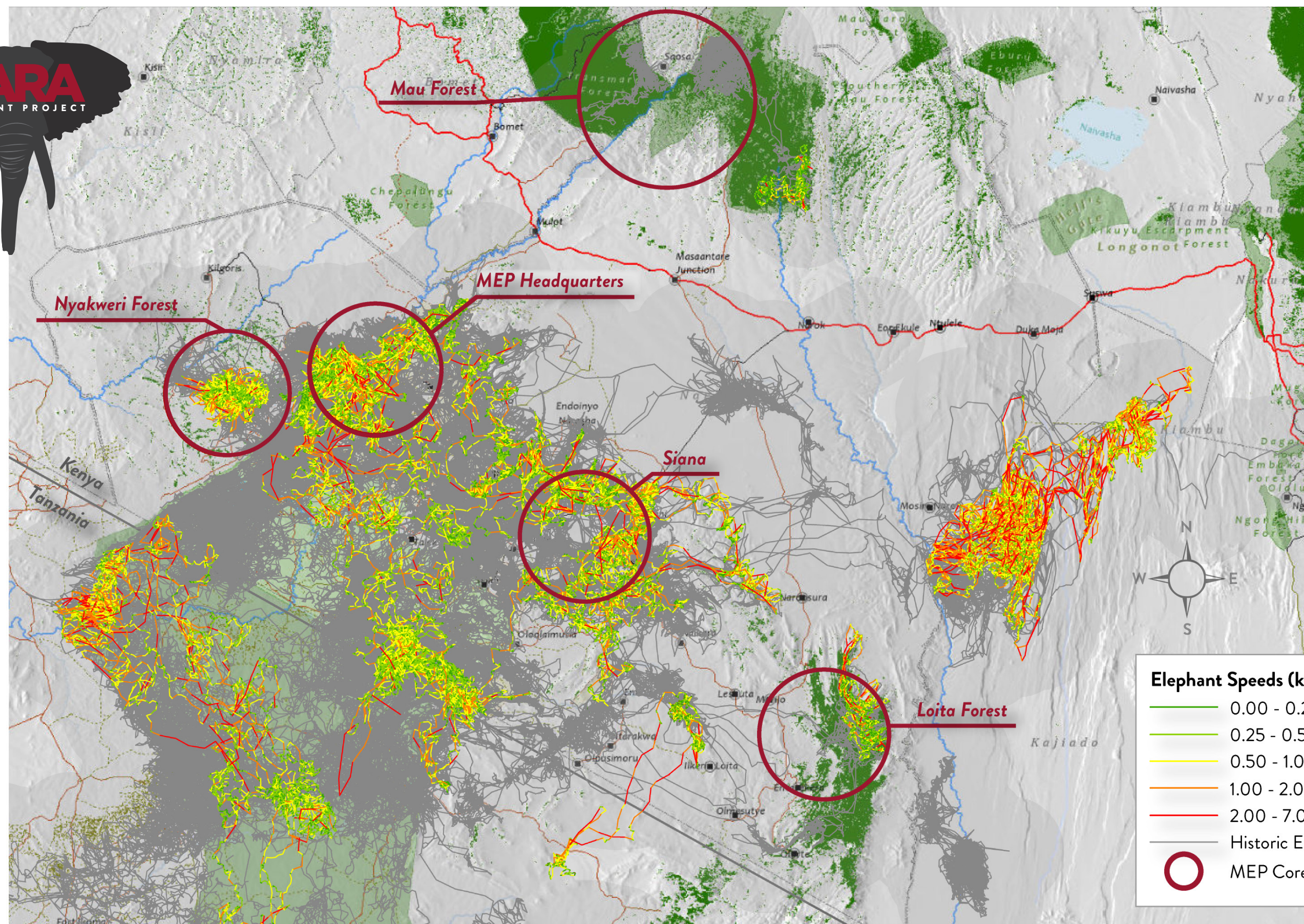


*“What we have in the Mara is best in class. It is heartwarming to see the level of respect other camps and conservancies have for MEP. They realize the work MEP, KWS and other stakeholders are doing to protect this ecosystem. Despite being a relatively small organization, our impact is enormous, and everything is ‘our’ success. It’s never one person, it’s always a team.”*

**Kevin Rodrigues**, MEP Trustee







The 2020 operational map features patrol concentrations of MEP rangers and movements based on speed of KWS and MEP collared elephants.



