

institutional strategic plan

ifaw





message from the President & CEO

Dear Colleagues,

As we release IFAW’s new 2021-2025 strategic plan, I would like to share a few opening thoughts as we begin the hard work of implementing the plan over the next five years together. The new plan reflects changes already taking place in the organization to address the pace of change in our external environment.

It reflects the Executive Management Team’s sustained efforts and the input of leadership and staff across the organization. We did not begin from scratch but rather built upon the work over the past five years.

Consistent with the previous strategic plan, we remain focused on addressing the core threats to animals we are best positioned to reduce, the critical geographic regions of those threats, and the approaches we believe will achieve results. We will continue to focus on rescuing animals and preserving their habitats, the two pillars of rescue and conservation, knowing that our name recognition will grow as this work is recognized. From a business perspective, IFAW will continue to pursue opportunities

to diversify revenue, build a staffing model that supports the strategic plan, and push programmatic and operational management closer to the point of implementation. We will fully leverage our brand for program impact and fundraising effectiveness and align resources geographically for the most significant impact. The new plan focuses on what’s needed to grow the restricted funding portfolio (major donors, foundations, governments). This is a critical shift both for the organization’s financial and programmatic growth and success.

In the next five years, our operational departments are committed to strengthening IFAW by engaging donors in our global programmatic priorities and working to improve brand awareness around animal welfare, conservation, and rescue. With a solid foundation built, we can now focus on growth over the next five years.

I remain committed to ensuring that our plan guides institutional decision making and evolves as we evolve. I continue to rely on you to familiarize yourself with its contents, reflect on

what it means for your work, and use it to guide your planning and decision making.

Thank you for all you do in support of our mission. We have made significant progress, and with your support, we will expand our impact and strengthen our organizational effectiveness over the remaining years of this plan. The future of the animals, communities, and the landscapes we serve depends on it.

Sincerely,



Azzedine Downes

Azzedine Downes
President & CEO



contents

2	message from the President & CEO
3	index
4	introduction
5	values
6	mission & vision
7	institutional theory of change
8	key assumptions
9	our strategic approach and niche
10	program strategic prioritization
11	impact goals
12	operating principles
13	core programs
15	cross-programmatic strategies



introduction

We are at a tipping point and in the midst of a crisis, the greatest humanity has ever faced. Species are on the brink of extinction, habitats are shrinking and disappearing, the lack of appreciation for the value of individual animals and their contributions to conservation goals remains and, climate change is wreaking havoc on people and ecosystems across the globe. All this is happening in a time when our assault on nature has given rise to deadly zoonotic diseases, one of which has become a global pandemic.

In response to this crisis, **IFAW is embarking on an audacious five-year strategic plan focused on improving the welfare of individual animals and the conservation status of wildlife populations in priority habitats through on-the-ground efforts and global advocacy.** The plan prioritizes solutions and approaches to build resilience to climate change which poses an existential threat to livelihoods, people, specific species and ecosystems in the places we work with the potential to derail efforts

underway to attain global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Animal welfare remains core to our mission. Our dual-emphasis on rescue and conservation promotes animal welfare, species population stability and secure habitats. To sustain the welfare of species and the places they call home, our work must be comprehensive.

Consistent with the previous strategic plan, **we remain focused on addressing the core threats to animals we are best positioned to reduce, the critical geographic regions of those threats, and the approaches we believe will achieve results.** This approach aligns with our commitment to deliver programs of impact to save the lives of animals around the world. We are fully committed to sustaining the successes achieved during the last five years, and to growing our impact in the next five.

We will continue to pursue opportunities to diversify revenue, build a staffing model that supports implementation of the strategic plan,

push programmatic and operational management closer to the point of implementation, fully leverage our brand for program impact and fundraising effectiveness and align resources geographically for greater impact. The new plan pays attention to the need to grow the restricted funding portfolio (major donors, foundations, governments), to support programmatic growth.

