



Annual Report 2020/21



## Note from the GCF Directors

Wow, without doubt, 2020 threw us all a curveball. Just like us, you probably also had various plans for the year and then the global COVID-19 pandemic brought life to a grinding halt. Even though travel restrictions and lockdowns, which held the world in check, affected some of our efforts, we managed to find ways to continue with most of our important work throughout Africa – giraffe still needed saving. Amid all the new pandemic-related stress and additional fears, there was certainly some merit in spending more time with our immediate families and in travelling less. This time also gave us the opportunity to revisit our approach regarding particular giraffe conservation challenges – stopping to reflect is not all bad...

While revisiting our organisational values and our mission, vision and purpose, we realised that we are 'a voice for giraffe'. Limited attention is still given to giraffe conservation and GCF plays a critical role in amplifying the giraffe conservation message – our own and that of others. By creating and supporting our long-term partnerships throughout Africa, we are starting to see the emergence of some giraffe conservation success stories. Every day we are inspired by our team, which has continued to make a difference for the world's most iconic animal during these challenging times.

We are often asked how we measure success. There is no easy answer; however, one indicator is the total number of giraffe remaining in the wild in Africa. We have recently collated the latest available data on giraffe in our 2020 Status of Giraffe Report. The outcome is positive as our current estimates have increased to

117,000 giraffe remaining in the wild. While this is certainly great news, it does not mean that giraffe are out of the woods. In part, the increase in numbers is due to better protection, awareness and conservation of giraffe, and largely, it is due to better survey methods and compilation of data: we have simply gotten better at counting them and working with partners to share information. Slowly, giraffe are becoming a priority species for conservation. This is critical for their future survival. Did you know that for every three to four African elephants, there is only one giraffe in the wild?

Despite all the challenges and losses this year, there is a lot to be grateful for. We are proud to say that GCF has continued to have a big impact on all giraffe species and their habitat. We cannot thank our amazing team, our conservation partners and our supporters enough. Saving giraffe is a team effort! We look forward to continuing working together for giraffe conservation in Africa and to sharing more exciting news with you in the future.

As the world adapts to the new norm, let's move forward in such a way that we can remain standing tall for giraffe!



*Steph & Julian Fennessy*

*Co-Founders & Directors*

## Message from the GCF Board Chair

As you read through this year's GCF annual report you will see that, despite the challenges of the pandemic, our team did not miss a beat saving giraffe throughout the African continent. Our purpose never shifted and we have adapted to the new challenges. The team's work included the ongoing desnaring and anti-poaching support, critical genetic research, the translocation of 55 giraffe in three countries, as well as the tremendous environmental education work of our Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP) team and much more. For the first time, we are delighted to report positive trends among some of the most threatened giraffe populations, which are also highlighted in this report.

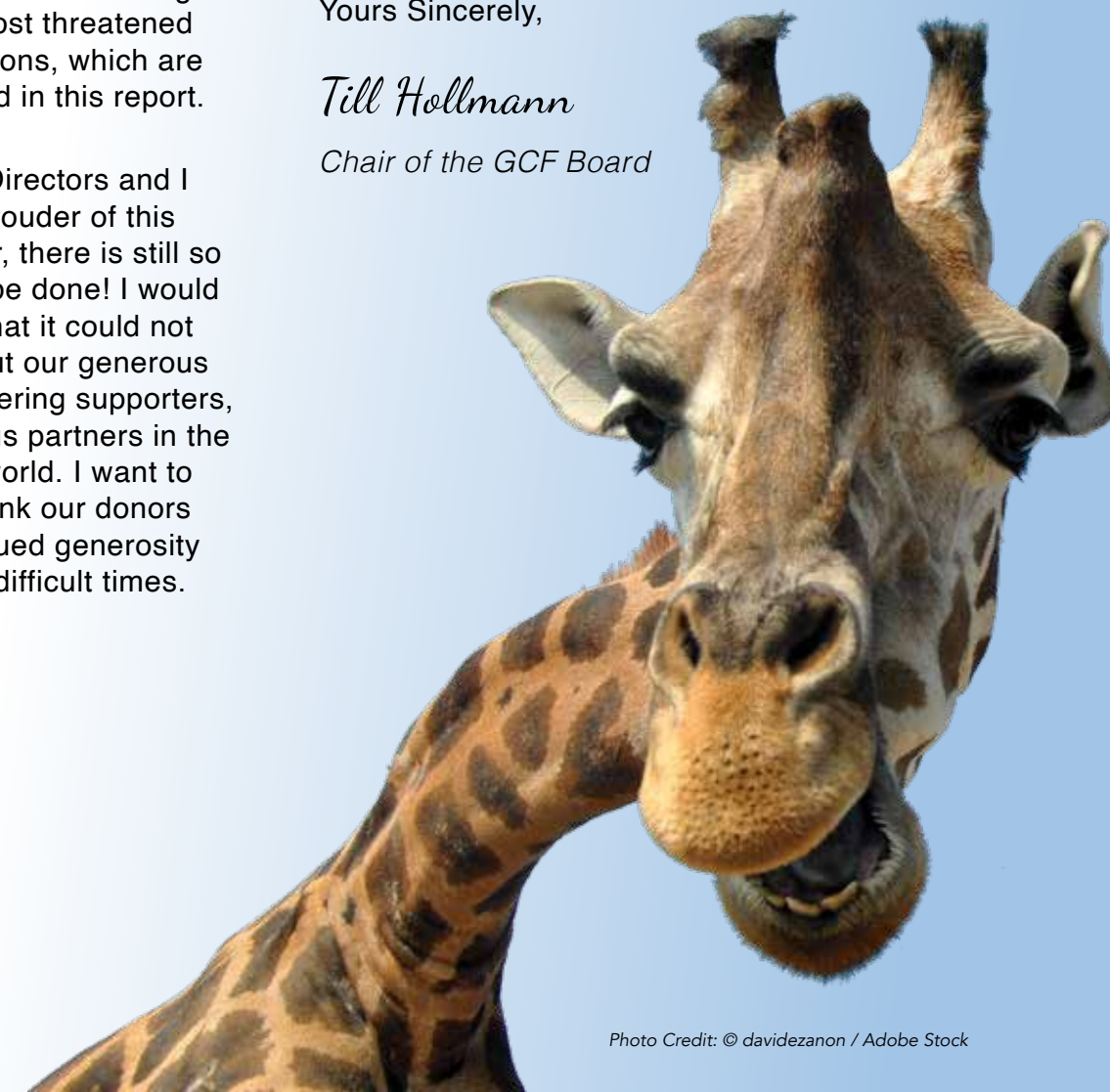
The Board of Directors and I could not be prouder of this team. However, there is still so much work to be done! I would like to stress that it could not be done without our generous donors, unwavering supporters, and tremendous partners in the conservation world. I want to particularly thank our donors for their continued generosity through these difficult times.