2020 IMPACT OF THE SWT MAU DE-SNARING UNITS



Mara Elephant Project’s ability to have two fully equipped ranger units stationed in the precious Mau Forest in the Maasai Mara in 2020 has increased protection in the forest for wildlife by deterring poaching and raised the opportunity cost for habitat destruction. Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (SWT) funds these two boots on the ground units and their impact, especially in 2020, cannot be overstated. In a year where MEP saw the highest numbers ever in bushmeat poaching and illegal logging and charcoaling, these 16 rangers were kept very busy and made a big difference in protecting the ecosystem. These two teams managed to carry on under the

great pressures the virus put on the Mara and the partnerships forged with KWS, KFS and BSP became crucial during the pandemic to address the additional challenges. In July, we saw the highest levels of logging, charcoal making, and bushmeat poaching ever recorded in the Mau Forest. The joint MEP/SWT Mau De-Snaring Units patrols with BSP, KFS and KWS resulted in a total of **379** snares removed from the Mau Forest in 2020, and the seizure of 85 kilograms of bushmeat, one antelope skin, one bow and three arrows, the destruction of two poacher’s camps and arrest of **14** suspects for bushmeat poaching.

The MEP/SWT Mau De-Snaring Units are also focused on shutting down illegal habitat destruction activities in the forest day and night. In total for 2020, the teams alongside partners destroyed **110** kilns, **190** bags of charcoal and seized a total of 728 illegally logged timbers, 122 logs from cutdown trees and 4,218 posts. They also confiscated nine power saws and arrested a total of **149** suspects for illegal logging or charcoal production activities. While the SWT Mau De-Snaring Units were mainly focused on shutting down illegal activities related to habitat destruction and poaching, they were also tasked with mitigating conflict in 2020. There were 14 total incidents of conflict during the year. The ecological, social, and economic significance of the Mau Forest to Kenya, the Eastern African region, Africa and the World, cannot be overemphasized and the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust’s grant to support these teams is addressing the widespread destruction and security threats head on into 2021.

2020 IMPACT OF THE MEP INTELLIGENCE UNIT

Mara Elephant Project has a vast intelligence network that has been at the center of many arrests and seizures in Kenya over the last nine years. While quietly working undercover, our network of informants and intelligence officers alongside KWS have reduced poaching and increased security for not only elephants but other wildlife. In 2020, MEP’s intelligence led to the seizure of the **third highest amount** of ivory in one year over the last nine years of operation.

We started the year with two prominent successful operations by the MEP intelligence team that led to a total recovery of 81 kg (179 lbs.) of ivory and the arrest of four suspects. Their first bust was near the main road heading to Nairobi from Narok in Ntulele where one suspect was arrested with four tusks weighing 39 kg (86 lbs.) and the second bust of 42 kg (93 lbs.) of ivory was of a Ugandan who also had a sack of wildlife bones, which made national news in

Kenya. In the second half of the year, MEP’s intelligence led to the recovery of 176 kg (388 lbs.) of ivory. We had a first of its kind incident on Lake Victoria when suspects threw six sacks of tusks from Uganda overboard while being pursued. The MEP intelligence unit and KWS continue to root out ivory being brought into Kenya across neighboring borders and their work in 2020 is evidence of their continued effectiveness. These arrests raise the opportunity cost for anyone involved in trafficking illegal elephant ivory in Kenya and the seizures mean that ivory wasn’t allowed to pass through Kenya into the market thanks to MEP’s intelligence efforts and KWS.



DEPLOYMENT OF A SECOND LOITA RANGER TEAM

The Loita Plains area in the GME includes the Loita Forest, a pristine forest that is an important refuge for elephants and plays a key role in the provision of water year-round for wildlife and communities. Mara Elephant Project’s Maasai rangers are tasked with protecting wildlife from poaching, communities from conflict and the forest from illegal habitat destruction activities such as logging and charcoal production. Their work, especially in forest areas of the GME, Loita, Mau and Nyakweri, resulted in a record breaking 2020; however more protection was needed to immediately mitigate conflict, reduce poaching and increase protection of habitat.

In response, MEP recruited 10 local community members from Loita in September. These men and women all completed a 6-week training course on MEP’s campus and were deployed by December. The 10 new MEP rangers are responsible for responding to conflict

and collecting information on all conflict incidents to analyze in MEP’s EarthRanger system. The information gathered when combined with the elephant movements from our collared elephants will be used to inform spatial planning to protect elephant habitat and test and modify different conflict mitigation techniques with the community. In addition, they will be tasked with increasing security in the area for wildlife by reducing poaching and illegal habitat destruction activities. **Lori Price**, the supporter of the first Loita Forest team, stepped up to fund this team and she was joined by **Creatura Wildlife Projects** and **Elephanatics**

along with hundreds of other MEP donors in December. The increase in illegal activity around these areas of the Mara due to the pandemic cannot be overstated and thanks to our amazing supporters, we now have one more team ready to combat these long-term threats.



