



WWF FINLAND

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2020

RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND RESOURCES

THRIVING ENVIRONMENT - WELLBEING OF PEOPLE

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME REPORT TO
THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FINLAND.

Partnership Programme Report 2020 to Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFR100	African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative
BZUC	Buffer Zone User Committee
CBFM	Community Based Forest Management
CBO	Community Based Organization
CFCC	Community Forest Coordination Committee
CFUG	Community Forest User Group
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DI	Disability Inclusion
EAC	East African Community
EAWC	East Africa Wildlife Crime hub
ENRCA	Environment and Natural Resources Conservation Act (Nepal)
ESSF	Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FLR	Forest Landscape Restoration
FORVAC	Forestry and Value Chains Development programme (Tanzania)
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GESI	Gender and Social Inclusion
GIS	Geographical Information System
GVL	Greater Virunga Landscape
HH	Household
HUMAK	National University of Applied Sciences (Finland)
HRBA	Human rights-based approach
ICCA	Indigenous and Community Conservation Area
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IKI	International Climate Initiative
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IPBES	The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KPH	Government Forest Management Unit (Indonesia)
KWS	The Kenya Wildlife Service
LPI	The Living Planet Index
MCDI	Mpingo Conservation and Development Initiative (Tanzania)
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
MoEF	Ministry of Environment and Forestry
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding (agreement)
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PA	Protected Area
PWD	Persons With Disabilities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TANAPA	Tanzania National Parks
TAWA	Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority
TAWIRI	Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute
TFS	Tanzania Forest Service
TMTI	CSO coalition in Madagascar
TRAFFIC	The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
URSA	The Universal Ranger Support Alliance
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
VLFR	Village Land Forest Reserve
WEF	The World Economic Forum

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
PROGRAMME KEY OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS ACHIEVED IN 2020	8
Impact “Sites and species important for biodiversity are more effectively protected and restored to safeguard ecosystem services”	9
Outcome “Communities, citizens, governments and companies engaged in sustainable natural resource management to address deforestation and secure equal benefits for people and sustain wildlife habitats”	10
Engagement	12
Sustainable Forest Management	14
LESSONS LEARNED	16
CONTRIBUTION TO FINNISH DEVELOPMENT POLICY	18
Support to Civil Society	19
Cross-cutting objectives of the Finnish Development Cooperation Policy and Enhancing gender equality	21
Reducing inequalities and promoting human rights based approach	22
RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT	27
Successes, challenges and adaptive management	28
Monitoring and Evaluation	30
Risk Management	34
Financial Management	37
Financial summary	37

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The global COVID-19 pandemic changed the world in 2020. The short-term impacts of the pandemic are somewhat understood, and they have had a significant impact for the people and their livelihoods in all countries of implementation. Global tourism has plunged, and this has had a direct effect on the incomes of local communities dependent on revenue streams from tourism. Work with some communities has been on hold due to travel restrictions, but the implications have been uneven among regions. National economic growth slowed down in most countries and development pathways are being redefined. The immediate impacts on the programme have been limited but it is still too early to assess changes in the long-term.

Despite challenges due to COVID-19 pandemic, programme partners have been able to implement the programme in their respective countries even within restrictions. Significant achievements were made in 2020:

- **39,069 people (17,845 women) benefitted directly of the programme**, out of those 33,473 (15,648 women) were right holders and 5,596 (2,197 women) duty bearers
- **329,402 people (157,627 women benefitted in-directly of the programme**, out of those 320,455 (157,146 women) were right holders and 8,947 (1,481 women) duty bearers
- Around **50 % of all beneficiaries belonged to Indigenous groups or ethnic minorities**
- Total of **716,792 hectares of forests** were protected, restored or put under sustainable management including community tenure in 2020 contributing to support to over 2 million hectares since the beginning of the programme
- Total of **208 civil society organisations and community groups** were capacitated and supported to influence decision making
- and strengthen Indigenous and community rights and tenure
- **652 small holder farmers** were supported to improve income and resilience
- **30 community based enterprises** were supported to access value chains and markets
- Total of **5,201 households** benefitted directly
- **15 different interventions** to e.g. improve sustainable forest management, enhance biodiversity values in forests and reduce poaching, wildlife crime and illegal timber trade and human wildlife conflicts were implemented together with various stakeholders
- **8 interventions to increase equality, human rights, gender and disability inclusion** were implemented to strengthen human rights based approach and reduce inequalities
- **1,4 million people were reached in Finland** by the climate and biodiversity campaign Earth Hour in 2020

The pandemic has highlighted the interconnectedness of nature and people and at the same time it has undermined the fragility of many of the partner countries. In the future people will come more and more in contact with wildlife as the habitats are destroyed and the biodiversity and host species for viruses are reduced. ([WWF 2020, COVID19: Urgent Call to Protect People and Nature.](#)) WWF promoted the One Health -approach to encourage different stakeholders from various lines of societies to work together to create holistic solutions to the environmental and human health challenges. During 2020, WWF raised awareness about the linkages between biodiversity destruction, wildlife crime and consumption and zoonotic diseases. Many governments also have used the pandemic as an excuse to push down civil society as well as withdraw funding and resources from environmental conservation. A slow recovery has negatively impacted communities and their livelihoods therefore increasing dependency and pressure on natural resources which has further had harmful effects on species and biodiversity.

In 2020, the alarming trends and the cry-out for nature was clearly stated in many high-level reports which underlined the emergency to take action for the global biodiversity and climate crisis. [The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#) (The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) 2020), states that the negative trends in nature will continue to 2050 and beyond in all of the policy scenarios explored in the Report, except those that include transformative change that values nature. The importance of healthy environment as the enabler of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals was emphasized in the [Global Sustainable Development Report in 2019](#); and the The World Economic Forum's (WEF) [Global Risks Report 2021](#) shows the climate crisis and nature-loss continue to be top tier threats to humanity in the coming decade. Biodiversity loss, natural resource crisis, and climate action failure are also recognised as existential threats. And finally, the [Living Planet report](#) (WWF 2020) indicated that different information from various sources show that the state of biodiversity is still decreasing globally.

Good signal of global political commitment to tackle the biodiversity crisis was witnessed when political leaders participating in the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity in September

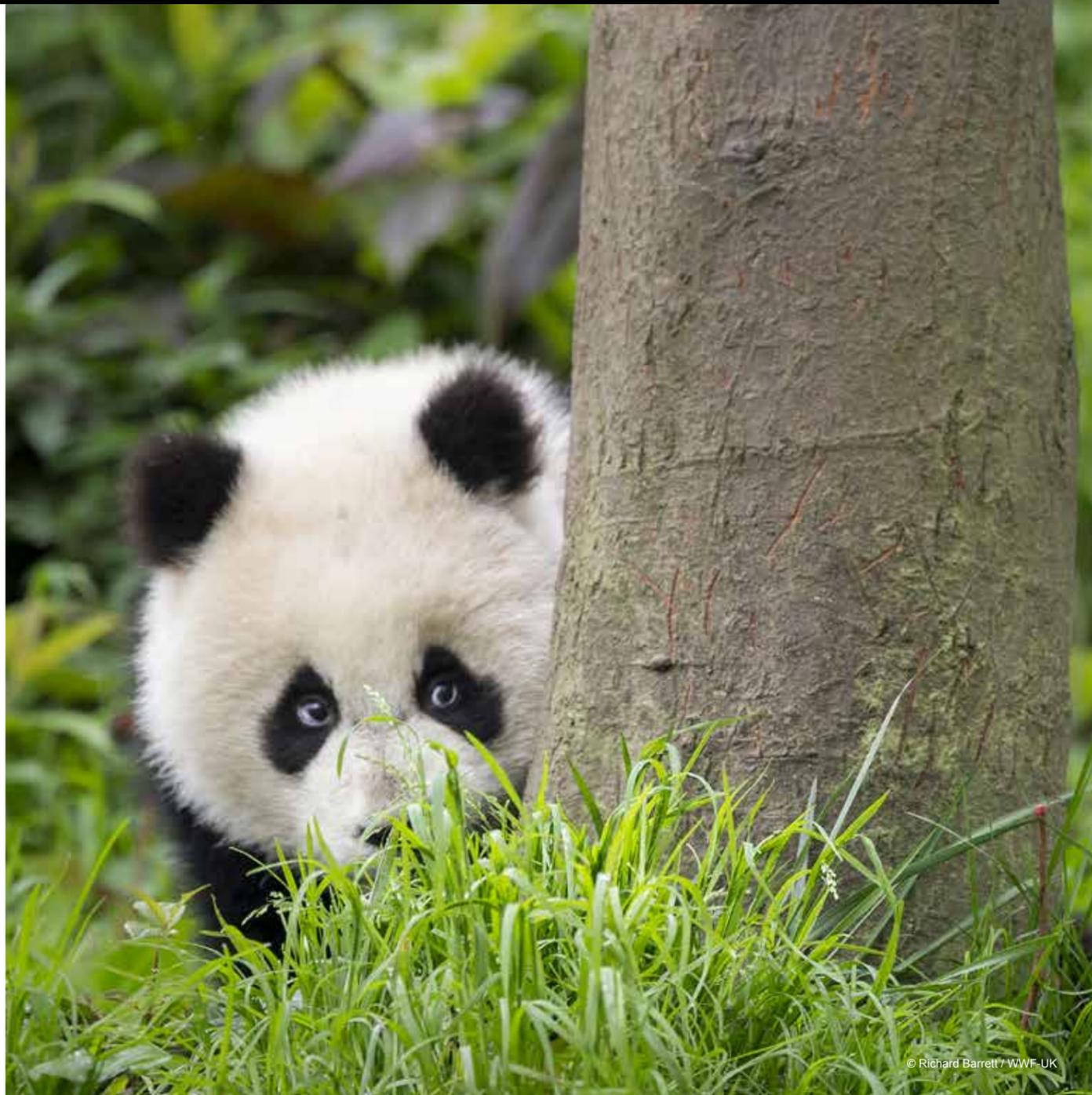
2020, representing 84 countries from all regions and the European Union, including the president of Finland, committed to reversing biodiversity loss by 2030, through the Leaders Pledge for Nature and People. By doing so, these leaders sent a united signal to step up global ambition and encourage others to match their collective ambition for nature, climate and people with the scale of the crisis at hand.

Also in Finland, there was increasing commitment to include biodiversity protection into the development policy as climate and environment were selected as one of the key themes of the Finnish Development Policy Committee. In January 2021 the Finnish Development Policy Committee published a report [“Biodiversity as an Enabler of Sustainable Development – Why is Safeguarding Biodiversity Important in the Finnish Development Policy?”](#), which highlights the role and importance of nature and biodiversity in development cooperation. The report summarizes the links between biodiversity and human rights and highlights the role of biodiversity as a basis for all other SDGs. WWF Finland has been an official member of the Development Policy Committee since 2020.

In general, the pandemic raised the discussion and awareness on the importance of nature and biodiversity to our health and wellbeing. At the same time, as travel reduced remarkably and industrial production was scaled down there were small, short-term benefits for the environment, but it was recognized internationally that the recovery of the pandemic must be green. This opened new opportunities for environmental NGOs like WWF to promote its solutions for a green and just recovery and sustainable development, like nature based solutions. At the same time in many developing countries the pressure and need for the natural resources increased a lot. Loss of income from tourism, many people migrated back to the countryside from big cities due to unemployment, gas and other energy sources were not available because of the lockdown, leading to more and more people needing to harvest natural resources like timber. This also led to an increased use of wildlife and poaching. How the recovery will be done in the partner countries and on the community level will be seen in coming years. On the other hand, many of the supported communities indicated that livelihood support and diversification of income sources as well as awareness about the environment and conservation helped them cope with the pandemic.

“Communities indicated that livelihood support, diversification of income sources and awareness about the environment helped them cope with the pandemic”

PROGRAMME KEY OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS ACHIEVED IN 2020



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IMPACT “SITES AND SPECIES IMPORTANT FOR BIODIVERSITY ARE MORE EFFECTIVELY PROTECTED AND RESTORED TO SAFEGUARD ECOSYSTEM SERVICES”

Contribution and progress towards the impact of the programme is summarized in this chapter and in the Results framework (Annex 1). The impact is analyzed with more in-depth detail next year when the programme will have its final reporting. However, in this chapter a short snapshot view is taken towards the wider ecological situation and development outside the program scope. Despite the disruptions caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic, travel and movement restrictions, and the slow-down of economic activities, our work has continued.

The WWF network published its biannual flagship report, the Living Planet Report in 2020. The Living Planet Index (LPI) still shows a decline in the biodiversity on the planet. The latest index shows an average 68 % decrease in population sizes of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish between 1970 and 2016. A 94 % decline in the LPI for the tropical subregions of the Americas is the largest fall observed in any part of the world. Freshwater species numbers have also declined dramatically, with the Freshwater Index showing an average 84% decrease in population sizes between 1970 and 2016. Humanity’s influence on the decline of nature is so great that scientists believe we are entering a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene. Yet, measuring biodiversity, the variety of all living things, is complex, and there is no single measure that can capture all of the changes in this web of life. Nevertheless, the vast majority of indicators show net declines over recent decades.

Despite the negative trend in biodiversity indicators, the programme is still in line to contribute towards efforts halting and reversing the terrestrial biodiversity decline in the Programme target areas.

