



# AFRICAN CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP NETWORK

Strong Leaders  
Effective Organizations  
Transformative Impact

## Africa Conservation Leadership Forum

Convening leaders, fostering exchange and strengthening collaboration for greater conservation impact

January 24 – 26, 2019 | Karatu, Tanzania

## Summary

- This document provides a summary of the first African Conservation Leadership Network Forum, which brought together 26 individuals from 16 leading African conservation organizations, along with 12 external colleagues and supporters, for three days of discussion around how to increase collaboration on critical issues and opportunities in the region. Key outcomes of the Forum include:
- Participants exchanged information about their personal and professional journeys, built new relationships and connections within the group.
- Participants revisited and clarified the purpose, functions, future aspirations and governance of the African Conservation Leadership Network as a platform for supporting the work of an emerging group of regional conservation leaders and their organizations.
- Participants developed a set of collaborative action plans that work to address key challenges in African conservation related to issues including leadership, communications, influencing policy, technical design, and funding.
- Maliasili committed to continue its coordination and support function of ACLN in collaboration with TNC and to provide moderate facilitation for implementation of action plans.

ACLN FORUM

**SUMMARY**

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## Overview & Rationale

**“** *What an amazing group of conservation leaders that you (ACLN) are working with. Your approach taken is providing a hugely important niche in African conservation, and one that has been sorely lacking. With such remarkable individuals and leaders, ACLN will not only create a great learning and networking opportunity, but also enable a truly African conservation centric movement.”*

–Richard Diggle, WWF in Namibia, on the ACLN Forum

The first African Conservation Leadership Network (ACLN) Forum was built off the ACLN program that has now engaged 32 leaders from 17 conservation organizations from east and southern Africa over the past three years. The overall objective of the ACLN is to strengthen the leadership capacity of key individuals working within African natural resource management and conservation using peer learning and a cohort-based structure. The forum was designed to strengthen collaboration amongst ACLN member organizations and also with a group of strategically invited external allies. As a first, the forum tested a new convening space for leading African conservation organizations that enables them to learn, innovate, and build collaborations that can help them accelerate their impacts on the ground.

**“** *ACLN was a unique experience. In those three weeks I was reinvented and what my organization has now is a man on a mission to ensure its success. It's amazing how each level built upon the other so well and I cannot place one over the other as I have experienced myself applying them all in my work.”*

–Alfred Mwanake, Coordinator, Taita Taveta Wildlife Conservancies Association



# Catalyzing collaboration through a network of African conservation leaders

A core purpose of ACLN is to create stronger personal and professional connections amongst rising African conservation leaders. In many cases, these relationships provide new opportunities for collaborations to emerge on a wide range of issues and scales. Since the ACLN program began with the first cohort of leaders in August 2016, a range of joint initiatives, field exchanges, and sharing of knowledge has taken place. This session invited participants to share the different types of collaboration that they had engaged in through ACLN, as a way of mapping these experiences. A remarkable amount of sharing, learning and joint efforts have taken place.