SAND RIVER COLLARING OPERATIONS

As space diminishes, tensions are rising between communities and wildlife, especially elephants who can wipe out an entire fence or field of crops overnight. MEP’s well-trained rapid response ranger units consisting of Maasai men and women recruited directly from the local communities they protect will immediately react to conflict to protect communities from the threat of crop raiding elephants. It’s not only MEP’s efforts on the ground, but our daily monitoring of KWS and MEP collared elephants that help our rangers react in a moment’s notice to a conflict situation. These elephants enable us to not only monitor their movements in real-time and react to protect them, but also helps us determine the extent of their range. This approach has been effective in the short term at keeping the elephant conflict related death rate steady despite the rising number of conflict incidents; however, this is not sustainable for the future. Collecting long-term data on these behaviors will help inform how MEP responds to conflict in the future.

In the south-eastern portion of the GME, the Sand River area that connects Loita to the Maasai Mara National Reserve is an important source of surface water for elephants and all wildlife and provides a critical corridor for them to move into the Loita Forest during times of drought. The river is also key for the surrounding communities who use it as a source of water and who farm tomatoes along its banks, which leads to conflict as the people and wildlife are competing for the same resource. This area is a key focus for MEP and our goal with collaring elephants here is to collect more movement data to use for landscape planning to maintain connectivity along this southern route. Not only that, but these elephants will also provide an early warning to conflict for MEP rangers stationed nearby.

So in August, KWS and MEP deployed a collar on a bull

elephant, **David**, who moves with a small group of bull elephants that were going into settlement areas and raiding tomato farms along the river. Then, in September, we also collared a female elephant, **Harriet**, in the Sand River corridor. Their collar data is not only helping with the joint KWS and MEP security operations but is also building up a valuable database on the spatial movements and resource selection of elephants.



David Chancellor



The Inaugural Ultra MARAthon

On December 12, the inaugural UltraMARAthon 50 km relay race took place to raise funds to support the hard-working rangers of the Mara conservancies in this time of great need, to enhance the level of protection that they can provide. Marc joined Peter Achammer up in the sky to provide aerial coverage for the safety of all runners and MEP rangers were stationed along the racecourse. The participating team of four Mara Elephant Project rangers, Stanley Kashu, Cosmus Bett, Edward Kuyo and Nashola Karia, won the ranger division and a breeding Boran bull as the grand prize. Thereby making them, officially, the **fastest rangers in the Mara.**



MEP's COVID Relief Efforts

Despite the pandemic in 2020, Mara Elephant Project rangers continued to provide essential services while operating in the GME. While focused on the protection of wildlife and habitat, the well-being of our community and partners remained important for MEP. Basics like food, personal protective equipment, or PPE, and proper hand washing stations all became vital to our neighbors, and we were in a position to help.

The Sidekick Foundation, Inc.® is MEP's core funder in the U.S., and they also support The Maa Trust in their work to ensure the success of conservation through sustainable community development in the Maasai Mara. The economic downturn due to the loss of

tourism resulted in The Maa Trust having to temporarily shut down Maa Beadwork and Maa Honey and send home all of their scholarship children from the program. Without the income generated for the women and children who are supported by the beadwork and honey programs, food scarcity was a deep concern. In April, the Sidekick Foundation funded food packages distributed to **over 630** of these families, and MEP assisted with the distribution of the food packages by providing a 4-wheel-drive vehicle with a ranger and driver. Getting the food safely to the remote locations was an important part of this project's success. All of the families being supported by this grant live in the Maasai Mara alongside the wildlife MEP protects and we were happy to

partner with The Maa Trust on this worthy initiative.

MEP rangers also took part in ensuring neighboring communities had access to proper hand washing stations, irrespective of their access to running water. We built tippy taps, which our rangers use in the field, for rangers at Mara North Conservancy and Lemek Conservancy headquarters and in the community area of Manyatta and at the entrance to MEP's campus for the public's use. In addition, MEP rangers and staff all made sure to set a good example of social distancing, wearing masks and hand washing. We posted a tutorial featuring CEO Marc Goss and MEP rangers took part in several community education sessions during the height of the pandemic.