Surveys of species included as an impact level indicator of the programme are not carried out annually. In East Africa, Kenya has reached a target with rhino count of 852-972, also with zero rhinos poached in Kenya in 2020. Tanzania currently has 150 rhinos. A survey in Nepal was postponed to 2021 due to the pandemic. The results in 2021 show an increase in the population of 16% to

752 individuals compared to the 2015 estimate of 645 rhinos in the Terai Arc Landscape. No elephant survey took place in East Africa in 2020 due to the pandemic and late rains, revised national figures should be shared in 2021. Poaching levels in Kenya and Tanzania continue to decline, however, in Uganda poaching levels have not declined.

In Borneo, in one programme area, orangutan monitoring was conducted, and the results showed the total nests found was 185 from 19 transects. This indicates that the population density in the same monitoring transect has decreased compared with a monitoring carried out in 2010, but not significantly. The density found in 2010 was in the range of 1,9-2,1 individuals per km², while it was in the range of 1,38 - 1,5 individuals per km² in 2020.

Program aims to contribute to halting the loss of natural forests in the programme areas as well as to the restoration of natural forests. The FAO published its Global Forest Resources Assessment in 2020. The world’s forest areas are decreasing, but the rate of loss has slowed down. Globally, deforestation continues, but at a lower rate than before. The deforestation rate in the tropics averaged 9.28 million ha per year and 0,50 million hectares in the sub-tropics in 2015–2020. The highest annual deforestation rate in 2015–2020 was in Africa (4.41 million ha), followed by South America (2.96 million ha) and Asia (2.24 million ha). During 2020 WWF published a report analysing deforestation in the tropics and sub-tropics. The results showed that deforestation and degradation in the 24 deforestation fronts has been significant, reaching up to 43 million hectares between 2004-2017. Furthermore, according to World Resources Institute and Global Forest Watch, primary rainforest destruction increased 12% from 2019 to 2020, resulting in 12.2 million hectares loss of tree cover in 2020. Forest destruction has been especially high in Brazil due to loosening of environmental laws by the present president’s regime. However, there are also positive signs, one being slight positive progress in Indonesia with reduced deforestation rate and moratorium on peat forest clearing as well as restoration and regeneration of natural forests around the world. In early 2021 WWF published an analysis showing nearly 59 million hectares of forests – an area larger than mainland France – has regrown since 2000 – most of these however outside tropics. Many of the programme areas are located in the deforestation hotspots, such as in East-Africa and Madagascar, Laos and Borneo. Despite the huge pressure on natural forest

“Zero rhinos poached in Kenya in 2020.”

clearing, the programme has been able to provide valuable support for the protection and restoration of these areas and vast areas of forests have been secured. The programme and its theory of change remain relevant, and the programme continues to contribute towards its original impact statement.

OUTCOME “COMMUNITIES, CITIZENS, GOVERNMENTS AND COMPANIES ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TO ADDRESS DEFORESTATION AND SECURE EQUAL BENEFITS FOR PEOPLE AND SUSTAIN WILDLIFE HABITATS”

The contribution towards the programme’s outcomes is summarized in this chapter and can also be found in the Results framework (Annex 1). Overall, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant role in how it was possible to conduct work. Some of the planned field work could not be carried out due to restrictions imposed by national governments or local authorities. WWF has also paid special attention to the safety and health of the communities that it works with. A cautious approach has been necessary but has slowed down engagement with communities. The work with authorities has also changed. National and local priorities have sometimes shifted rapidly, causing shortcomings and delays in how duties have been carried out. At the same time, many people moved into the countryside from cities creating pressures on local natural resources leading sometimes to overexploitation of resources. The change in conditions has highlighted the need for increasing awareness raising efforts. The strong local presence and local ownership over initiatives have proven resilient amidst these situations and highlighted the value of WWF approach working with communities.

Extent of application of WWF practices

WWF Finland’s partners have continued to support local and regional governments and entities to improve their policies, guidelines and management plans in 2020. The target has been achieved already in 2020 and the program strives to maintain the result in 2020 and increase the application of these practices.

The programme has successfully continued to develop and revise community level forest management plans and also supported improved forest management in government and private sector forest concessions. For instance, in Borneo, the programme supported reduced impact logging -method to secure biodiversity values in production forests. Illegal wildlife trade reduced in East Africa at the outset of the pandemic. However, towards the end of 2020 it has started picking up again. The work remains relevant, and the Wildlife Crime Hub has addressed poaching, trade and demand for illegal wildlife products while improving community benefits. Zero poaching strategies have been adopted and implemented successfully in East Africa. Efforts to address illegal trade in timber and other forest products in East Africa have also yielded results and country level commitment has increased.

Civil society has been strengthened to influence policy and decision making regarding natural resources. WWF has also continued to work with CSOs and governments to ensure that earlier achievements have been maintained while also new engagement platforms have also been created, for example, in Indonesia.

The impacts of the pandemic are expected to be exacerbated going forward especially in work with officials and authorities. As the priorities of the governments have changed and the government coffers have been exhausted, the impacts on wildlife and natural resources are expected to show in the coming years. With resources depleted most authorities are lacking the meager resources they had earlier to carry out their work for law enforcement and supervision. There is little hope that the governments will be able to make up for their losses and at the end of 2020 there was already anecdotal evidence that people who have lost their incomes are looking for alternative income sources while the authorities are lacking the resources for basic necessities needed to do their work.

Amount of forests under protection or improved management

The programme target of 1,1 million hectares of forests under protection or improved management was achieved and exceeded in 2019. In 2020, the progress continued to 2,0 million hectares and is expected to continue in 2021. The majority of the forest area covered is in Borneo in Indonesia, where the biggest gain in 2020 was the final official approval of one of the WWF supported government forest management units, KPH Melawi, which covers an area of 703 999 hectares and is now

secured under improved forest management. This is a result of several years of technical support to district government partners. In addition, WWF continued to support another government forest management unit (over 200 000 hectares) and a private company (over 170 000 hectares) in their efforts to improve sustainable forest management, community tenure and biodiversity monitoring and protection as well as demarcating No-Go areas (the hectares have been reported earlier or will be reported later). Common practise is that WWF continuously supports partners in sustainable forest management throughout the programme duration.

Good progress has continued in other regions as well. Nepal has made significant gains in supporting community forestry in over 3 500 hectares and, for example, Laos added 67 hectares of forests under village protection in 2020. In East Africa’s program countries growth has been somewhat slower and individual targets for all countries might not be reached despite the programme achieving its cumulative target already in 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing travel restrictions played a role in progress being slower in some areas than expected. Whereas some communities may only be reached during the dry seasons, where travel restrictions coincided it made some communities inaccessible altogether in 2020. This particularly affected engaging hard to reach communities.

Furthermore, new community forest areas were identified, and the process of registration and approval has started. For instance, in Borneo, over 15 000 hectares of Indigenous community forests were demarcated within district government forest management areas. These will be now managed by the indigenous communities once the final approval is done. This progress is a result of support to local CSOs to discuss and negotiate with government officials to secure the rights of the indigenous communities to land. In addition, forest restoration is an important component in the programme. Forest restoration was supported in various partner countries and 631 hectares of forests put under restoration were achieved in 2020. This achievement contributes also to the African countries forest landscape restoration targets (The African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative, AFR100) as well as to the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration targets, in which WWF is one of the global partners.

As 2020 faced high deforestation rates in the tropics, it is important that the programme has been able to support protection and restoration of important

forest areas and also reduce deforestation. The COVID-19 pandemic also increased pressure on the forests since many people in rural areas faced challenges to earn income through tourism or other measures. Likelihood for forest encroachment for clearing of farming land or sell of timber increased in 2020 but luckily the programme was able to contribute positively to forest conservation.

Number of people engaged (disaggregated by gender and CSOs and companies)

There were a total of 33,473 rights holders (15,648f and 17,825m) and 5,596 duty bearers (2,197f and 3,399m) engaged by the end of 2020. The positive development is mostly down to a significant effort in Nepal which was able to reach more people because the budget originally allocated for travel and meetings in Nepal was invested in livelihoods and income generation activities for forest dependent, human wildlife conflict victims, and vulnerable communities on the ground. Partially the increase can be attributed to poor data from East Africa Forest Program in 2019, the full data now being available for both 2019 and 2020. The improved effort in data management is also bearing fruit in terms of increased reporting capacity. Out of the direct number of people engaged, 50% were indigenous peoples and/or represented ethnic minorities.

While the achievement in 2020 is significant given the restrictions in place due to the pandemic, the programme is now behind its original target of engaging around 15,000 people in each country/region, and it is unlikely that the gap can be made up by the end of the programme. Nepal is the only country that has reached the target set for the total number of people engaged. It must be noted however, that the scale of work differs between partner countries and instead of reaching a large number of people, it’s crucial that communities which are already engaged in the programme receive regular and sufficient support and capacity building to become self-dependent in natural resources management.

The number of CSOs and enterprises engaged remained stable in 2020 with the number of CSOs supported at 208 and the number of private enterprises supported at 30. The number of smallholder farmers supported in 2020 dropped to 652, partially due to travel restrictions. Indirectly, the programme reached approximately 330,000 people in 2020 and in addition, approximately 1,4 million people in Finland participated in Earth Hour.

“2 million hectares of forests has been brought under protection or improved management since 2018.”

“Indigenous peoples and/or ethnic minorities represent 50% of the people engaged.”

“5,201 households benefited directly from the programme.”

Number of households benefiting

5,201 households benefited directly from the programme in 2020. This is a slight decrease from last year and is just over half of the number of households aimed to be targeted during the whole programme duration. Whereas the number of people and duty bearers engaged were not significantly affected by the pandemic, the lower than expected number of households and smallholder farmers supported is to some extent down to the travel restrictions that were in place. While it was possible to find alternative ways of engagement with officials, CSOs and enterprises during the pandemics, for example by taking events and meetings online, this was not possible with rural households. Most communities could not be meaningfully engaged through virtual means. This has slowed down efforts to engage new communities and to maintain the level of support provided to existing communities. We do not expect to be able to make up the gap in our reach of households in 2021.

Number of equity responsive measures

The programme continues to contribute to improving gender equity and reducing inequalities. In all partner countries WWF Finland's partners were supporting and encouraging equity responsive measures in the programme interventions. This is in line with the WWF network's focus on strengthening the social aspects of conservation work and supported by the findings of the programme's Mid Term Review. Equity measures were conducted including promotion of gender equality and reduction of inequalities in nearly all countries and regions. We have reached the programme level target in 2020 and expect to maintain the level in 2021. Equity responsive measures have included for instance specific activities targeted to women, youth, children, Indigenous groups and people with disabilities, such as women's livelihood enterprises and agricultural production groups, livelihood development for people with disabilities, strengthening the land rights and tenure of Indigenous people, engaging youth in prevention of poaching and wildlife crime, capacity building and job creation for youth and environmental education programs for children and students. Further, a capacity development process based on a specific analysis on disability inclusion started in 2020 and is expected to improve programme delivery in 2021.

ENGAGEMENT

The programme has continued the engagement of duty bearers to improve forest management, to increase governments' commitments to international and regional agreements, to address illegal trade and poaching, and to raise awareness on biodiversity, climate resilience and sustainable consumption.

To strengthen the programme and improve delivery, innovation work in Kenya was added to the programme in 2020. The aim is to leverage the WWF global network and the Innovation Programme Panda Labs framework to identify and connect existing prototypes and solutions and develop new solutions where needed, to empower and value local and indigenous communities in developing countries and emerging economies as environmental stewards. The programme support to Panda Labs has enhanced the development of new innovative approaches in Kenya on delivering conservation impact, mainstreaming innovation in conservation programs, and strategic alliances for capacity building of CSO's. In 2020, the Innovation Program Panda Labs and Amani Institute collaborated on a six-part series called the Green House Sessions that sought to provide a collaborative forum to tackle some of Kenya's most pressing environmental challenges with over 500 people participating. The Innovation Programme is also exploring innovative finance mechanisms for wildlife conservation through Wildlife Credits.

In Indonesia, the programme continued dialogue and engagement with district and provincial governments as well companies and local Indigenous communities to strengthen and enhance multi-stakeholder cooperation. As a result, local CSOs and their platforms have been accepted as official partners to enhance sustainable and green development in the districts and province. This has resulted in improved forest management in government forest units as well as with private sector forest concessions and strengthened biodiversity awareness and community rights. Further, WWF has joined in collaboration with other international NGOs and programs to coordinate efforts and receive a bigger impact.

The East African Wildlife Crime Hub has been successful, and five countries have signed off the regional wildlife strategy hosted by the East African Community (EAC). This can be seen as a good commitment and a joint implementation

plan now exists for the implementation of the wildlife crime strategy. Monitoring frames will be developed to support the implementation and 7 agreements with national authorities are in place to implement the strategy: two in Kenya (training institution and KWS), three in Tanzania (TAWIRI, TAWA, TANAPA) and one in Uganda (UWA). In addition, a regional prosecution forum has been established for state prosecution officers to improve data sharing and collaboration.