The plan reflects a rebuild of our communications and marketing department to help us connect with, and grow, our network of people who care about animals and their habitats as much as we do. **We will continue to focus on rescuing animals and preserving their habitats, knowing that as this work is recognized, our name recognition will grow.** These major changes include a revitalized brand with a new vision, mission, logo and new website that positions us for the work ahead. We will use these tools to generate greater awareness, increased revenue and support for on-the-ground programmatic growth in Africa and Asia, and global advocacy.



values

In order to achieve IFAW's vision of animals and people thriving together, we uphold key values in our work.

compassion

We care about individual animals and fight to protect them from suffering caused by human actions or natural disasters.

commitment

We know meaningful change takes time, and we work for years, sometimes decades, to achieve and sustain lasting victories for animals.

courage

We stay true to our positions and are willing to challenge existing norms in order to advance animal welfare and conservation.

flexibility

We stay closely attuned to changing environmental, political, cultural and financial conditions and adapt our approaches accordingly.

integrity

We uphold the highest standard of ethical behavior, honesty, accuracy and respect for the intrinsic value of all living beings. This includes respect for cultural, religious and political differences.

proactivity

We believe that scientific uncertainty is never an excuse to avoid changes needed to prevent suffering or protect animal populations. We campaign for the precautionary approach to protect individual animals, wild populations and their habitats.

pragmatism

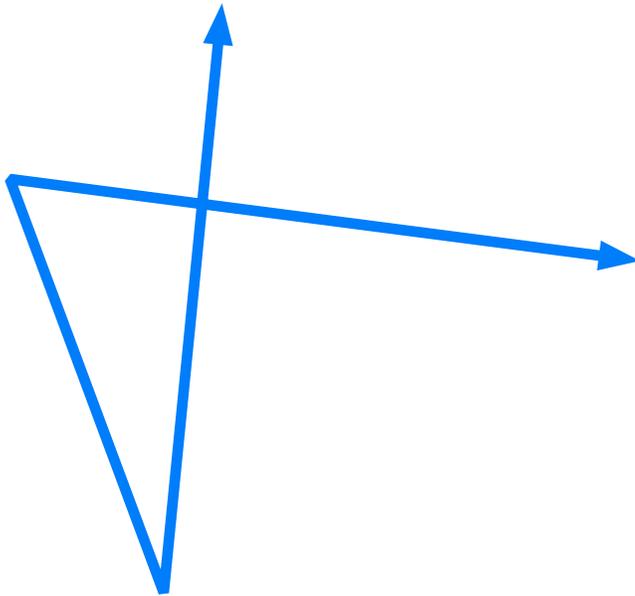
We strive to attain and promote practices that support lasting results for individual animals as well as species, populations and habitats. Communities play a critical role in protecting animals, and we promote solutions that address their needs. We work with diverse interests to find common ground.

justice, equity, diversity & inclusion (JEDI)

We believe each person offers a unique set of ideas, beliefs and skills. Our core values and mission are strengthened when all members have a voice and are encouraged to contribute in a supportive space (full statement in appendix).



vision:
animals and people
thriving together.



mission:
fresh thinking and
bold action for
animals, people
and the place we
call home.

Positive, transformative impact for animals, people and habitats drives us in all we do. We relentlessly tackle conservation and welfare threats to species and individual animals to achieve long-term outcomes of healthy species populations, functional habitats and positive animal welfare. It is essential to empower people and those communities coexisting with wildlife in their habitats to develop collaborative, sustainable solutions that reduce vulnerability to climate change. Guided by this holistic approach, IFAW works to solve problems and create long-lasting impact for both animals and people.