**SORALO visited UCRT** in Tanzania to learn about methods and experiences inland-use planning with communities.

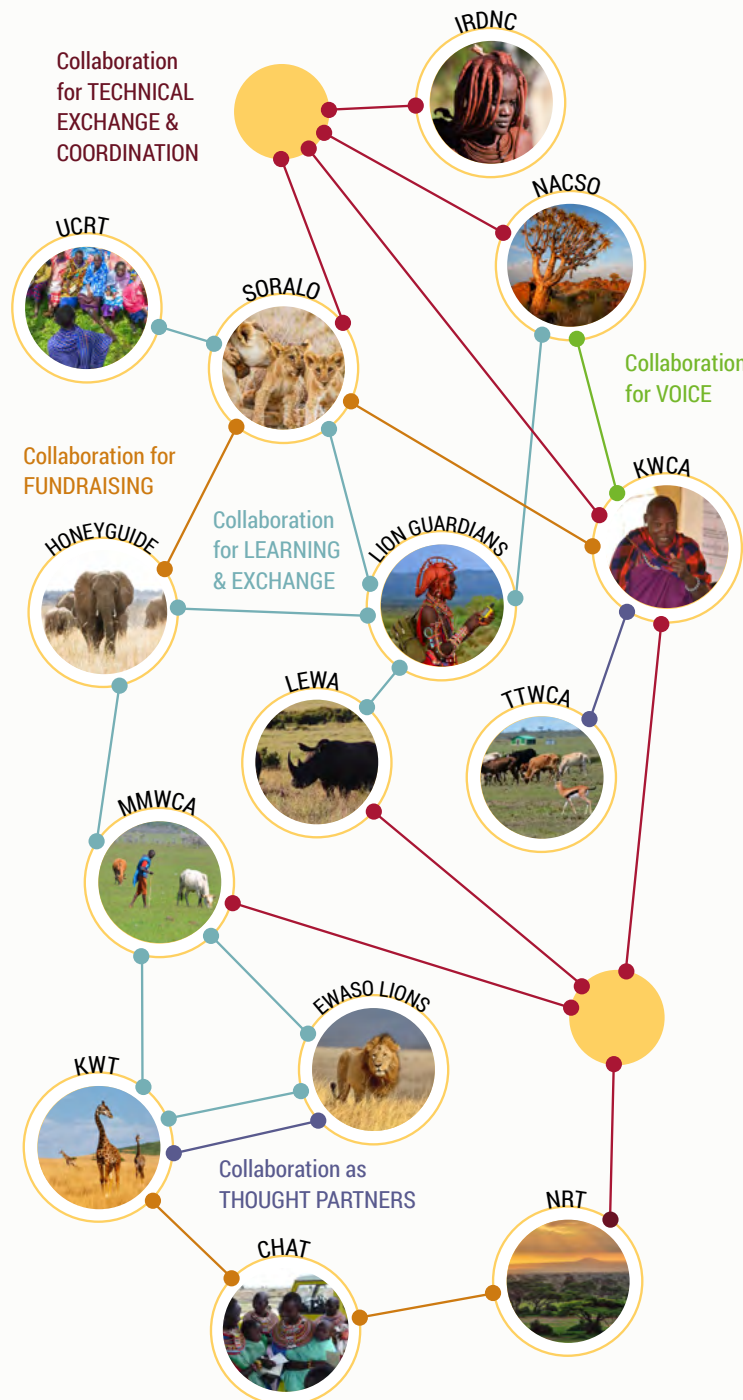
**Honeyguide, SORALO & ACC:** Successfully partnered on joint proposal to EU for project in Kilimanjaro-Amboseli transboundary ecosystem.

**SORALO and Lion Guardians** collaborated on a new initiative to provide greater wildlife connectivity between Amboseli and South Rift landscapes, helping SORALO raise new funds for this work.

**Lion Guardians provided Honeyguide** with technical support and training on managing human wildlife conflict.

**Honeyguide & MMWCA:** WMA managers in Tanzania visited the Maasai Mara to learn from successful management model being used there.

**Ewaso & KWT:** Supported KWT rethink their strategy, KWT supported Ewaso hire a senior manager.



**Lion Guardians provided NACSO** partners in Namibia with human-wildlife conflict mitigation methods in areas of high conflict in NW Namibia.

**KWCA & NACSO:** Speaking in one voice to create a rural working group that promotes local representation and engagement in CITES processes.

**TTWCA & KWCA:** Collaborated with Maliasili support to refine and streamline TTWCA's strategic plan.

**Lion Guardians, LEWA, Kerr & Downey:** working on "donor safari" model – developing donations.

**KWCA, Lewa, MMWCA, NRT, TNC, Maliasili:** All involved in a meeting with Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group on strengthening partnerships to support conservancies in Kenya.

**CHAT & KWT:** Collaboration led to KWT funding CHAT to work in conservancies.

See page 7 for list of partners

## Areas of potential upcoming collaboration:

Several of the invited guests gave a short overview about upcoming opportunities for increased collaboration with ACLN and its members in the future. These included:

- **LION RECOVERY FUND:** through the upcoming conference “Lion Foot-print Forum” and their projects involving a number of ACLN member organizations
- **AFRICAN CONSERVATION CENTRE THROUGH ITS PROGRAMS:** Institutional Canopy of Conservation and an upcoming EU grant for cross border engagement
- **SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION:** a range of support to field research around health and ecology in East Africa, and engagement in the planned Earth Optimism Summit 2020
- **AFRICAN LEADERSHIP UNIVERSITY:** through their various programs at the School of Wildlife Conservation, their Business of Conservation Conference 2019, and greater collaboration with ACLN partners to bring more women into their programs and find opportunities for their interns
- **IIED:** On strengthening local voices, such as those of ACLN member and their partner communities, in global debates around illegal wildlife trade
- **WILDAID:** looking to collaborate on ideas to build public support for conservation



*I believe the most important and useful outcome of the ACLN is the continuity of an active and connected network of conservation organizations who share similar values and visions, and leveraging this network for the greater good of wild-life conservation. Currently, I feel like we are all 'atoms' flying around in all different directions. The ACLN could be the 'covalency' that connects us all together into a powerful collective 'molecule'.*

– Sport Beattie, Game Rangers International, Zambia

### Developing ACLN as a network:

The forum saw the two cohorts of the ACLN meet for the first time as an expanded network totaling 16 organizations and over 30 individuals. The members used the gathering to re-examine the purpose and vision of the ACLN, clarify the priority functions of the program and articulate the members' shared vision.

### Purpose:

The purpose of the ACLN is to achieve greater conservation impact in Africa by improving the quality and effectiveness of leaders of local organizations that work with communities to protect their land, natural resources and livelihoods. Through the ACLN, this new generation of leaders can connect, develop and maintain relationships – a dedicated space for support and advice- sharing knowledge, information and expertise. The ACLN is also a platform for African conservation leaders to expand their joint influence and to convene strategic thought leaders.

### Function:

1. LEARN and build leadership skills through training, coaching and mentorship
2. SHARE technical approaches, expertise and best practice
3. BUILD the network, grow trust, foster friendships and develop a shared vision
4. ESTABLISH a collective African voice that advocates for pressing conservation issues
5. COLLECTIVELY LEVERAGE funds and seek joint fundraising opportunities

### Values:

- Sharing knowledge and solutions drives change
- Trusted friendships underpin partnership and collaboration
- Conservation leaders can achieve more by working together
- Leaders draw strength and credibility from being both leaders and field-rooted implementers
- The network needs to balance structure and adaptability, building interest and being informal
- Like-minded leaders with shared purpose can achieve conservation outcomes together
- ACLN is as strong as its members – all members play a part in living the network's values



## Collaboration Opportunities

A main focus of the forum was to explore tangible collaboration around key challenge areas. Five thematic (technical design, communications, fundraising, policy and leadership) areas were discussed and a series of collaboration plans developed, based on concrete actions drawn up and reviewed by all participants. A number of the actions are already underway, some will be undertaken by Maliasili as part of its support to ACLN, and other actions may be pursued by members of the network and support partners as relevant and aligned with their areas of focus.

| Challenge   | Opportunities  | Areas for collaborative action  |
|---|--|---|
| <p><b>TECHNICAL DESIGN:</b><br/>Key technical challenges remain critical to lasting impact and effectiveness of the conservation models being developed by ACLN members at community and landscape scale across the region.</p> | <p>USE ACLN NETWORK structure to support improved technical design and implementation of its members' work, including through ongoing field exchange and other ways to share knowledge and expertise</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEVELOP technical repository of methodologies, resources, tools on CBNRM</li> <li>• CREATE opportunities for ACLN members to share expert methodologies within network</li> <li>• IMPROVE the design and practice of learning exchanges (shared resources, booklet on best practice)</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>COMMUNICATIONS:</b><br/>Media narratives around African conservation generally fail to capture key local issues and realities and showcase effective solutions.</p>   | <p>SHARE resources and expertise to build the communications capacity of the ACLN network members</p> <p>BUILD and communicate a shared and effective story around community conservation in Africa</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SHARE communications expertise and resources to reduce and ensuring high-quality, consistent and effective communications</li> <li>• BUILD the ACLN brand to influence national-level conservation narrative and attract donor support for African community conservation organizations</li> <li>• SHARE best practices to enhance ACLN members' capacity to effectively communicate their work</li> </ul> |