East Africa Forest Programme continued its engagement with the Regional Economic Commissions, namely East African Community and Southern African Community. The EAC forestry policy and strategy were officially signed by the member states in 2020 and the implementation plan was developed with technical support from WWF. By initiation of WWF, harmonisation of timber customs documents in the EAC region and inclusion of gender in forest value chains were included in the EAC implementation plan, creating an opportunity to address and harmonize conflicting forest policies, laws, regulations and practices within the East Africa region resulting in maximized contribution of the forest sector in improving people's livelihoods, conservation and economic prosperity in the region. Furthermore, WWF supported the development of an agreement between SADC and Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus three (ASEAN+3) countries aimed at developing a mechanism for a regional stockpile inventory, management, repatriation and/or disposal for seized timber and other forest products for SADC Member States was presented to SADC. The endorsement and commitment by SADC to pursue the agreement with Asian importing countries and to control timber stockpiles regionally is a milestone towards curbing the illegal trade of timber and other forest products in the region and promotion of legal timber trade. The score measured by WWF's level of engagement and commitment tool was achieved in all five countries supported under the programme.

In Nepal, engagement within the new governance structure on the local level has continued to institutionalize environmentally friendly policies and to enhance natural resources management capacity at the level of local governments. Work with communities has been extremely valuable during COVID-19 to sustain the results of earlier engagements and to help safeguard socio-economic wellbeing.

In Finland, programme related issues were widely covered in the media communication. In the top 10 list of WWF Finland most covered issues, five were related to the programme. The number of media hits decreased by several hundred compared to previous years. The biggest coverage peaks on 2020 about programme related topics were: the Living Planet report 2020, forest fires in Australia, WWF's report on the environmental impact of the national diet recommendations in November, and WWF's statement to ban on the international trade of tigers. The number of media hits in 2020 was 3106 in total and the top media covering WWF's issues (both in quantity and quality) are Helsingin Sanomat and YLE. The reasons behind the decreasing coverage may vary, but it is believed that the main reason behind this is the COVID-19 pandemic which has decreased the amount of WWF Finland's communication especially in May-July when WWF was not only very sensitive on communicating any topics during the state of emergency but also many of the operation and projects were cancelled or freezed in Finland and in its partner countries.

The school tours reached 6 346 pupils all over the country in upper secondary schools, high schools and vocational schools. The year 2020 was the first year for the new concept of WWF Youth. 50 young people from Helsinki, Turku and Tampere started their engagement.

While meat consumption in Finland declined in 2019 to just under 80 kg per capita (the latest data available), it is too early to draw long term conclusions from the result. Early indications point to an increase in consumption for 2020.

The brand survey of 2020 indicated that WWF Finland and UNICEF are two most recognizable charities (around 20 charities in total took part). WWF is described as professional, reliable, meaningful and trustworthy. At the same time, respondents think that WWF is lacking agility, innovativeness, accountability and passion. These same lacking attributes appear in answers relating to all charities. At the end of 2020 WWF Finland had 34 092 active regular donors, which means 726 new regular donors (+ 2,2 % net change) during the year.

WWF Finland has been increasing and systemizing its advocacy and policy work in the past few years. Since 2020 WWF Finland has been an official member of the Finnish Development Policy Committee together with the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation, as an expert

“East Africa Forest Programme continued its engagement with the Regional Economic Commissions.”

“Efforts have been concentrated in the quality of improved forest management and deepening relationships with existing communities.”

on the climate and environment. This provided WWF Finland a more structured way to engage and influence Finnish Development Policy. The climate and environment were recognised as one of the key themes of the Development Policy Committee in coming years. WWF Finland had an active role in promoting this key theme and it also participated in the working group which published in January 2021 a report “Biodiversity as an Enabler of Sustainable Development – Why is Safeguarding Biodiversity Important in the Finnish Development Policy?”, which highlights the role and importance of nature and biodiversity in development cooperation. The report summarizes the links between biodiversity and human rights and highlights the role of biodiversity as a basis for all other SDGs. WWF Finland was part of the working group writing the report as well as preparation of the Development Policy Committee report, Coronavirus threatens to erode Africa’s development efforts. In this publication WWF contributed to highlighting the connection between the environmental destruction and zoonotic pandemic. Advocacy work also included advocacy towards MFA to include these themes on the new Report on Development Policy across Parliamentary Terms.

In addition to the Development policy committee WWF Finland participated on several national shareholder groups including for example IUCN committee, network of international natural resources policy in Finland and international biodiversity expert group. In these groups WWF emphasized the role and importance of biodiversity conservation and brought practical solutions to improve the situation. WWF Finland also actively raised the discussion about global equity and Leave no one behind principle, by highlighting the need to support developing countries on biodiversity conservation but also highlighting the need for a systemic change to reduce the impacts of production and consumption globally. WWF Finland also wanted to raise Finnish ambition level on the international agreements on climate and biodiversity, as the present government programme, it has been stated that Finland wants to be a global forerunner on addressing climate change and promoting biodiversity conservation. As Finland is also a member of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development it has an excellent position on discussing and promoting Finnish commitment and observing the policy coherence.

SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

The programme achieved its target already in the second year of the programme implementation. This is partly the result of the strategy chosen at the planning stage. Work on forestry issues with governments inherently contains an assumption of political willingness on behalf of the host governments. In addition, political processes can take long, and delays are always expected. As such, a precautionary principle was applied in the planning stage leading in this case the overall result being achieved well ahead of time. The programme carries on with work bringing in new areas under sustainable forest management in all regions and countries that include forestry work. More efforts have been concentrated in the quality of improved forest management and deepening relationships with existing communities. The theory of change and assumptions remain relevant, there is sustained interest and commitment from the communities to be engaged as well as from governments and local authorities.

Progress on sustainable forest management was achieved in Borneo, where WWF worked with government partners on various government forest areas to support improved management of forests. Interventions included mapping of high conservation value areas and No-Go zones inside and outside government forests, securing orangutan habitats, restoration of degraded peat forests, implementing reduced impact logging and selective logging and identifying Indigenous Community areas inside government forest management units. Also, various trainings and capacity building on sustainable forest management, GIS and biodiversity conservation were conducted together with government partners and local communities. Unfortunately, in Indonesia, one private forest company that had previously gained FSC-certification with WWF’s support had a change in management and as a result dropped the certification. On the other hand, a new forest company was engaged and activities for orangutan protection and high conservation value identification were done in company managed forests. Positive impact is that the company itself wanted to allocate an annual budget for biodiversity conservation and also wanted to engage CSOs in supporting the work.

In Nepal, WWF published a guidebook on sustainable forest management to be used with government partners as well as with communities on community forest management. Also, in Nepal

community forest management and protection were supported through developing and revision of community forest management plans. Forest restoration activities were also conducted and to prevent forest degradation, forest fire management and reduced animal grazing in forests were implemented.

In Laos, forest restoration was done together with rural communities. In Bhutan community forest management plans were reviewed and developed following new methods of forest resource assessment and incorporating financial

management, gender and governance aspects into the plans. These plans are being drafted and reviewed by the concerned field forestry officials and then submitted to the Social Forestry and Extension Division through the field offices/forests divisions for final review and approval by the Department.

In East Africa additional community forest development and management was promoted and altogether 7,660ha was brought under improved sustainable forest management; in Uganda 430 ha and in Kenya 7,230 ha.

“In Nepal, WWF published a guidebook on sustainable forest management.”



LESSONS LEARNED



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There were several lessons learned related to the pandemic. How it affected the programme, and how the activities were adapted, is described in the Successes, challenges and adaptive management chapter.

Related to communications, it was noticed that one has to be agile to wrap messages differently and to respond to the general topics as was seen happening with the COVID-19 pandemic. WWF adapted its messages so that they contributed to the general topics in society. For example, the communication of the Living Planet Report 2020 was strongly linked to the pandemic and the loss of nature.

In Bhutan, Community-based Forest enterprise establishment still remains a challenge and its progress depends on capacity, skill, technology and producing quality products. Enterprise development could not come up well due to lack of enterprise and business skills of the group members in the rural areas. The functional networks and other emerging networks are to be strengthened, streamlined and instituted based on the guidelines for community forest and non-wood forest product network and networking guidelines. The feedback from the participants who attended the earlier carpentry training was that the duration is not adequate, more time is required to be a skilful carpenter.

In Tanzania Forest Stewardship Certification (FSC) and value addition to timber is an opportunity to increase the price and hence increased revenues to local communities. This is demonstrated by an increase in revenues by 60% for Likawage village for selling FSC certified and kiln-dried sawn timber to Grumeti Eco Lodge Company in Tanzania. The existing buyers including the major one (The Grumeti Eco Lodge Company) reduced their order significantly because of COVID-19 and some sawmills were closed. The FSC timber market situation has not improved in 2020 especially with COVID-19 pandemic but the situation is expected to improve in 2021 as there's already been new order inquiries. MCDI is also making more efforts to pursue new markets.

In Madagascar TMTI CSO conducted an advocacy campaign in the Vohemar district affecting 3 municipalities (Amboriala, Andrafainkona et Ambalatrana). This action materialized by a round table discussion in which all the stakeholders concerned with local forest management were invited. The round table discussion has proven to be much more effective than traditional awareness because it allows for short-term results while ensuring long-term sustainability.

CONTRIBUTION TO FINNISH DEVELOPMENT POLICY



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Contribution to the MFA aggregate indicators and development policy objectives is described in the pdf reporting template in Finnish based on the achievement described in previous chapters. Here the programme contribution to the strengthening of the civil society and MFA's cross-cutting objectives is described in detail. Close cooperation with MFA was continued in Finland even during the restrictions, for example by participating in the Africa strategy process and MFA's country strategy process.

SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY

Civic space is the bedrock of good governance in any open and democratic society. Yet, with attacks on core freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression increasing in number and intensity, its erosion is becoming a global phenomenon.

In 2017 alone, more than 40 laws aimed at restricting civil society organisation registration, operation and funding were proposed or enacted by governments worldwide. Six billion people living in 111 countries – 80% of the world's population – currently lack civic space or face substantial legal and political obstacles.

Environmental and Human Rights Defenders are increasingly targeted, and in 2018, more than three-quarters of the [321 human rights defenders murdered globally](#), were killed as a result of defending their land, environmental or Indigenous Peoples' rights.

In 2020, as a response to the pandemic, governments around the world have acted with significant implications for fundamental freedoms and civic space. The unique situation led to the severe limitations on the freedom of assembly as these measures were needed to save lives and protect health care systems from overburdening. The situation also limited possibilities for a transparent, open and participatory governance. Nevertheless, WWF offices were able to continue the programme implementation and facilitation and capacity building of governments and civil society partners in 2020, mainly through online approaches. WWF offices and CSO partners have demonstrated their capability to adapt to the circumstances in terms of shrinking space, lockdowns and other restrictions due to COVID -19.

One of the main strategic approaches in the program is to support, capacitate and engage with local level civil society organisations (CSOs) in all partner countries. Further, the local community-based organizations (CBOs) and CSOs are important implementers of the programme. Programme aims to capacitate CSOs, CBOs and their platforms so that they can independently engage with governments, private sector and other stakeholders and that way advocate for social and ecological sustainability. WWF recognizes the roles played by the local CSOs as legitimate owners and stewards of natural resources and active members of civil society. As such, WWF aims to empower the communities to engage in shaping the decisions that affect them, and to advocate for their rights in the natural resources sector by holding the duty bearers accountable.

As an internationally recognized organization WWF has used its status to facilitate, build up and maintain the dialogue between different actors, especially between the governments and civil societies during 2020. This is seen increasingly important in front of the global trend of shrinking civil space. WWF has its influence in building bridges between different stakeholders in terms of creating more open and vibrant civil space. Under the MFA funding the situation of civil space varies slightly from country to country and the activities are adjusted and adopted in the local context. Also, as a member of civil society, WWF is dependent on an open and vibrant civil society to enable the best impact possible, by being able to operate and challenge duty bearers, but also through partnerships with other local and international civil society actors. Although many activities were cancelled or postponed to 2021, the outcomes are in line with planned targets and in some cases even higher than expected.

During 2020 civil society was supported in various ways:

- In Nepal, 144 local CSOs and CBOs, consisting of community forest and buffer zone user groups and committees, were supported to enhance their institutional capacity through trainings, orientations and office equipment support. This helped to strengthen the capacity of the CSOs to conduct sustainable forest management and protection, livelihood development and wildlife conservation.
- In Tanzania, Technical Forest Working Group and forest CSOs meeting provided a platform for

“Engaging with local level CSOs, providing support and enhancing their capacity is one of the main strategic approaches in the programme.”

CSOs to advocate for better community forest management policies including removing of barriers and promoting establishment of more Village Land Forest Reserves (VLFRs). The forum coordinated the response to the gaps in Government Notice 417 by presenting unified evidence-based information to government forestry authorities. Mpingo Conservation and Development Initiative (MCDI) together with other CSOs held a meeting with the Tanzania Prime Minister Hon. Kasim Majaliwa on key policy issues related to the challenges and opportunities for upscaling CBFM.