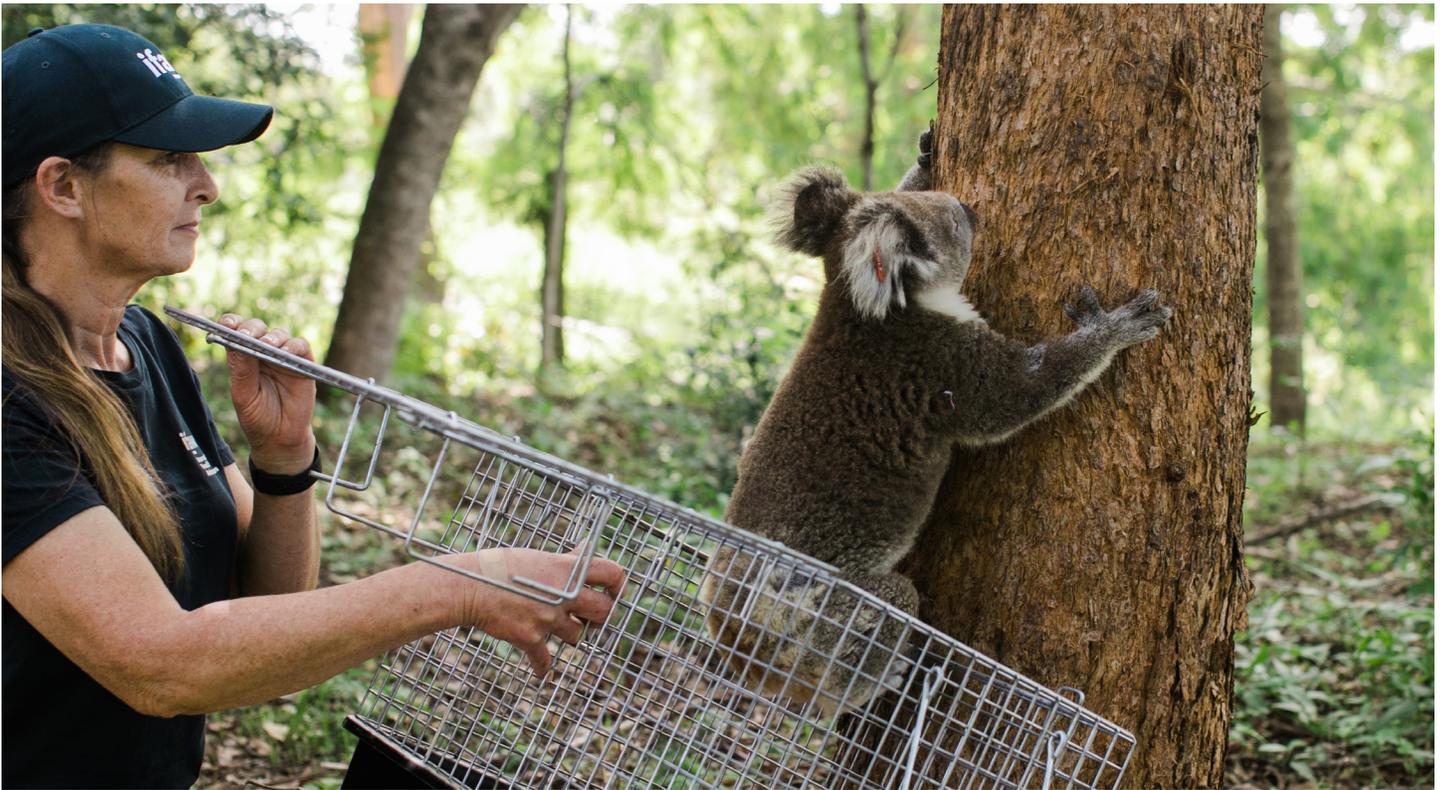
How We Define Impact

institutional theory of change

The welfare of individual animals and the conservation status of wildlife populations in IFAW priority habitats will be improved through on-the-ground efforts, engaging communities and global advocacy.



Figure 1. IFAW theory of change. See program strategic plans for more details by program.



How We Define Impact

key assumptions



Human and disaster induced animal suffering is globally prevalent. Africa and Asia are hotspots for natural disasters, commercial exploitation, habitat loss and degradation. Teams will identify opportunities to expand our work in countries with urgent needs in order to increase the impact of our programmatic work over the next five years.



Projects in IFAW country/regional offices outside of Africa and Asia may be necessary to support programmatic goals, in-market fundraising and/or compliance goals.



Africa and Asia are hotspots for climate change vulnerability, which is an existential threat.



A focus on using flagship species for IFAW programming supports prioritization but allows for far-reaching animal protection, habitat protection and conservation impacts.



Opportunities exist to achieve impact, build on areas of IFAW expertise, mobilize global support, and secure funding for the work that is most promising for projects on the ground in Africa and Asia, as well as global advocacy efforts.