| Challenge   | Opportunities  | Areas for collaborative action   |
|---|--|--|
| <p><b>FUNDING:</b> ACLN members’ work is chronically constrained by the funding context of their work- including both insufficient funding and inappropriate funding models to sustain the work of local organizations.</p> | <p>HARNESS the experience, capacity and opportunities within the ACLN network and across the networks of its members to raise increased and more flexible funding.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EXPLORE opportunities to pool collective funds and distribute through a trusted, non-operational intermediary</li> <li>• CREATE a better understanding of natural resource value chains and determine opportunities for value creation to support conservation management and livelihoods</li> <li>• INCREASE scale and impact of efforts in the field by increasing donor coordination and collaboration</li> <li>• EMPOWER local organizations to be smarter in their donor engagement and relationship management</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>POLICY:</b> Lack of political and policy support by government decision makers- both nationally and in key global policy forums- is one of the greater barriers to conservation progress.</p>                         | <p>ESTABLISH, share and use a policy toolkit to empower local civil society to inform and influence policy for conservation in Africa</p>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PUBLISH a policy advocacy toolkit and establish policy library</li> <li>• ARTICULATE and document shared policy priorities (that include community voices and perspectives) as an ACLN resource</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>LEADERSHIP:</b> African conservation needs a new generation of more connected, collaborative leaders and coordination amongst different leadership initiatives.</p>   | <p>COLLABORATION and synergy between leadership development programs in Africa<br/><br/>Increasing and supporting women leaders in conservation in Africa</p>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COORDINATE, harmonize and collaborate to establish and deliver quality range of leadership programs for African conservation</li> <li>• ESTABLISH and implement a focused strategy that supports, strengthens and grows women leaders in African conservation</li> </ul>  |

## Next Steps

Building on the outcomes of the forum, an ACLN Charter document that reflects the purpose, functions, values and governance of the network will be developed and endorsed by ACLN members. This process will be led by the four-member ACLN committee, which was selected by the network members during the forum. Moving forward, Maliasili and TNC will support the ACLN committee, members and partners in both maintaining the network and following through on key action plans compiled during the forum. Maliasili and TNC will continue to work together to ensure effective coordination of the ACLN as a network in realizing its key functions.

## ACLN Cohort 2

Sharon Wreford-Smith | Community Health Africa Trust (CHAT)

Rose Kimanzi | Community Health Africa Trust (CHAT)

Shivani Bhalla | Ewaso Lions

Resson Kantai Duff | Ewaso Lions

Sport Beattie | Game Rangers International

Rachael Murton | Game Rangers International

Dominic Muema | Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC)

Basilia Shivute | Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC)

Tuqa Jirmo | Lewa Wildlife Conservancy

Jasper Makala | Mpingo Conservation & Development Initiative

Glory Massao | Mpingo Conservation & Development Initiative

Alfred Mwanake | Taita Taveta Conservancy Association (TTWCA)

Simeon Mwadilo Mwarungu | Taita Taveta Conservancy Association (TTWCA)

Irene Amoke | Kenya Wildlife Trust (KWT)

Tom Lalampaa | Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT)

## ACLN Cohort 1

Maxi Louis | Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO)

Dickson Ole Kaelo | Kenya Wildlife Conservancy Association (KWCA)

Gladys Njoroge | Kenya Wildlife Conservancy Association (KWCA)

John Kamanga | Southern Rift Association of Land Owners (SORALO)

Samantha Russell du Toit | Southern Rift Association of Land Owners (SORALO)

Makko Sinandei | Ujamaa Community Resource Team (UCRT)

Daniel Sopia | Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association (MMWCA)

Damian Bell | Honeyguide Foundation

Sam Shaba | Honeyguide Foundation

Leela Hazzah | Lion Guardians

Salisha Chandra | Lion Guardians

## Invited guests

Peter Lindsey | Lion Recovery Fund - Wildlife Conservation Network

Elizabeth Tolu Ojo | African Leadership University

Kent Wommack | Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation

Nick Lapham | BAND Foundation

Dilys Roe | IIED

Holly Dublin | IIED

Rupert Quinlan | Blue Ventures

Richard Diggle | WWF in Namibia

Steve Monfort | Smithsonian Institution

Andreas Fox | Kerr & Downey Safaris

Andrew Williams | US Forest Service

Lucy Waruingi | African Conservation Centre (ACC)

Nayantara Kilachand | WildAid



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