- In Tanzania, the programme organized the EAC technical working group meeting which successfully mobilized and supported CSOs engagement with relevant government authorities in policy related dialogues to influence decision and policy-making processes by airing out their views regarding forest management and trade at the regional level.
- In Mozambique, CSOs and CBOs were engaged at all stages of drafting the new forest law and its implementation strategy. This enlargement of civic space in Mozambique was accompanied by the involvement of the local community which also increased their participation and freedom to give their views in forest management.
- Through the interventions of CSOs in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique and Madagascar; the local community are more aware of their rights with regards to CBFM and free to report any forms of illegal logging to the relevant authorities. However, there were some instances of crackdown of civic space in Tanzania especially during and slightly after the general elections where internet and mobile services were disrupted limiting the freedom of speech in the country.
- In the Annual Community Based Forest Management Stakeholders' Forum in Tanzania 300 participants spanning from grass root stakeholders, forest CSOs, village councils, community conservation groups, media and central government and other relevant government authorities had an opportunity to discuss enabling conditions for community-based forest management. This gave more space for CSOs and grass root beneficiaries

to freely discuss their challenges, share their experiences, address the obstacles they face in Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) and to jointly escalate the issues to higher authorities and to give recommendations for further improvements. CSOs, local community and other grass root forest stakeholders are now more aware of their rights regarding community forest management as a result of the forum.

- In Indonesia, WWF supported local CSOs and their platforms and built their capacity. As a result, it was witnessed that partner CSOs were recognized and invited by government and private sector to support in enhancing indigenous community areas and securing high conservation value areas in district forest management.
- Also in Indonesia, capacity assessment trainings to conduct self-assessment was supported for CSO partners, which now have improved capacity in basic organization and leadership management as well as in developing strategic plans and financial management. As a result of improved capacity, the CSOs have been able to assist in establishing 4 new indigenous community forests (altogether over 16 000 hectares) and facilitated the development of 3 social forestry schemes improving local communities' rights to forests.
- Local and district governments have been supportive to civil society organisations and WWF continues to engage actively with CSOs and government and private sector partners to hold good relationships and implement work together.
- In Kenya, WWF worked with the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association to develop a rights-based approach for the management of community rangers. This umbrella organisation represents 160 conservancies consisting of 700 000 households representing members of all Indigenous groups and local communities in Kenya as defined in the Kenyan constitution.

CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVES OF THE FINNISH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION POLICY AND ENHANCING GENDER EQUALITY

Programme is implemented in areas where women, girls, boys, and men are highly dependent on natural resources and ecosystem services. However, women are often in marginalized positions in the communities when compared to men and can often be excluded from participating in community decision and policymaking. In many of the programme areas, women and girls are responsible for water, fuelwood, and fodder collection from forests, farming practices, animal rearing and grazing, and household chores. Women might also be involved in illegal practices such as poaching or illegal logging or wildlife trade. Women are also exposed to wildlife in their daily lives.

Women have an impressive amount of knowledge about the environment and are therefore in a crucial position in conservation. Women are one specific group of right-holders and have an important role in the programme implementation. Equal participation of women in the programme activities, including various decision-making groups and committees, as well as in livelihood and commodity production groups and enterprises is supported also by giving emphasis on the specific needs and restrictions that women may have. Women are specifically targeted in the programme outcomes and outputs and many of the programme indicators collect disaggregated data on women's participation. Programme also follows the WWF Network Gender Policy.

Examples of specific activities targeted to reduce gender inequality in 2020:

- In Bhutan, specific livelihood activity was developed for a women-led community forest group. Based on their own interests, a hot-stone bath enterprise was established to provide income to the group.
- In Borneo, the programme supported women's banana chip enterprise groups and organic farming groups. Furthermore, several commodity production groups producing coffee, rubber and honey consisted of women.
- In Nepal, at least 45% of participants and beneficiaries were female in conservation

activities. In the community forest groups that were supported, there is mandatory provision for the gender and social inclusion (GESI) and inclusion of indigenous and disadvantaged groups in terms of participation in the decision-making process and benefit sharing process.

- In Nepal, five poor women from disadvantaged groups who were wildlife conflict victims were supported to establish a tailoring centre along with equipment and three months tailoring training, which has been supportive to empower women in the community.
- In East-Africa Forest program, a proposal on empowerment of women and other underprivileged gender groups to have access to and control over timber and honey value chains in Eastern and Southern Africa was developed and presented to East African Commission (EAC) member states at the EAC terrestrial technical working group. This will increase women's contribution to transboundary forest management leading to improved livelihoods of women and enhancement of transboundary conservation.
- A review of gender in wildlife crime was conducted as well as an URSA white paper on the role of gender rangers. The East Africa wildlife crime hub works with TRAFFIC and Uganda customs and revenue authorities, to promote the role of women in preventing wildlife crime. This has resulted in the programme looking for better opportunities to engage women in preventing wildlife crime and increased understanding of women and youth in the different roles they play in wildlife crime moving beyond the traditional offender and defender roles.
- Under East Africa wildlife crime hub, also a series of webinars with 135 officials and journalists from all EAC member states was held with the aim to promote awareness of the role of working with youth and women and how to effectively engage them to prevent wildlife crime. This resulted in over 40 media stories being produced reaching a potential audience of 3 million people across Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.
- Following the workshop, WWF is working with three pilots in Tanzania (Ruaha Carnivore Project), Kenya (Stand up and Shout out) and Rwanda (Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association) to promote best practices in gender mainstreaming in wildlife crime prevention.

“Women have an impressive amount of knowledge about the environment and are therefore in a crucial position in conservation.”

- In Uganda, women and youth have been actively involved in forest product value chain activities and in leadership positions of timber grower's associations and cooperatives. Provision of incentives such as seedlings, skills and technology support were targeted to encourage women participation in sustainable forest management. The programme also encourages the participation of women and young girls in community, national CSOs and regional CSOs meetings.
- In Laos, community consultations were done separately in men and women groups and the consultations with women groups were led by a woman. In addition, women participated in non-timber forest product production groups and trainings. However, there are also challenges when trying to encourage women participation in program activities; the project team learned that in a specific target community married women are not allowed to travel outside their own communities without their spouses. At the end, there was only one single woman out of five women originally participating in the activities able to join an excursion visit to learn about value chain and product development in a nearby town. Based on these learnings, the project team will plan upcoming interventions with a more inclusive approach finding solutions to enable women's equal participation.
- Children and youth were also engaged in program implementation and as beneficiaries. In Bhutan, environmental education and awareness materials were targeted to teenagers and school students especially via social media due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Several environmental campaigns and programs targeted to youth and school students were supported and children were activated to act for the environment in Nepal as well. WWF follows specific Child Policy principles when engaging with children and youth.

REDUCING INEQUALITIES AND PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The programme is human rights progressive. The right-holders and duty bearers are identified, and their respective rights and responsibilities are promoted through the programme interventions. In 2020, the programme supported several processes through which a human rights-based approach was implemented, and inequalities reduced. The WWF network wide Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework was adopted and started to be implemented. Disability inclusion was given specific focus and program partners joined the first capacity building workshop on the matter. Exception being WWF Nepal which is already advanced in disability inclusion and continued cooperation with Abilis Foundation and Red Cross in Nepal. Human Rights Based approach was also adopted as a specific topic in the East Africa wildlife crime prevention work. Also, Inclusive Conservation promoting specifically Indigenous Peoples and local communities' rights was promoted in the programme. However, many partners are still lacking capacity and information about human rights based approach and the program will continue to focus on improving that in future.

Disability inclusion

Persons with disabilities are the world's largest minority. According to the WHO, about 15 % of the world's population, that is over one billion people, live with disabilities. The majority, around 80 % of persons with disabilities, live in developing countries. Out of the world's poorest people, 20 % have some kind of disability. In addition to often living in poverty, the majority of persons with disabilities live also in rural areas. Their livelihoods are highly dependent on the environment due to lack of access to employment and education, and other resources and basic necessities. The work WWF is promoting related to wildlife conservation has unique risks for people with disabilities: the risks of human-wildlife conflicts and getting attacked by wildlife can be higher for people with disabilities. Also, anti-poaching patrolling or collection of products from forests also pose a risk for human wildlife conflicts which can cause physical disability.

In 2020, WWF Finland ordered an analysis on the disability inclusion aspects in conservation

work. The analysis was done by Abilis Consulting and was finished in early 2021, (Annex 3B: Abilis Consulting 2021; Disability inclusion in environmental conservation; an analysis on general aspects and a review on the status of disability inclusion in WWF Finland's partnership programme). All partners of the programme were involved in the review process, either through online interviews or providing views via email. Also, most of the partners joined the final workshop where also WWF Nepal presented their experiences on working to enhance disability inclusion. More capacity building will be done under this programme with all partners using expertise support from disability organizations and peer-learning among partner offices. WWF Nepal, as one of the partners, has already developed disability inclusion in their work and has been able to train their own staff and partners as well as engage more people with disabilities in the implementation work in the project villages.

Other marginalised groups

Many of the beneficiaries in the programme areas belonging to Indigenous communities are marginalized in their own social hierarchy due to ethnic origin, caste or religion, or face other difficulties such as vulnerability to climate change or environmental degradation. These people are often highly dependent on natural resources and can also suffer from conservation initiatives such as human wildlife conflicts. The poorest and most excluded members of communities depend on free access to forests and rivers since they do not have any farming land or other assets. WWF encourages the equal participation of all community members (also the poorest and most excluded) in programme activities, community natural resources groups and decision-making bodies and ensures that their needs, views and opinions are heard and taken into account in programme implementation.

In all program countries, specific attention was given to improve Indigenous Peoples and marginalized groups' engagement in the program. People vulnerable to climate change and environmental degradation as well as human wildlife conflicts were given specific attention. Understanding of disability inclusion was improved among program partners. Most of the program partners use a pro-vulnerable group criteria when planning livelihood activities together with the local communities. The criteria are developed by the programme team together with local partners and communities. Communities then select the families which should get support from the program.

Examples of activities enhancing equality and disability inclusion in 2020:

- WWF Nepal staff had a virtual session with Abilis Foundation in Nepal on mainstreaming the rights of people with disabilities in Sustainable Development practices, more specifically, in natural resource management, climate change adaptation and disaster preparedness. After this orientation, WWF Nepal organized together with Abilis Foundation and Nepal Red Cross Society a conservation awareness program for 105 people with disabilities. Of them, 18 poor people with disabilities (5 female) were supported with equipment to start their own livelihood activities and become financially independent. Also, 1 146 households who are suffering from human-wildlife conflicts were given support for income generation and prevention of future wildlife damage through WWF Nepal. Also, one province level interaction program among forest officials on Human Right Based and Inclusive Conservation was organized.
- Through East Africa wildlife crime hub and cooperation with Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association, WWF has developed a human rights-based approach for the management of community rangers. This umbrella organisation represents 160 conservancies consisting of 700 000 households representing a member of all Indigenous Peoples in Kenya as defined in the Kenyan constitution.
- In Indonesia, the program team has begun implementing the identification of persons with disabilities (PWD) based on a workshop organized by WWF Finland. The first steps in improving disability inclusion included discussions with the district government on existing organisations promoting DI in the same working areas with WWF. Also, WWF was informed about data on people with disabilities in their working area. Being more aware enables WWF team to further improve disability inclusion when working with villages and government partners.
- Some of the partners have included human rights-based approach in their grant agreements with their partners, and grantees are well oriented about the provision of human rights. Also, as part of the HRBA, a project compliant mechanism has been adopted. WWF has also a child safeguard policy which is followed by all partners. Parents' consent is taken, and teachers

"Equal participation of all community members is encouraged."

“WWF has launched an Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework (ESSF).”

are made accountable if students below 18 are engaged in the programme.

- In Tanzania, women, poor, disabled and elderly people benefited when 50 % of the income from timber sales were re-invested to social and health services at community level. For instance, 76 expectant mothers have each received maternity and medical support at the district hospital and paid health insurance. Further education services were improved through construction of 1 classroom and through purchase of 100 desks to incentivize 198 youth who were in need.
- In Uganda, smallholders were supported in organizing themselves into associations in order to increase their power to produce together and bargain together.
- Young people were particularly targeted by the activities of the Vintsy club in Madagascar through school youths' clubs.
- In Mozambique, the local community participated in the development of the new forestry policy which was approved in March 2020 through their representing CSOs. In Mozambique, the 2% of taxes paid by timber companies is sent back to the community where the timber company operates to support community development projects and 20% of government royalties from forest management is sent back to the community.

Improving human rights based approach in global WWF network

Strengthening WWF's human rights-based approach has been a priority for WWF international. In March 2019, WWF international commissioned an Independent Review to examine allegations raised about human rights abuses and other serious misconduct by government eco-guards in complex and remote landscapes where WWF works, and to review the suitability and appropriateness of WWF's broader policies, procedures, and assurances and risk management processes. In late 2020 the review was published, and the panel found no evidence that WWF staff directed, participated in, or encouraged any abuses.

However, the report gave various recommendations on how WWF can improve and systematically develop procedures to ensure human rights are carefully adopted in all WWF's work. Since then, WWF has further strengthened the network's capacity through training existing staff and

employing specialists as well as launched a new Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework (ESSF), which will improve and systematise the implementation of human rights based approach across WWF network.

All partners of the programme are well aware of the ESSF process and are already implementing screenings and consultations with all relevant stakeholders in their respective working areas. The ESSF is fully aligned with the MFA supported programme, and they mutually contribute towards the achievement of results. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, there are differences in the progress of partners in the ESSF process. The aim of the screenings and consultations is to critically analyse the possible risks (at interventions level) on community and environment with all the possible stakeholders following the major three risks identified in landscape screening (involuntary resettlement/access restriction, indigenous people and community health and security). According to identified risks a mitigation plan is developed. Once the plan is finalized, it will be rolled out on the grounds engaging all identified stakeholders. This will eventually ensure consistent and comprehensive application of safeguard measures across the network which helps to reduce risk that conservation activities may have on people and the environment WWF is working with. The mitigation plans are updated periodically and especially when new interventions with risk such probability are applied in the landscapes, making the process continuous in improving the social and environmental safeguards. For further details, see Risk management chapter.