▲ IFAW x Friends of the Koala, release “Ginger” back into the wild in East Linsmore, New South Wales, Australia.

our strategic approach and niche

With a dual focus on both rescue and conservation, IFAW is well-positioned to lead strategic and effective interventions that reduce or eliminate threats to animals. **We believe each individual animal matters, and value the individual animal from an intrinsic and welfare perspective, but also as a contributor to conservation.** Through this lens, IFAW approaches species conservation and individual animal welfare threats as one. By addressing

problems affecting individual animals, we are strengthening wildlife populations and vice versa. Our greatest strength is in the layering of our expertise from complementary rescue and conservation programs to achieve magnified impact. By understanding the strengths of each program, we can better leverage our efforts to maximize our results. Through strategic partnerships with diverse and multidisciplinary

stakeholders, our programs position us as a credible convener and lead agent for integrated impact at scale. Our hands-on, field-based and community-centered work across all our programs, linked to our political advocacy work at the national, regional and international levels, has established IFAW as a leader in animal welfare and wildlife conservation.

IFAW's strategic approach is guided by the following:

partner strategically

Pursue strategic partnerships with governments, foundations, other NGOs, local communities and landowners, and private companies to achieve programmatic goals and provide a competitive edge.

invest in our stakeholders

Achieve lasting impact by bringing key stakeholders together through multi-lateral environmental agreements, direct program interventions, or on-the-ground program planning and delivery.

lead on-the-ground implementation

Continue to lead on-the-ground project implementation to build resilience to climate change and contribute to sustainable development.

continue to learn and grow

Embrace a culture of learning from both our successes and failures, and integrate those learnings into our strategies to ensure we remain steadfast in reaching our goals.

advocate globally

Position IFAW as an influential voice in key countries and regions and in relevant international policy fora as informed by our values and lessons learned from our on-the-ground programs.

intervene holistically

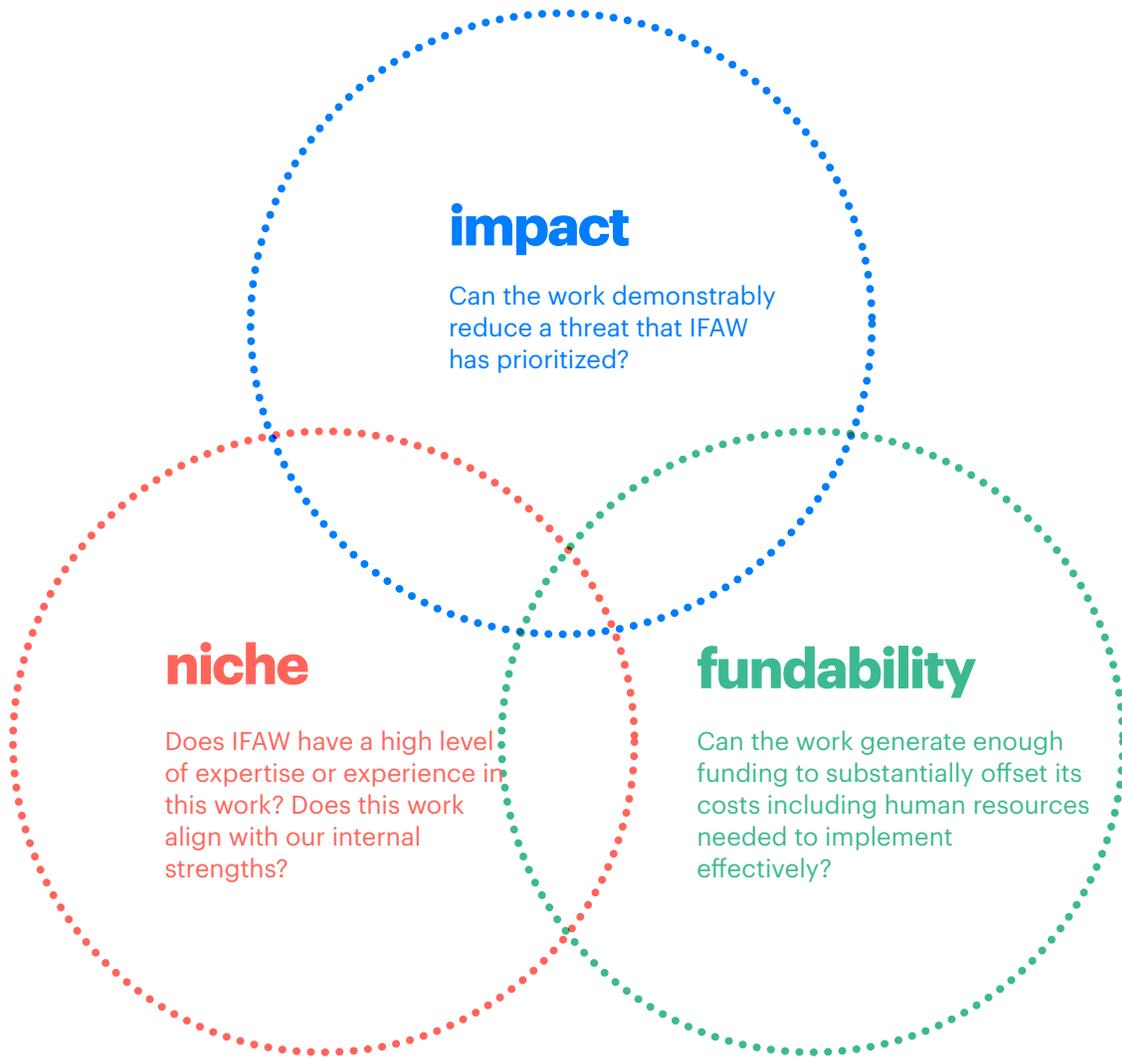
IFAW will follow a model of rescue, rehab and release of individual animals combined with protection and effective management of species' habitats to deliver holistic solutions that address welfare and conservation threats as one.