In May, the MEP Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Mau De-Snaring Unit delivered PPE along with materials for mobile hand washing stations to KFS ranger posts around the Mau Forest and to remote communities living along the forest edge. In July, MEP rangers distributed masks donated by Paradise International Foundation through six health clinics in the Maasai Mara. Keeping the community safe during the COVID-19 outbreak has been a top priority for MEP. We did everything we could in 2020 to keep calm, carry on and respect the seriousness of the COVID-19 virus.



Thank You 2020 Donors

While the world dealt with the evolving ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Mara Elephant Project aimed to provide our supporters with stories about the work that continued on the ground and bring interesting and informative posts onto your social media feed during a dark and difficult time in history. We appreciate everyone's support big or small in 2020, and we are especially grateful to core supporters for providing the stability our organization needed to focus on the task at hand.

In 2020, despite the year being extremely challenging, MEP raised a record amount of funds to support our efforts and expand them in the GME. This support allowed MEP to deploy a new team in the Loita Hills, and it was all kicked off on Giving Tuesday by a long-time MEP champion, Lori Price, who is now a key support system for two MEP ranger units in a critical forest area. We'd also like to thank Elephanatics and their loyal supporter base for giving to this team, founder Fran and Lorne Duthie personally donated towards these efforts and Creatura Wildlife Projects.

Other core supporters of MEP gave us stability in 2020, the Sidekick Foundation, Inc.®, OAK Foundation, Angama Foundation and Sheldrick Wildlife Trust. We received a

donation from the estate of Mary and Maurice Woulfe who were passionate about conservation. We received another year of support from the J.E. Fehsenfeld Family Foundation to support our core operations and Elephant Cooperation supported MEP with two key donations in 2020. We are also very grateful to Sue Anschutz-Rogers for her continued support of the helicopter, which we had to use more during the COVID restrictions. MEP was also the proud recipient of the Shining World Compassion Award given by Supreme Master Ching Hai and the International Association which included a donation to our core operations. MEP's direct mail campaign in the U.S. helped our organization expand in 2020 and brought along new key donors like the Leslie L. Alexander Foundation.

MEP also received several large donations of seedballs from Seedballs Kenya that were donated by individuals for our rangers to distribute in the Mara. The Greatest Maasai Mara Photographer of the Year not only accepted entries in their competition, but also launched an online auction platform selling beautiful images to raise much-needed funds. Thank you to the Angama Foundation for supporting MEP. Finally, thank you to the donors who donated supplies like Life Straws, lithium batteries and backpacks from MEP's Amazon Wish List.

CORPORATES, FOUNDATIONS, LOCAL CONSERVANCIES AND CAMPS

Amy and Bart Peterson Foundation  
Animal Companion Rescue Foundation  
Animal Rights Reserved Foundation Williamson  
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Audrey and Jacob Cappell Charitable Fund  
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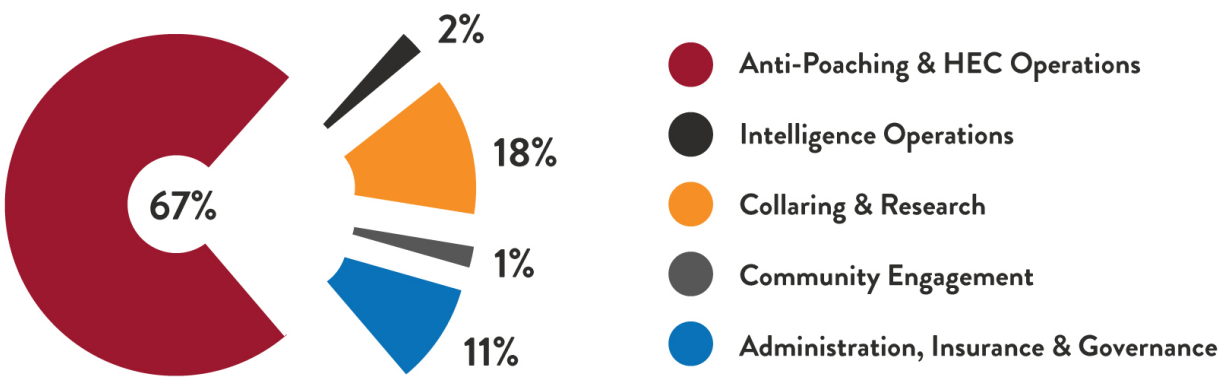
## INDIVIDUALS