Climate resilience and low carbon development

The programme has both mainstreamed and conducted specific targeted actions related to climate change mitigation and adaptation in 2020.

Climate resilience

The programme received additional funding from MFA to enhance addressing climate change interventions for 2020-2021. The additional funds were targeted to the East Africa Regional Forest Programme to improve climate resilience of the people and nature around two landscapes, namely Northern Highlands landscape in Madagascar and Greater Virunga Landscape in Uganda. Despite the travel restrictions, progress has been made towards the set targets.

In Madagascar, market system analysis of vanilla value chain and coffee was conducted

to develop a strategy for the capacity building and accompaniment of producers, with the aim of having a resilient and improved agricultural practice. Furthermore, a finer scale climate vulnerability assessment was conducted to eight Northern Highland Protected Areas (PAs). The assessment recommended among others to prioritise the protected areas on the eastern and western peripheries of the landscape for restoration, given that they are going to become increasingly important for species under climate change, have been subjected to considerable deforestation and degradation over the past two decades and they are also the most vulnerable PAs within the landscape. The assessment made projections on impact of the climate change to the crops cultivated in the areas and recommended to use the assessment findings to influence larger development plans around the protected areas and to diversify peoples' livelihoods in a climate resilient and sustainable manner. There are over 0.5 million people living in the area with about 32 000 people living within PAs. The assessment will further inform the WWF's Northern Highlands landscape Conservation Strategy Plan on adaptation options. Both assessments will assist in evidence and science informed decision making and more holistic planning and sustainable development of the landscape at large.

In Nepal, technical support and backstopping continued to Nepal Red Cross Society, local authorities and stakeholders for climate change adaptation and disaster preparedness. In collaboration with the Red Cross Society local communities (BZUCs, CFCCs, CFUGs) were capacitated in climate change adaptation, disaster preparedness, as well as health and safety. Furthermore, 59 flood victim households were supported in private and agroforestry in 14.5 hectares of flooded agricultural land. Private forestry has shown to improve the flood victim family's income. Also, forest fire prevention and management were supported within community forests and communities technical capacity was strengthened to manage fires.

Climate change may further exacerbate already existing challenges. For example, in Indonesia large areas of land have been converted from other uses, such as local food production, to large scale palm oil plantations. As more land area is lost from food production to large scale palm oil plantations and the existing food production land suffers from water scarcity due to prolonged dry periods resulting in crop failures, the food security of the local communities has been seen to be hampered. In 2020, the programme supported

the communities in community-based forest management practices, food crops diversification as well as promoted the customary practices and traditional knowledge in building the communities resilience towards climate change.

Few targeted actions were also supported to improve the resilience of wildlife to climate change. WWF Nepal supported the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation to assess the status, efforts and future strategies of transboundary rhino rescues operations due to climate induced disasters (mainly flood) in between Chitwan National Park (Nepal) to Valmiki Tiger Reserve (India). Similarly, the programme engaged in wetlands management focusing wildlife habitat improvement in the dry season.

As the climate risks are very context and landscape specific there is no one solution in addressing them, the programme has planned desk top climate risk assessments to be made for the programme areas in 2021. Results of the climate risks assessments will be used to gain better understanding of the context specific climate risks and to guide the programme interventions accordingly to address them. Based on the results solutions will be co-created together with the communities, public officials, and companies in each location.

Low carbon development

The programme has continued its efforts on forest protection, management and restoration contributing to climate change mitigation by reducing emission from deforestation and forest degradation.

Altogether 716,792 hectares of forests were protected and brought under improved forest management and 631 hectares were restored in 2020. In addition, even bigger forest areas and their protection and management continued together with government, private sector and community partners. In Uganda, e.g., the Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) for climate change adaptation and mitigation has gained a lot of acceptance and demand in the Greater Virunga Landscape (GVL) since the terrain in the area is generally steep and prone to fire, erosion and landslides. Forest landscape restoration of 430 hectares of mountain slopes and other terrain was conducted in Rwenzori and Imaramagambo aiming to improve the two forest ecosystems' climate resilience. The FLR conducted under the programme contributes to the AFR100, the country-led African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative to bring 100 million hectares of land in Africa into restoration by 2030.

To back up the national commitment of Uganda to the AFR100, the capacity building interventions aimed to strengthen the local timber growers and traders' associations in the communities in GVL has resulted in increased capacity and two associations have negotiated with the District Local government to acquire public land for growing trees. This indicates their improved ability to influence planning and decision making at their respective local governments which is a step towards sustainability of the associations and the Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) efforts in the area.

A carbon assessment is planned to be conducted in 2021 to establish the amount of above ground carbon sequestration in the forests under improved sustainable forest management, enhancement, and conservation (restoration, protection), as a result of the work or activities of the WWF programme since 2018.

Climate Change advocacy and communications

In Nepal, WWF has continued to engage with and support the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration to mainstream climate and biodiversity into formulation, and implementation of Environment and Natural Resources Conservation Act (ENRCA) Framework. The framework governs all environmental related activities local governments must implement according to Local Governance Operationalization Act. Based on this, around 24 local governments have started endorsing ENRCA for their respective jurisdictions in Nepal.

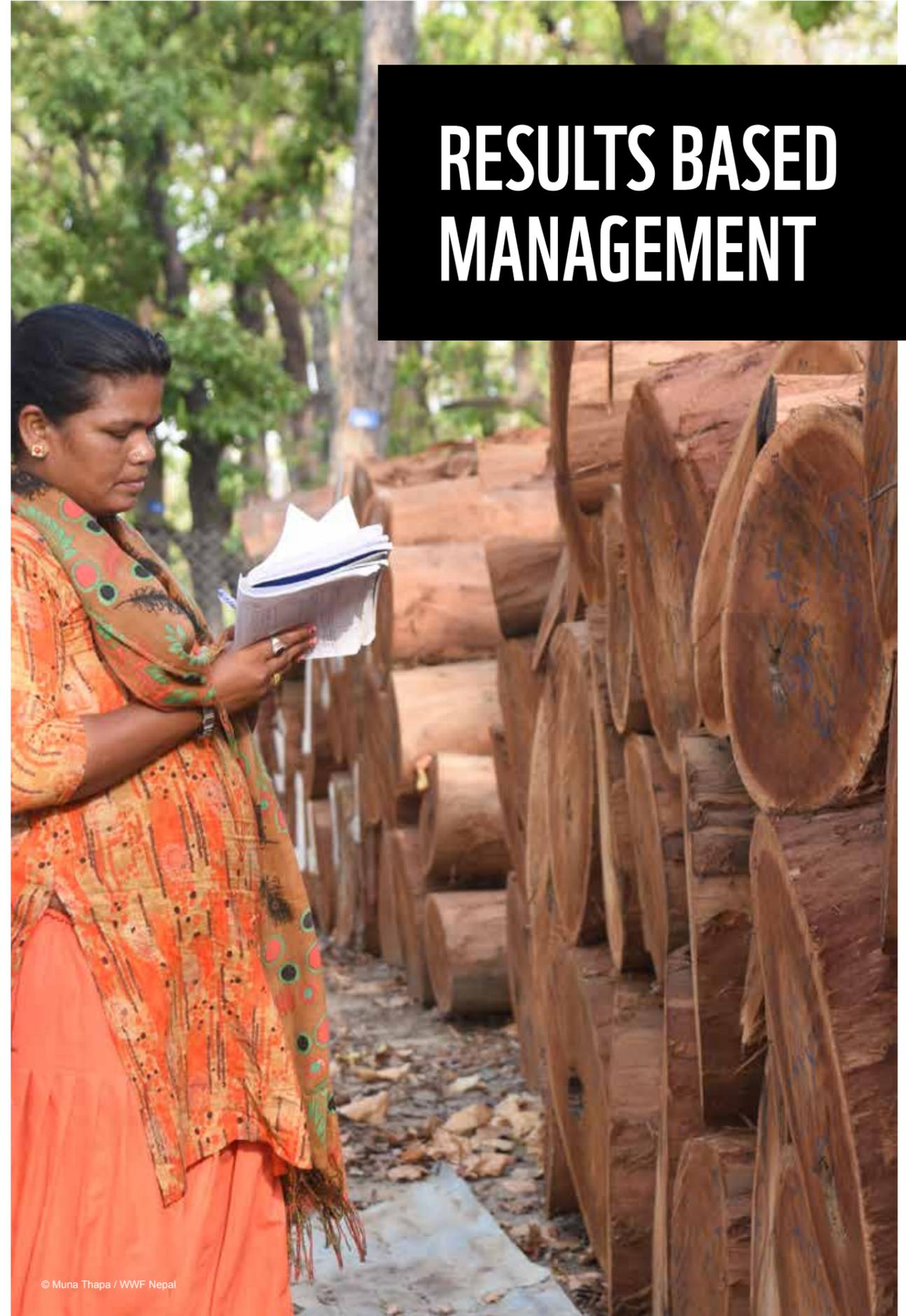
Some advocacy and capacity strengthening activities had to be postponed due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. The regional level 8th East African Timber Trade Stakeholders forum themed "Exploring linkages between climate change and illegal trade in timber and other forest products" that convenes stakeholders from the region's countries, will thus be held in 2021. However, while COVID-19 related slowed down some interventions, the programme was also able to capitalize the lockdown time, especially in WWF Nepal where digital learning materials for students over the country was created. An animated film "Rukh Baje ko Katha" (Banyan tree's story) was created to launch on Environment Day (June 05) which is a storytelling video about climate change, narrated for kids.

WWF's regional climate adaptation expert, Harisoa Rakotondrazafy, participated in a climate

adaptation seminar organized by Finnish natural resources management group, led by the Ministry of agriculture and forestry of Finland. She was reflecting the adaptation needs and challenges from community level to national, regional and international level.

Climate change has received increasing attention in Finland. WWF Finland gained 1200 new regular donors during the fundraising campaign that addressed the climate crisis and biodiversity in 2020. Climate is now the second most popular cause for new regular donors for WWF Finland. Similarly, from the communication pieces published in the Finnish media, a climate change related piece on forest fires in Australia and WWF's report on the environmental impact of the Finnish national diet recommendations were among the 10 most covered communication pieces. A highlight of the WWF Youth activities included a climate change themed social media campaign "Proteiinimyytti". It targeted young men who are interested in sports. The campaign delved on the assumption that one needs meat to become a successful athlete. Through promoted Instagram posts, the campaign managed to reach a large audience of young people, who are not typically interested in the environment. The Instagram posts were seen 447 632 times during the two-month campaign.

RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT



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SUCCESSSES, CHALLENGES AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

“Work plans were revised twice due to COVID-19.”

Despite COVID-19, the WWF partner offices were able to operate at least in some scale and the programme was able to provide support to communities during the difficult times. Major challenge and cause for adaptive management in 2020 was the COVID-19 pandemic. Revision of the work plans was done three times, first in February, then in June and again in October. The immediate impacts on the programme have been limited but it is still too early to assess impacts in the long-term. WWF COVID-19 Pandemic – Contingency plan was designed to support the field work in all countries following COVID-19 pandemic. WWF has paid special attention to the safety and health of the communities that it works with. In September, WWF Finland organized a zoom session where all partner countries participated and could share their experiences, concerns and learnings on the pandemic.

As the pandemic started, work plans and budgets were revised and part of the funds were reallocated from the field activities to activities that could be done remotely, virtually or in small groups, like tree planting. More focus and resources were directed to digital campaigning and to produce digital material for schools and youth, and in some partner countries also for organizational development and for capacity building of staff. Most of the activities planned for the first half of 2020 were postponed to July - December 2020 but travelling or implementation was still not possible in all partner countries then either. Where possible, several field support interventions were combined in one consolidated mission when travelling was again possible. For example in Laos, product scanning, selecting agroforestry model families and monitoring community tree nurseries were combined and completed in one field trip. In Nepal the local resource persons in the villages were found very useful, as through them it was possible to monitor the activities and adjust plans when travelling was not possible.

Positive adaptation to pandemia

Based on the discussions with partners along 2020, there are also signs that programme support has helped communities to cope with the pandemia. The work on livelihood diversification may have contributed positively to the resilience of the programme communities in the midst of the pandemia as they have already had a mix of income and food sources. Also, clear ownership

and guidelines on the use of community forests and conservation of wildlife have protected communities' natural resources from degradation and over-utilization. Observations have shown that in other villages pressure towards natural resources has been high as people are forced to come up with income and livelihood sources. This has resulted also in illegal activities such as poaching and timber logging. The programme was also able to continue with the forest restoration and get large areas under improved forest management. In addition during 2020, the programme was able to provide support to communities in the form of protective gear, such as masks and hygiene supplies to enable them to prevent the spread of virus. The strong engagement and ownership of local resource persons who are villagers themselves, has enabled the programme activities to continue even when WWF staff have not been able to visit the programme communities.