engage and empower communities

Engage the people living closest to wildlife, community animals and their habitats to tangibly contribute to positive and sustained change for conservation and animal welfare.

make science-based and data driven decisions

Rely on the best available science to inform our decision making around program prioritization. We will monitor projects consistently to ensure accountability and transparency, to drive adaptive management.



How We Prioritize

program strategic prioritization

Tighter prioritization is essential to succeed. IFAW will continue to prioritize existing and future programmatic work according to three main criteria: impact, niche, and fundability. This framework is intended to integrate with program planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning systems at IFAW as well as all departmental support functions.

Program prioritization is key to achieving impact as it allows us to:

- ▶ Save the lives of animals (directly and indirectly) through a variety of IFAW-led interventions.

- ▶ Meaningfully integrate the rescue of individual animals and the protection of populations and their habitats for greater impact.
- ▶ Build support in the conservation community for the value and role of individual animals in species conservation.
- ▶ Bring the strengths of different programs together in a targeted and focused way to achieve greater impact for animals, people and habitats.
- ▶ Advocate in support of global program priorities.
- ▶ Change the way people think about animals and their contribution to society.
- ▶ Contribute to human health.

▲ Figure 2. Framework illustration to prioritize programmatic work by impact, niche and fundability.



How We Prioritize

impact goals

By recognizing and embracing our strengths and the niche we have established, IFAW can achieve key impact goals over the next five years and position for future growth and broader reach. These goals are inclusive of all IFAW programs and will guide us in achieving institutional impact.

We seek to achieve the following by 2025:

- ▶ **goal 1**
75%¹ of individual wild animals rescued by IFAW annually are successfully released or progressing toward release into secure habitats.
- ▶ **goal 2**
80% of individual community animals rescued in disasters annually are reunited with owners or rehomed.
- ▶ **goal 3**
80% of targeted stakeholders have implemented improved conservation or rescue practices as a result of IFAW interventions.

- ▶ **goal 4**
75% of targeted and flagship species of wildlife populations are stable or on a path toward stability.
- ▶ **goal 5**
75% of target priority habitats are under improved management.

▲ Wild African elephants roam across habitat.

¹All percentage targets represent an average across all programs or interventions.