A. Jayne Allison	Carola Gerigk	Donald Swihart	Gilbert Siron	Joanne Cirocco	Kim Kanas	Margaretha Backers	Namrata Kolla	Richard Busse	Steven Petak
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Allan Montgomery	Charles R Moser	Douglas Weber	Gloria Slagle	John Dillow	Lena Miller	Marion Zola	Nancy Shuman	Richard Salus	Suzanne Svendsen Kosman
Allan Sheldon Feinberg	Charlie Hamilton James	Dr. Jill Sideman	Gordon Gibson	John Hansen	Leslie Alexander	Marivee Frayer	Nathan Hahn	Richard Tourangeau	Sydney Shanks
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Amy Paul	Christian Michaels	Dwight Cummings	Gregory Keith Phillips &	John Nanninga	Lexi Hazam	Mark Forszt	Nina Irani	Rob Mcgregor	Tannyjha Hicks
Andrea Callan	Christiane Costello	Ed Cleary	Scott Douglas Goodrich	John Petrowsky	Libby McLaren	Mark Ross	Norman Walker	Robert Bliss	Ted Merrill
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Analysis of 2020 Expenditure



As a result of the record amount of funds received in 2020 from our supporters, the organization developed an operational reserve aimed at enabling us to weather any unforeseen and sudden drops in funding received. Operational costs reduced in 2020 as compared to 2019 are mainly due to MEP’s contribution towards the cost of the replacement helicopter, paid out in 2019. Donations received towards the end of 2020 have been carried forward to support operations in 2021. The management as well as the audit and risk committee continue to ensure the financial policies in place are strictly adhered to.

# Celebrate A Decade of MEP

## MEP’s Kumi (10th) Anniversary



In 2021, MEP is celebrating 10 years of operation. Help us celebrate our milestone. Donate to strengthen, build and grow our decade of success.

### Please help us:

#### Monitor & Protect Elephant Families Over the Next 10 Years

Monitoring the overall population of all elephant families protects them into the future. MEP’s LTM team studies how elephants use their limited wild spaces to expand the protection and survival of elephant families.

#### Monitor & Protect 10 Collared Elephants

MEP’s elephant collars protect community’s crops and keep down tensions between wildlife and people. The monitoring informs spatial planning to protect the ecosystem’s biodiversity and solve conflict.

#### Protect More Elephants by Employing 10 Total Ranger Teams

MEP’s Maasai rangers are the defenders of the Mara’s wildlife, people and habitat because they are the future generation of Kenyan conservationists.

## MEP IS READY FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS!

DONATIONS	2020 (USD)	2020 (Kshs)	2019 (USD)	2019 (Kshs)
Restricted grant	856,975	90,930,133	657,690	66,679,373
Other unrestricted donations	626,761	66,757,118	646,311	65,494,90
Transfer from capital grant	32,702	3,570,109	43,100	4,367,622
Release on disposal	425	46,406	19,701	1,996,405
	1,516,863	161,303,766	1,366,801	138,538,300
EXPENDITURE				
Administrative expenses	(89,964)	(9,799,460)	(85,771)	(8,691,775)
Program costs	(832,573)	(90,762,946)	(1,014,570)	(102,813,012)
	(922,537)	(100,562,406)	(1,100,341)	(111,504,787)
SURPLUS				
Surplus before tax	594,326	60,741,360	266,460	27,033,513
Tax	-	-	(886)	(89,805)
	594,326	60,741,360	265,574	26,943,708
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR*	594,326	60,741,360	265,574	26,943,708

\*Surplus for the year reflects the development of a 6-month operational reserve for the organization.  
Chart indicates income in USD and KES equivalent (102.2KES = 1USD)



## How to Donate



### DONATE ONLINE

Visit MEP's safe and secure donate page for a quick and easy way to donate via credit card.

**[www.maraelephantproject.org/donate](http://www.maraelephantproject.org/donate)**

### CHECK

Individuals from the U.S. seeking to make a donation can do so through our 501(c)(3), Sidekick Foundation, Inc.® DBA Mara Elephant Project.

**4000 W. 106th Street  
Suite 125-238  
Carmel, IN 46032**

### BANK TRANSFER

Please email **[info@maraelephantproject.org](mailto:info@maraelephantproject.org)** for wire transfer instructions to MEP Kenya Trust or the Sidekick Foundation, Inc. ® DBA Mara Elephant Project.

### USA CONTACT

**317-344-2863**

4000 W. 106th Street  
Suite 125-238  
Carmel, IN 46032

### KENYA CONTACT

**+254 707 280033**

2ns Floor Spring Road  
Watermark Office Park  
Ndege Road, Karen

**[www.maraelephantproject.org](http://www.maraelephantproject.org)**

follow us on Instagram and Facebook  
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## YOUR SUPPORT IS VITAL

**Elephants are in crisis. Please join us and support MEP's work to save elephants and successfully protect them in the long term.**