Use of technology in conducting online training, seminars and social media, especially in youth outreach, enabled the programme to reach bigger participation numbers in work conducted by the Panda Labs, East Africa Wildlife Crime Hub and Bhutan. This has increased the efficiency of events due to declining travel time and travel costs, and reduced workshop and training costs. It has also enabled more people to join. However, it remains to be seen if the virtual trainings have been as effective and engaging as the face-to-face training. It has taken time for people to get used to and learn to use zoom, teams and other virtual platforms. Some partners have been more prepared, while for others it has taken longer. Some partners were supported with the equipment (for example in Bhutan). In some areas the internet connections are still not sufficient for virtual/remote meetings. Also, other means of communications were adapted, for example in Nepal telephone, sms, email, messengers, etc. to the possible extent were used to gather information which helped to report human wildlife conflicts cases in time and to deliver immediate relief packages even during the lockdown. It can also be seen as a success for this unusual year that the programme was able to engage and work with a large number of CSOs and CBOs, and provided them opportunities to advocate their rights.

Various challenges affected the programme implementation

The pandemic exposed the weaknesses of the conservation financing system; both communities and the state have relied on tourism revenues in many countries. As many as a million people in the

tourism sector are now unemployed. For example, demand for bushmeat has increased. Also, locals are less tolerant of wildlife when livelihoods are tighter. This has been reflected in the increase in the number of conflicts between humans and wildlife. In Laos, communities have lost revenue as the markets were closed, and they were not able to sell the non timber forest products that are their main source of income, so communities and local partners are likely going to focus on economic recovery from the COVID-19, and this will mean increased pressure on forest resources. Together with Panda Labs, the EAWC hub has been considering how local livelihoods could be improved and alternative forms of income developed alongside/instead of tourism, for example by the Wildlife Credits concept.

In Tanzania, COVID-19 caused a decline in the demand for timber coming from community-managed forests because most buyers had to either temporarily suspend their operations and/or completely shut down. As a result, the rural communities suffered from loss of expected income from sustainable timber sales. This threatened conservation efforts as communities got fewer incentives. The programme supported communities by working with the government to ensure that government projects source timber from community managed forests. The programme has also secured a commitment from the Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism who has promised to pass this timber procurement order for government procurements to be made from community managed forests. Meanwhile, marketing efforts are also underway, and the programme is working on supporting communities to sell finished products as a way of value addition and resolving the market issue.

In Laos, community tree nursery and forest restoration activities were most affected by the lockdown in 2020, whereas in previous year an exceptional heat wave had hampered programme implementation. Initial plan was that the project would support the community to produce at least 40,000 seedlings but this is unlikely to be possible due to the lack of proper technical support and follow up (that should have taken place from March to June) from project staff and local government partners. The project team prioritized the technical support towards enhanced maintenance/caring of seedlings as soon as the lockdown restrictions were lifted. In 2020, community tree nurseries successfully produced around 10,000 seedlings. Many seedlings died because of poor management, and this has been exacerbated by the extreme heat that the country has experienced during this year's dry season.

In Madagascar, long distances and difficult terrain pose a challenge. Despite the additional funding, the coverage of 19 CBOs is faced with limited access due to long distances between each other and are, hence, difficult to access regularly. This challenge was more accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic because, from July to August, the pandemic was at its peak in the Sava region, where the programme is being implemented. Also, the mobilization of forest service's officers in Madagascar is often limited as there were very few staff available. Therefore, the challenge was to be able to mobilize especially CBOs and forestry services, to aid the conservation work. However, in 2020, the team was able to count on the effective involvement of regional authorities, led by the governor of the Sava region, to raise awareness about the fight against deforestation.

In Mozambique, in order to cope with limited funding, the team conducted a permanent exercise to complement activities of different projects that have the same objective and activities. This included partnership with the MozDGM project to support the community enterprise as well as FAO and National Directorate of Forestry to produce and disseminate the forest policy brochures and their implementation strategy. This adaptive management contributed to achieving better impacting results for both project initiatives and this programme. Therefore, the team in Mozambique is working to strengthen these complementarities during the consultation process on forest law and regulation and also to strengthen companies/community initiatives.

In Mozambique, there is still insecurity in some districts of Cabo Delgado due to the existence of military groups which are attacking local communities also in the areas where the programme is implemented (e.g., Macomia). To address this challenge, WWF plans to shift most of the project activities to the districts with higher levels of stability to ensure continuation of the programme.

Due to general elections in Tanzania in October 2020 and Uganda in January 2021 it was difficult to conduct field activities just before and after the election months due to political insecurity that was accompanied with breakdown of internet and mobile communications at the country level. Since these inconveniences were somewhat expected, prior special logistical arrangements were made by the programme team in order to ensure that many planned activities were completed before the elections and reports were submitted in case of network breakdown. Also, in Indonesia elections caused delays in the programme implementation.

“Locals are less tolerant of wildlife when livelihoods are tighter.”

Pandemic also affected fund-raising in Finland. The growth rate of active regular donors was lower than previous years because of a pandemic which affected during three quarters of the year 2020 and shortened the time of gaining donations and new supporters in the new multimedia fundraising campaign in the first quarter. Also, face-to-face fundraising had to be shut down for almost half a year. Pandemic also gave rise to a little bit higher attrition among regular donors. After the lock down in spring WWF Finland did an extra campaign with direct marketing and telemarketing and after summer when face-to-face acquisition was feasible again, WWF invested more to it by cooperating with an additional supplier. As described earlier, the whole WWF network, including WWF Finland, increased their capacity and attention to the social aspects of the conservation work when the independent review was prepared and published.

In Finland, the budget allocated to the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the programme was used to procure expert services from Abilis. As WWF Finland did not use the self-financing proportion of the budget to complement the MFA support in Finland, there was no budget left to be reallocated to the other items.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

“One programme level assessment on disability inclusion was carried out.”

One programme level assessment on disability inclusion was carried out late 2020- early 2021. In addition, a monitoring trip was done to East-Africa (Kenya & Uganda) and several evaluations and studies were carried out under the sub-programmes.

Monitoring trips

In early 2020 a monitoring trip was done by the Head of International Development and Development Co-operation Expert which covered Kenya and Uganda. In Kenya, the monitoring focused on the East Africa Illegal Wildlife Hub activities in Tsavo National Park. During the monitoring trip WWF Kenya experts conducted training for Kenya Wildlife Service representatives on the SAFE system that aims to reduce human wildlife conflicts in the area. In addition, representatives of WWF Finland participated in the regional hub meeting which included also representatives of the hub partner countries (Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya) and TRAFFIC representatives to plan and coordinate the work in the region.

Development Co-operation Expert continued the monitoring trip to Uganda where the focus was on monitoring the progress of the community forest and anti-poaching work conducted with

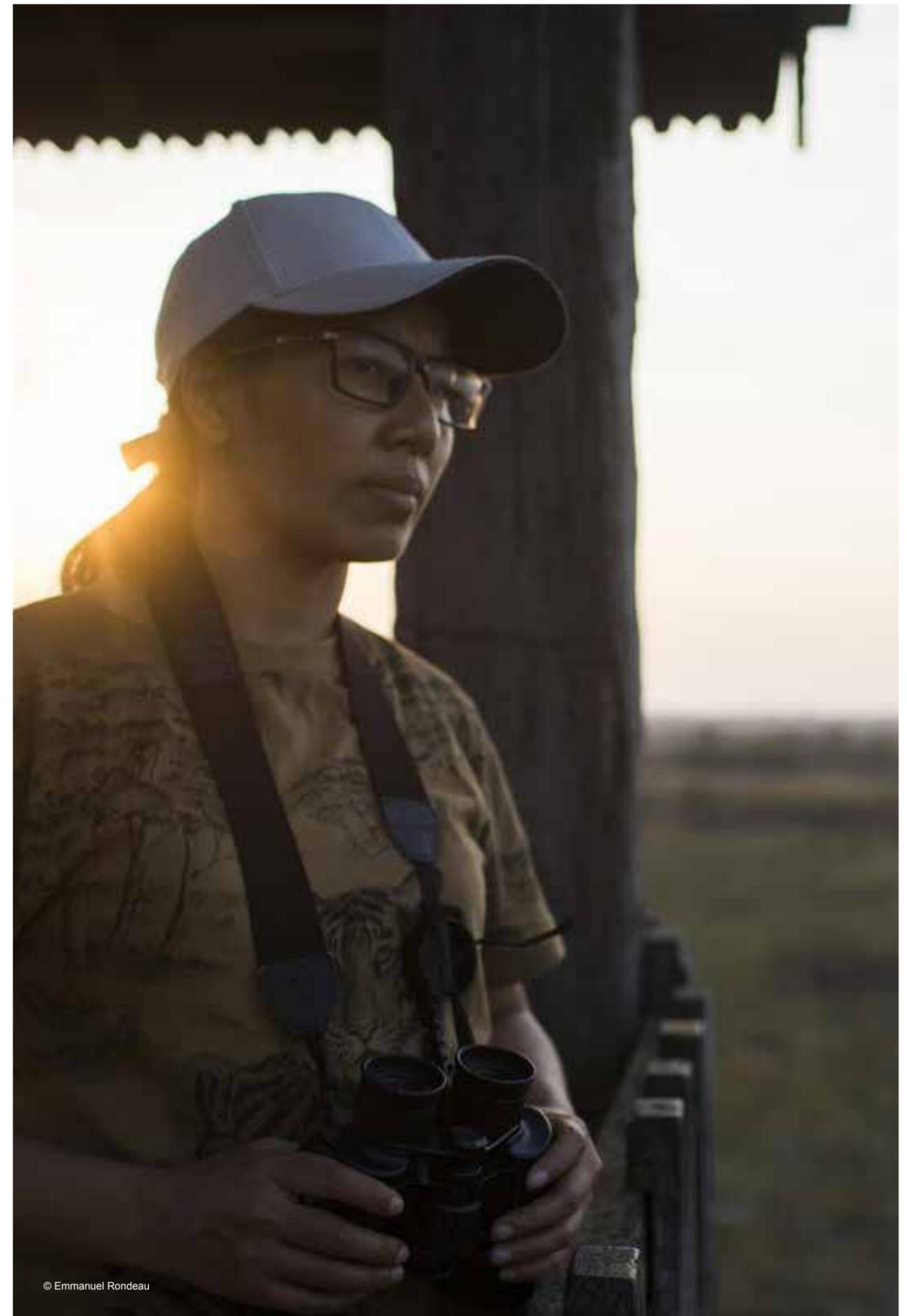
the communities, protected areas authorities and districts. The community forest work was consolidated to be beneficial both for communities, as well as the district officials, also e.g. the coordination and collaboration with WWF Denmark on forest work was tightened.

In addition, the Head of International Development team participated in the Africa Shareholder meeting in Kenya, where all country and conservation directors from WWF offices in Africa together with WWF Regional Office for Africa presented their work and the strategy process for all country offices and regional office was initiated. Also, representatives of WWF international and supporting WWF offices attended this strategic workshop.

Programme level evaluations

An assessment of Abilis Consulting analysed the general aspects of disability in conservation work and assessed the level of inclusion done in the WWF Partnership Programme (see chapter Cross-cutting objectives of the Finnish Development Cooperation Policy and Enhancing gender equality). The assessment highlighted the importance of disability inclusion as the majority of persons with disabilities are usually highly dependent on the environment due to lack of access to employment and education, and other resources and necessities. Furthermore, climate change threatens and affects the well-being and livelihoods of everyone, but due to the societal structures that make persons with disabilities extremely vulnerable already as a baseline, special attention and effort must be put on making sure that environmental work is disability inclusive and reaches persons with disabilities as well. Addressing disability inclusion is relevant for the conservation in preventing human wildlife conflicts in areas, where wildlife may present harm to peoples' crops and even health.

Although the assessment did find it encouraging that there have been some early steps of disability inclusion done in the programme in Nepal, the assessment confirmed that there is still a lot to do in terms of integrating disability inclusion to the programme implementation. The assessment recommended amongst others that the programme should integrate inclusion better in the programme documents and monitoring, develop supporting measures and build capacity of the WWF staff and partners on the matter, as well as continue and strengthen the collaboration with local organizations of people with disabilities to improve sub-programme level integration (see Annex 3B). The programme will improve the programme based on recommendations in 2021 onwards.



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Sub-programme evaluations

“Leading the Change: Civil Society, Rights & Environment” programme by WWF Sweden (funded by SIDA), which is run together with partnering WWF offices and civil society organizations 2018-2022, commissioned Mid Term Review (MTR) for the East Africa Regional Forest Programme (EAFP) in 2020. As EAFP is a basket funded programme together with WWF Sweden, Finland and UK, the findings and recommendations are applicable for the MFA programme implementation. Also, in other partner countries this programme and Leading the Change programme are supporting each other in Indonesia.

The findings of the EAFP MTR reveal that the objectives that pursue interventions to improve intergovernmental collaboration in a transparent manner and inclusion of communities and CSOs, are aligned with the priorities of the countries. Effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and adaptive capacity were assessed to be good (3,5 in a rating between 1-5). The findings, furthermore, show that the programme is creating synergies with other programmes e.g. with TRAFFIC and “Forestry and Value Chains development (FORVAC)” programme in Tanzania funded by the Government of Finland. EAFP has been implementing its interventions based on the principles of human right-based approach (HBRA) and gender inclusion at all levels.

The review recommends, e.g.