How We Prioritize

operating principles

- ▶ Program management and decision making authority is close to point of implementation.
- ▶ HQ and IOC support departments will focus on operational policy, service delivery to stakeholders across the organization and accountability.
- ▶ Incorporate multi-program, multi-regional collaboration to maximize impact and demonstrate a more holistic approach.
- ▶ Prioritize strategic partnerships over transactional grant making.
- ▶ Projects/initiatives outside of programmatic priority, but capable of raising funds in key markets, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- ▶ Country/Regional offices in Europe, US, Canada and Australia will focus on advocacy, policy and fundraising to support program goals and strategic focus.
- ▶ Combine strengths from across all programs and departments in a targeted and focused way - allowing us to take an integrated planning approach leading to greater impact for animals.

▲ IFAW x Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary. A rescued echidna receives a medical examination.



How We Prioritize

core programs

rescue

Within the rescue pillar, Marine Mammal Rescue & Research, Disaster Response & Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Rescue programs are each positioned to grow and accomplish key goals moving forward. Each team has a well-established, globally recognized niche upon which we will build over the next five years.

marine mammal rescue & research

Marine Mammal Rescue & Research is a core focus in the US and is globally recognized for its pioneering expertise in cetacean rescue, mass stranding response, and the scientific and welfare-based approach to strandings.

IFAW rescues marine mammals and advances stranding science by:

- ▶ optimizing responses to strandings
- ▶ maintaining & improving assessments & care

- ▶ sharing knowledge & mutual aid
- ▶ conducting and coordinating research

disaster response & risk reduction

Disaster Response & Risk Reduction focuses on rapid, professional response efforts in major disasters including a keen focus on sustained impacts by building local communities' disaster preparedness and risk reduction capacity. This niche focus makes IFAW the partner of choice for many governments and communities.

IFAW reduces animal suffering during disasters by:

- ▶ rescuing animals
- ▶ including animals in disaster planning
- ▶ building local capacity
- ▶ promoting community resilience

wildlife rescue

Wildlife Rescue efforts are based on the rescue, rehabilitation and release of wildlife into safe habitats. Due to the emergency nature of the work, it is most often achieved through partners in key locations.

IFAW has two distinct niches in this area of work: 1) the rescue of live animals seized in trade (especially when coordinated with our Wildlife Crime Program efforts) and 2) a scientific approach to rescue, rehabilitation and release standards of care, including an emphasis on post-release monitoring.

IFAW rescues wildlife and supports conservation through:

- ▶ rescue, rehabilitation, release & monitoring
- ▶ disseminating best practices
- ▶ training confiscators and care givers
- ▶ developing response networks

conservation

Within the conservation pillar, the Landscape Conservation, Marine Conservation, and Wildlife Crime programs are poised to grow during the next five years. They will offer holistic and integrated solutions in carefully selected terrestrial and marine hotspot locations in IFAW prioritized program, advocacy, policy and fundraising countries.

landscape conservation

Landscape Conservation focuses on maintaining viable populations and species persistence across critical conservation landscapes in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

On-the-ground work will focus on flagship species (elephants and large carnivores where range overlaps), but in the process also address related ecosystem threats that matter for big picture impact. All actions will be premised on rigorous applied science triangulated with best available local knowledge that includes socioeconomic and geopolitical dynamics to inform a contemporary conservation development agenda in the places we work.

IFAW protects species, wildlife habitats and landscapes by:

- ▶ developing resilient ecological networks
- ▶ protecting area enforcement capacity building
- ▶ engaging communities in natural resource management
- ▶ managing land and resource use planning

marine conservation

Marine Conservation works to strengthen protections for whales, other marine species and ocean habitats worldwide. The priority focus is saving the critically endangered North Atlantic right whale from

extinction, with a particular focus on the threats of entanglement, ship strike and ocean noise. This work is complemented by policy and advocacy efforts across IFAW regional offices, in collaboration with International Policy, to improve marine conservation outcomes, and reduce pressure from commercial exploitation and the shipping industry on marine wildlife.