- further collaboration with private sector to strengthen the private sector capacity (wood-based industry/trade, value chain development and value addition) and facilitate avenues for seed funding e.g. through micro-finance institutions to support funding in the forest sector;
- improvement of documentation of best practices to strengthen the knowledge transfer from the CSOs to the communities for more efficient scaling up; and
- strengthening of the EAFP’s M&E structure and communication.

Part of the funds from WWF Finland MFA programme have been used in 2020 to support the EAFP’s capacity on monitoring and evaluation and communications by recruitment of M&E and communications experts to the programme.

The review highlights also some achievements and lessons learnt from the programme e.g.

- Facilitating the East African Community (EAC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) to develop EAC Forestry Policy and undertaking the inventory of illegal timber stockpile management are important milestones towards harmonisation of forest sector in the region;
- East Africa Timber Stakeholder’s Forum has been instrumental in facilitating interaction between the state actors and non-state actors across the region. The forum has brought various stakeholders from the private sector (timber growers and trade traders) and CSOs to echo issues on forest governance and deliberate on illegal timber traded and implementation of the Zanzibar declaration; and
- The tools that are presented and validated in East African Stakeholders’ Timber Forum, especially the TFS timber tracker (handheld device) have enhanced and promoted accountability, removed obstacles and slack time. Data is now digitized and easily uploaded to the central database.

The review also highlights that the high-level regional processes take time and need commitment and that the COVID-19 has had impacts on the progress e.g. as the 8th Timber Stakeholder Forum had to be postponed to 2021. (For more details, please refer to Annex 3A for the MTR.)

A gender learning review was also commissioned by WWF Sweden on their programme Leading the Change: Civil Society, Rights & Environment. The LtC programme has geographical overlap with the MFA programme in East Africa (Incl. Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique, Madagascar and Uganda). The assessment concluded that WWF’s commitment to gender equality is having a demonstrably positive effect and that the drive towards gender equality in conservation is widely seen by country offices and community partners as an important element in WWF’s human rights commitments. Even where progress has been partial or contested, incorporating gender equality into conservation goals is seen as bringing positive benefits for women and men, for communities, for conservation governance, and for conservation itself. The review also found out that there has been an improvement in the WWF’s capacity in the subject in the country offices, however there is a need to support the mainstreaming the work and provision of targeted funding for gender initiatives, which was found by several of the country offices to be inadequate and inconsistent. The results of the review will be used to explore and develop strategies for strengthening gender mainstreaming, inclusion and participation.

As part of WWF Finland’s strategy process the advocacy and communication work under the ecological footprint theme done in Finland was internally assessed to guide the new strategic objective. It was concluded that as we know, overall footprint of Finnish consumption is still very high in 2021 and there’s ever growing urgency in re-arranging our societies in a way that would deliver well-being within planetary boundaries. However, MFA has supported WWF Finland to implement activities that have promoted specific changes in the value chains and “practical applications of sustainable development models” as expressed in the original programme logframe.

The recent (2021) Dasgupta review on Economics of Biodiversity has once again raised the attention to the interlinkages of biodiversity and the economy. Since 2015, WWF Finland has been working on financial flows and on how to redirect them from fossil fuels to renewable sources of energy. This workstream was one of the outcomes of the green economy work funded by the programme (2014-2017). This work has laid the ground and built capacity for expanding the scope of finance work to the biodiversity and economy interlinkages. Some examples of recent developments in the field are the EU Taxonomy for sustainable activities and the indication of interest of The Coalition of the Finance Ministers for Climate action to take biodiversity on their agenda as well.

The EU is the second largest importer of tropical deforestation and associated emissions.

Expanding production of global commodities, such as soy, palm oil, beef, wood products, cocoa and coffee are key drivers of deforestation. The programme has provided resources for WWF Finland to focus on sustainable sourcing of these commodities among Finnish businesses. Palm oil sourcing has taken positive steps and the Finnish Soy Commitment, aiming at 100 % sustainable sourcing of soy by 2020 has made a difference. The impact of soy commitment will be followed up during 2021. However, global commodity related deforestation, and conversion of other ecosystems, has not been halted by 2020 despite a wealth of such commitments in previous years. The EU Commission has taken the initiative to draft legislation aiming at stopping the EU consumption related deforestation. Such legislation is a more systemic and efficient tool for ending deforestation than scattered voluntary commitments. Strict and proper legislation has been proposed and promoted by NGOs.

The programme has also allowed increased attention and capacity to the sustainability of the

supply chains in previous years and therefore a number of key companies in Finland are better prepared for such legislation and probably more willing to support such regulation. Proper regulation will hopefully be also an important factor in creating a level playing field for the private sector, rewarding the frontrunners and penalizing the laggards.

One of the greatest outcomes/spin-offs of the programme is the considerable role of WWF Finland in the build-up of the global WWF Food Practice, and especially the sustainable diets workstream within the Practice. Increased capacity and strategic focus on sustainable diets allowed implementation of innovative national activities, such as the meat guide activities that were carried out in close cooperation with the Swedish WWF colleagues. This Finland Sweden cooperation made a substantial impact in the evolution of the sustainable diets workstream in the international WWF network. This workstream was further solidified when the 11 million 4 year EU funding for Eat4Change project (including 12 countries or regions) was approved in 2019. Eat4Change project is also remarkable in that sense that it builds on active citizenship and agency among the youth.

Two dissertation studies were conducted related to the work on WWF Youth in Finland. WWF Youth is a volunteer group of WWF Finland which consists of 18-25-year-olds who are interested in social impact.

A dissertation conducted at the University of Helsinki evaluated the involvement of young people and young adults in environmental action at WWF Finland based on the hypothesis that positive experiences of involvement can strengthen environmental action competence and encourage participants to take environmentally responsible action. The study provided evidence that the activities succeeded to empower participants and strengthen their environmental citizenship and environmental action competence. WWF Youth participants also learned other skills that support environmental citizenship. The WWF Youth had a positive effect on self-empowerment and social empowerment and indicated an increase in societal engagement, or encouragement to work in the field of environmental or sustainable development. The results of the thesis conclude that the context of WWF’s Youth work was overall successful and the results are in line with previous similar research, which indicates that environmental participation in the third sector plays an important role in promoting environmental citizenship.

“Overall footprint of Finnish consumption is still very high.”

“Youth’s activities were expanded from Helsinki to Tampere and Turku.”

A dissertation study for HUMAK looked into developing an action plan for WWF Youth, as the WWF Youth’s activities were expanded from Helsinki to Tampere and Turku and the structure of operations changed and expanded. The study resulted into a suggested new action plan for the WWF Youth and highlighted areas for development to improve the work with WWF Youth. The study recommends to improve the communication and cooperation between WWF Finland and WWF Youth to prevent young people’s withdrawal from activities in the middle of the operating period and improve project planning and defining roles and actions.

Progress update of the MFA Programme Mid-Term Review recommendation implementation was conducted in 2020. Several recommendations have been addressed, for example, the programme has made efforts to improve sharing best practices and lessons learned between programme partners; a partnership zoom meeting was organised in September 2020 to share experiences about the effect of COVID-19. Similarly, “Workspace” platform was established and used for easier sharing of documents, online training opportunities, experiences etc. However, for the platform to be effective, further discussion will be done with partners to activate the use of the platform by all.

The MTR identified a need to strengthen the partners capacity in private sector engagement. WWF Finland recruited an expert to the International Development team to improve the capacitation of partners in providing entrepreneur skills for communities, business development and market access services. Furthermore, the programme has continued to support the streamlining and mainstreaming of the WWF’s Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework and climate change mitigation and adaptation to the programme. The programme has furthermore planned to carry out disability inclusion assessment and carbon sequestration assessments in 2021 (see chapter Cross-cutting objectives of the Finnish Development Cooperation Policy and Enhancing gender equality).

The findings and recommendation of the Mid-Term Review were also noted and taken into account when WWF Finland (2021-2030) new strategy was developed, this strategy and review observations were also guiding the planning of the new programme (2022-2025) for MFA.

RISK MANAGEMENT

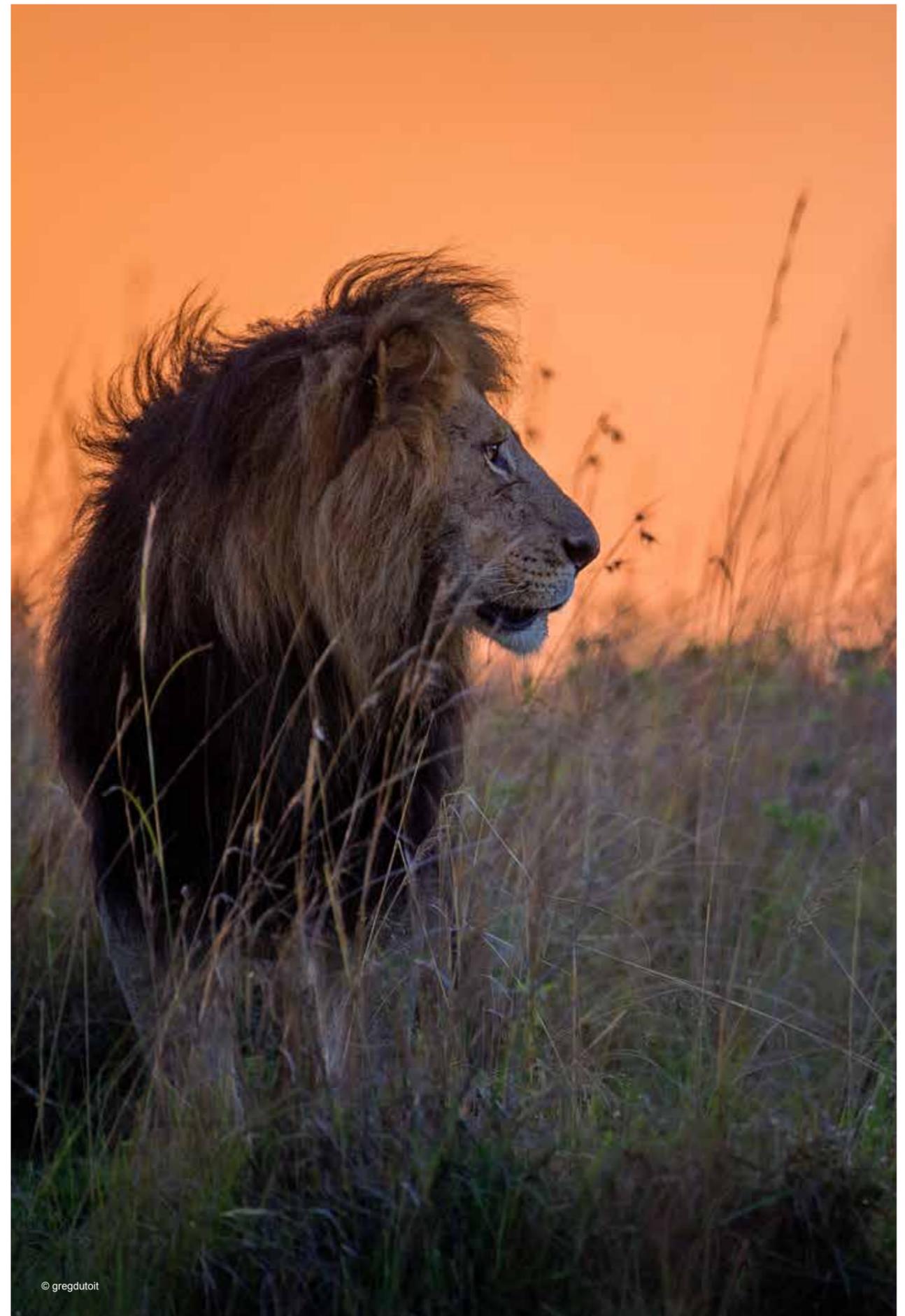
The risks are discussed with partner countries on a regular basis in quarterly calls and the whole programme level risk matrix is discussed quarterly in partnership coordination meetings within WWF Finland. As the major risk that materialized in 2020 was pandemic, discussions about risks were mostly COVID-19 related; how to cope with the situation, support partners and adapt the work plans. Pandemic and its impacts are reflected in the chapter Successes, challenges and adaptive management. Risk matrices, both the programme level and country specific were updated to better take into account the pandemic (Annex 2).

While pandemic was a realized risk with implications itself, it also influenced external risks to materialize, for example political insecurity. Also, staff turnover itself is a challenge, and as due to COVID-19 travel was restricted, it took more time to get new staff onboard and orientated in the projects. Also, WWF staff has been contracted with COVID-19 in some countries, so the pandemic has both internal and external risk elements.

Governments have directed their funds to other causes due to COVID-19. State budgets have been cut in many East African countries, so the authorities are only doing their core business, which has had a direct impact on conservation measures. Also, in Indonesia the government has had to cut its budget and requested WWF to cover some activities they are not able to fund themselves. Due to the pandemic, there will probably be less funding available from donors in the coming years, so it’s important to be actively seeking for new funding opportunities.

In 2020, WWF Network launched a new Risk and Quality Assurance Management Standard that sets out the requirements and expectations on all WWF offices with regards to Risk Management and Quality Assurance. It also determines WWF’s Risk appetite (limits of risks WWF is prepared to take), as risks must be taken in order to achieve WWF’s mission.

The independent expert panel’s review about raised human rights abuses in Central Africa, India, and Nepal was published in November 2020 titled ‘Embedding Human Rights in Nature Conservation - from Intent to Action’. The process increased WWF’s commitment and understanding to address human rights in its work, which led to the ESSF and the recruitment of the ombudsperson in 2021. A [Management Response](#) was developed by WWF network to address the recommendations.