IFAW protects marine animals and habitats by:

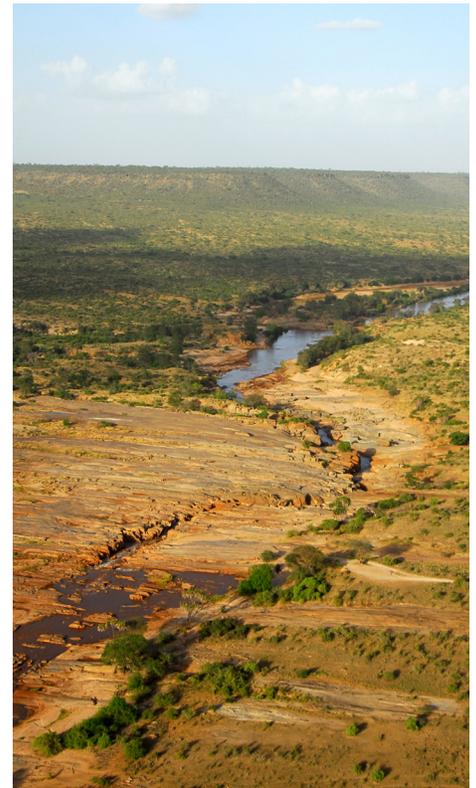
- ▶ promoting alternative fishing practices
- ▶ engaging industry
- ▶ strengthening policies
- ▶ establishing protections

wildlife crime

Wildlife Crime brings a strategic niche to combatting illegal wildlife trade with our ability to address issues throughout the illicit value chain from source to consumer markets with a focus on threatened and endangered species and their derivatives e.g. elephants and ivory. This will be achieved with capacity building for the law enforcement and prosecution agencies of our partner governments, policy/regulatory change that supports our work in Africa and Asia, disrupting wildlife crime online and social and behavior change communication campaigns to reduce demand. Through the Live Animals Seized in Trade agenda, Wildlife Crime integrates with the Wildlife Rescue Program to promote the safe and appropriate handling and disposition of live animals seized by law enforcement agencies.

IFAW combats wildlife trafficking by:

- ▶ building law enforcement capacity
- ▶ disrupting the online trade in wildlife
- ▶ strengthening policies
- ▶ reducing consumer demand



poised to grow during the next five years and offer holistic and integrated solutions.

▲ Aerial view of Lugrad Falls in Tsavo East National Park, Kenya.

▲ North Atlantic right whale swims through shipping traffic.



How We Prioritize

cross-programmatic strategies

To achieve the greatest impact for wildlife populations and individual animals, IFAW engages from the grassroots community up to the highest levels of global policymaking to deliver system-level change.

Whether engaging communities in disaster preparedness planning, establishing community-driven landscape and marine conservation efforts, or setting global standards for species protection, the role of international stakeholders and local communities is essential to our success.

community engagement

- ▶ We work with indigenous people and communities living closest to animals and their habitats to co-create solutions to challenges such as unsustainable natural resource use or increased vulnerability to natural disasters. Our collaborative approach focuses on listening and empowering local people to play a leading role in animal welfare and conservation initiatives that affect them, while supporting livelihoods, human wellbeing and the inter-generational values in priority landscapes and habitats.

- ▶ We partner with communities to find sustainable solutions for mitigating human-wildlife conflict and enhance coexistence so that humans and animals thrive together.
- ▶ We document lessons learned from our work for public dissemination through our channels to inform the global discourse of community conservation through platforms such as IUCN.

international policy

- ▶ We position IFAW as an influential voice in key countries and regions and in relevant international policy fora as informed by our values and lessons learned from our on-the-ground programs.
- ▶ We provide direct support and advice to governments on wildlife conservation based on our project experience, and raise our profile with potential strategic partners (funders, governments, other NGOs) for program implementation.
- ▶ We increase our participation and influence at policy platforms like CITES and United Nations (UN) conventions and within processes on biodiversity, wildlife trade, climate change, desertification and sustainable development in response to the emerging global policy priority initiatives.

the role of international stakeholders and local communities is essential to our success and we seek to engage both.

- ▲ Influential voice and activist, Cleo Wade, meets the Enduata Kitirua women's group (formed in partnership with IFAW to support education for girls and income generating activities for women) in Esiteti village, near Amboseli National Park.

International Fund
for Animal Welfare

Institutional Strategic Plan
2020.

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