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Network wide action plan to implement the recommendations will be developed in 2021. The MFA programme drafted a preliminary action plan for the implementation of the recommendations applicable to the programme in late 2020, however it will be updated and aligned with the action plan by network in 2021.

WWF sees social inclusion and inclusive conservation as an important aspect of the conservation approach but at the same time social issues and human rights need to be addressed as possible risks. WWF's enhanced Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework, ESSF, establishes a common set of standards, policies, planning, and implementation mechanisms, and compliance systems that govern how activities on-the-ground are carried out. WWF uses safeguards to identify, avoid, and mitigate any negative social and environmental impacts within its conservation work. The framework has been adopted by the entire WWF Network to ensure consistent, comprehensive application of safeguards across all that WWF does. The safeguards are applied in the design, implementation, and monitoring of all the field-based activities in landscapes and seascapes.

"The ESSF screenings begun in Laos."

ESSF is applied to all WWF network landscapes, supported by the WWF International and WWF National Offices. Nepal was one of the pilot countries for ESSF. In Nepal the ESSF risk screening has been completed and a mitigation plan drafted for Terai Arc Landscape. For preparing this plan, series of stakeholders consultation workshops (through physical and virtual means) were organized which made WWF to engage and critically analyse the possible risks (at interventions level) on community and environment with all the possible stakeholders following the major three risks identified in landscape screening (involuntary resettlement/access restriction, indigenous people and community health and security). The mitigation plan will be rolled out engaging all the identified stakeholders. WWF US supported WWF Nepal in this process.

WWF Finland's experts took part and supported the ESSF screening of Mikumi-Selous-Nyerere sub-landscape, which is part of the larger Ruvuma landscape where the programme supports community forest management interventions. The screening is still ongoing. Similarly, a WWF National Office support group for ESSF implementation was formed for Uganda, to support coordination and effective implementation of the ESSF process in the Greater Virunga Landscape. WWF Finland supports this effort through expert capacity. As for the other programme countries and landscapes;

- In Kenya the ESSF screening and mitigation planning is planned to be rolled out in the landscapes 2021;
- in Madagascar the Northern Highlands Landscape ESSF screening took place in 2020, based on which the COMATSA protected area social and environmental management plan will be updated;
- in Indonesia site specific ESSF assessments will be conducted in the operating landscapes;
- in Laos, Annamites Landscape, the ESSF screening around 24 target communities under MFA support has started; and
- In Bhutan, ESSF screenings have been completed for the two identified landscapes; Bhutan Biological Conservation Complex (B2C2) and Living Landscapes. The latter landscape is the one where the MFA Finland supported project belongs. The next step is to initiate a Mitigation Plan, which is planned to take place in the fiscal year 2022 (July 2021-June 2022).

In Nepal the change in governing system at the local level was identified as a high risk. The existing project implementation modality was designed based on previous governing structure. New governing structure made WWF coordinate with new governing entities at province and local level. Accordingly, WWF has engaged with them through a province level project coordination committee, which will serve as a loose forum for coordination in between three tiers of governments and facilitate project interventions. This requires WWF's engagement on institutional capacity strengthening, as there occurs frequent transfer of human resources in those institutions.

In Indonesia, WWF has strategically continued close cooperation with local communities, local level CSOs and government partners in Borneo, strengthening relationships and promoting the lessons learnt from a decade of joint work in the region. In recent years, a positive progress has been that local communities and CSOs have more capacity to work directly with local governments and also receive funding for community development and conservation from local governments. This is also a risk mitigation strategy and a way of ensuring sustainability and continuity even if WWF's funds and resources would be reduced. The program team in Borneo has had fewer resources and less staff in 2020 which has affected program implementation mostly by putting more pressure on the remaining staff.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

2020 was the third year of the programme and there were no significant changes compared to 2019 in the financial management. The programme management was done in Finland by the International development team.

Programme received additional funding from MFA for 2020-2021 to deepen its approach on climate adaptation in the East Africa Forest programme. This support is channelled through the regional East Africa Forest programme to the national programmes in Madagascar and Uganda, hence no changes on the implementation, management or M&E structures were done due to this extension. Amendment for the agreement between East Africa Forest Programme and WWF Finland was done to include this funding. Also, WWF Finland human resources were strengthened to increase WWF Finland's ability to support its partners on climate adaptation and also to enable learning and sharing knowledge between partners on this issue.

In 2020 also one new partner was added to the programme; Innovation Programme Panda Labs located in Kenya to support innovations as indicated in the original programme document. Agreement for the support for 2020-2021 was signed with WWF Kenya.

Programme budget and work plan was first revised in February when the additional funding was added to the programme plans for 2020. Due to COVID-19, budgets and work plans were revised also in June and again in October, when the latest updated budget of 2020 was sent to MFA for approval.

WWF Finland follows up use of funds through financial reports that partners send to WWF Finland quarterly. The reports are reviewed and approved by the project coordinator, administrator and the head of the programme. If needed, additional information is requested from the partners. The expenditure levels as well as balances are monitored and reconciled quarterly with WWF Finland's accounts by the finance department together with the administrator and head of programme. The expenditure and other programme related issues are discussed with WWF Finland Senior Management quarterly in Finland. The funds are transferred to partners in two to four instalments per year depending on their expenditure rate.

MFA-funded programmes are annually audited in the respective countries. The programme expenses of WWF Finland and the annual

programme level report are audited in Finland by PricewaterhouseCoopers Oy, including audit reports from all partners. As the audits were conducted in spring 2021, due to COVID-19 epidemic some of the audits, including audit of the whole programme in Finland, were conducted remotely.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The total available budget for the Partnership Programme for 2020 was EUR 2 655 545 (MFA support EUR 2 257 213), including new MFA support for 2020 (EUR 2 130 000), carry forwarded MFA support from 2019 (EUR 127 213) and self-financing (EUR 398 332). The total costs of the programme in 2020 were EUR 2 128 279 which was 80 % of the budget. Partner countries spent 65 - 95 % of their annual budget, and WWF Finland spent 84 % of its budget.

MFA temporarily removed the requirement for self-financing in 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic implications to the fundraising. WWF Finland uses this option for the expenses incurred in Finland in 2020 but decided that the budgets of the partner countries would not be reduced as partners are already facing many other challenges due to the pandemic and funding was needed to continue the work. Thus, the self-financing for the expenses in partner countries was 15 %, but as expenses in Finland were 84 % of the budget, no self-financing was used for those expenses. For this reason, the share of MFA funding was 90 % (EUR 1 912 875) and self-financing was 10 % (EUR 215 404) in 2020. Self-financing included support from WWF Finland's private supporters and Finnish companies, and WWF Network (UK).

"Total costs of the programme in 2020 were 2,1 million EUR."

All the unspent budget (EUR 398 086) of the partner countries is requested to be carried forward to 2021. From WWF Finland's budget only unspent MFA support (EUR 5 965) with self-financing (EUR 1 053) will be carried forward for 2021. The amount of carry forwards from 2020 to 2021 is EUR 405 103 (EUR 344 338 MFA programme support).

In Finland, spending was 84 % of the budget. Spending of the Monitoring and evaluation budget was low (14 %), as most of the monitoring visits were cancelled due to the pandemic.

In Indonesia the annual budget in 2019 was exceeded by EUR 11 133 due to Finland's monitoring visit to Borneo, travel costs related to Mid Term Review in Indonesia and workshop in Tanzania, and it was agreed that exceeding would be covered from

Finland's budget. So, 11 133 EUR was reallocated from Finland's budget to Indonesia in 2020.

The activities in the East Africa Regional Forest Programme are basket funded by Sweden and Finland, Finnish support being the biggest contributing 88 % of the total programme costs in 2020. For the Illegal Wildlife Trade Hub this programme's contribution was 35 % of the core budget in 2020, other donors being UK and Sweden.

In addition to the partnership programme, WWF Finland supports the WWF network offices through network service fee which was 681 141 € in FY20. This funding is used to support WWF Network, including offices in Africa and Asia, in organizational development and compliance of the network policies etc. In 2020 WWF Finland also supported a network initiative in Asian deltas with 100 000 € WWF to increase climate resilience of Asia's deltas which host over 400 million people, and a wealth of biodiversity. These areas are critical to the economies, food security and sustainable development of the entire continent. WWF influences political processes and financial investments to identify and implement solutions to address the root causes of loss of resilient deltas and provide more sustainable and resilient solutions.

The detailed financial report is presented in Annex 4.

Table 1. Expenses in 2020 by countries/ regions

Programmes	Actual costs, €
Bhutan	75 394
Nepal	408 085
Indonesia	181 100
East Africa Forest Programme	490 842
East Africa Forest Expert	3 985
East Africa Illegal Wildlife Trade Hub	97 430
Greater Mekong	135 805
Total costs of programmes	1 436 026
Finland	
Personnel	375 428
Communications	82 157
Learning for change	35 882
Planning, monitoring and evaluation	8 592
Admin	190 194
Total costs in Finland	692 253
Total costs	2 128 279
MFA support used	1 912 875
WWF Finland self-financing	215 404

ANNEXES

1. Results Framework, progress in 2020

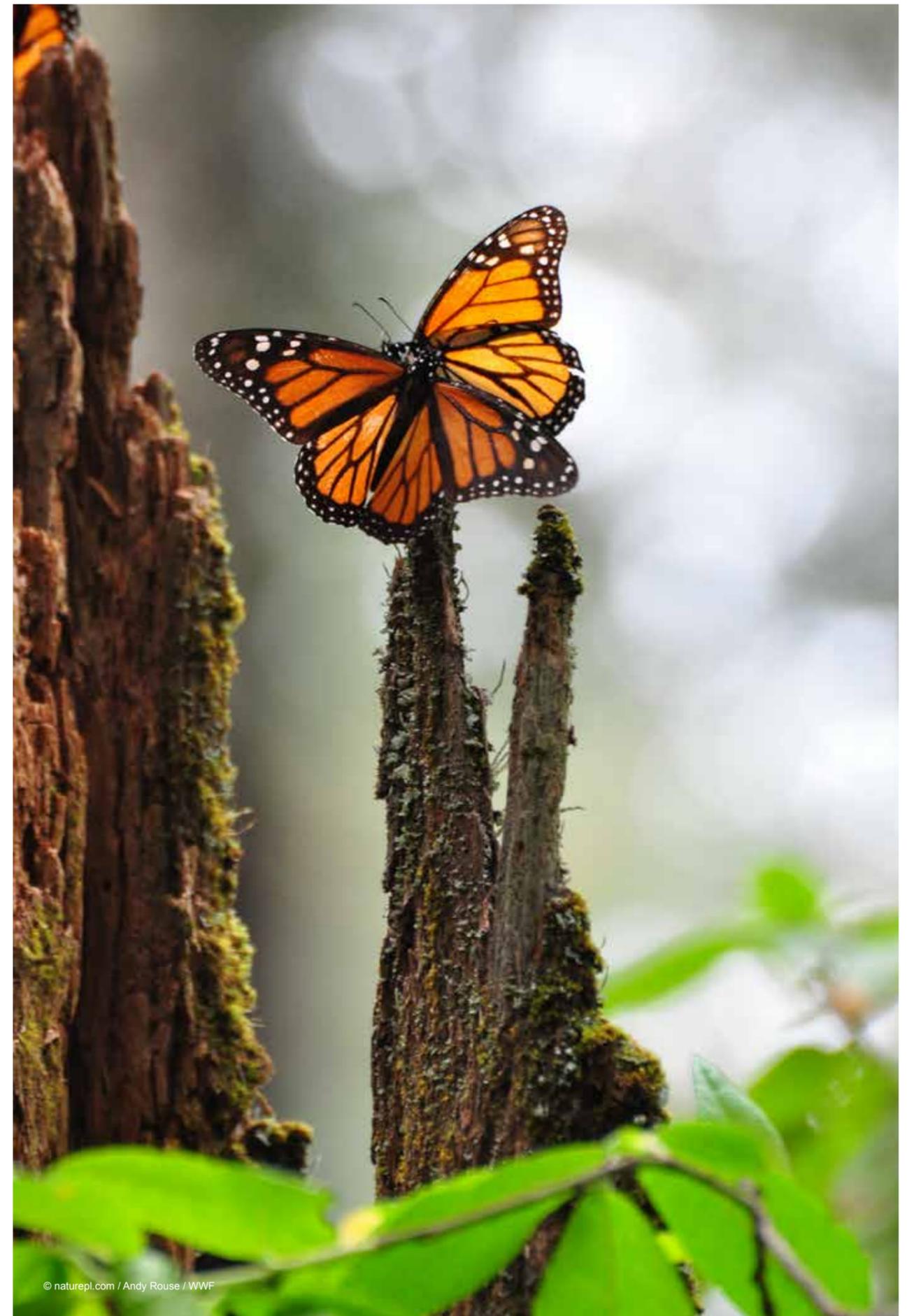
2. Risk Matrix

3A. Mid Term Review (MTR) for the East Africa Regional Forest Programme (EAFP) in 2020

3B. Abilis Consulting 2021: Disability inclusion in environmental conservation; an analysis on general aspects and a review on the status of disability inclusion in WWF Finland's partnership programme

4. Financial report

5. Audit Report



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