I also thank my fellow board members for contributing their passion, expertise and knowledge in guiding GCF, and I extend the entire board's appreciation to Tom Leiden, who is now a retired board member and the former Chair, for his invaluable contributions over the years. We also welcome our new members, Steph Fennessy, Tim Tetzlaff and Lars Markgren, who chose to serve on the GCF board this last year. I am confident that GCF is on a strong footing as we continue our mission to save giraffe!

Yours Sincerely,

*Till Hollmann*

*Chair of the GCF Board*





*The Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF)  
is the only organisation in the world that  
concentrates solely on the conservation and  
management of giraffe in the wild  
throughout Africa.*

United under a common goal, GCF is a family of organisations consisting of GCF Trust(Namibia)  
GCF-USA (Florida, USA), GCF-East Africa (Kenya and Uganda) and Freunde von GCF (Germany)  
All organisations are legally and financially separate entities, working under the umbrella of GCF

*Their shared commitment to a sustainable future for all  
giraffe populations in the wild is governed  
by a Memorandum of Understanding.*

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# ABOUT GCF



The Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) is the only organisation in the world that concentrates solely on the conservation and management of giraffe in the wild throughout Africa.

United under a common goal, GCF is a family of organisations that consists of GCF Trust (Namibia), GCF-USA (Florida, USA), GCF-East Africa (Kenya and Uganda), and Freunde von GCF (Germany). All of these organisations are legally and financially separate entities that work under the umbrella of 'one' GCF. Their shared commitment to a sustainable future for all giraffe populations in the wild is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding.

## What does GCF stand for?

- An international science-based conservation organisation that provides innovative approaches to save giraffe in the wild
- The go-to organisation for giraffe conservation that is proactive and reactive, with a strong collaborative and dynamic team that works within a network of partners on all levels
- The leader in supporting a sustainable future for giraffe in/and their natural habitats
- An organisation that will continue to organically grow and increase awareness to save giraffe in the wild

## What drives GCF?

- To be a bold, independent organisation
- To not be regimented
- To be disciplined and 'always on'
- To be an open book
- To not over-promise
- To be passionate
- To not be afraid of pushing boundaries
- To be open-minded and flexible
- To be adaptable
- To build trustworthy partnerships and relationships



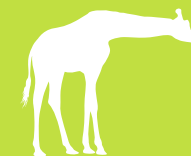
Photo Credit: © davidezanon / Adobe Stock

## GCF Objectives

GCF is dedicated to a sustainable future for all giraffe populations in the wild.

GCF's objective is to raise awareness and support towards securing a future for giraffe and the conservation of their habitat in Africa and, more specifically, to:

- support the conservation of viable and existing habitat for giraffe;
- identify key threats to giraffe in Africa and develop innovative ways to mitigate them;
- raise awareness of and promote the value of giraffe conservation in the African Range States as well as internationally;
- plan, develop, implement and administer projects and programmes – including the appointment of project staff – in support of its primary aim, in cooperation with local communities and partner institutions, as appropriate;
- collaborate with local, national and international partners on giraffe conservation efforts in the interests of giraffe conservation in the African Range States; and
- raise funds for giraffe conservation and management throughout Africa.



## Board of Directors

As GCF continues to grow in impact and in size, we are making sure that all checks and balances are in place to be fully accountable on all levels. Adding valuable skill sets and knowledge to the GCF Board of Directors is a very important part of this process.

It was with a heavy heart that we bade Tom Leiden farewell at the end of this financial year. Tom was instrumental in setting up GCF-USA and it is no exaggeration when we say that giraffe conservation would not be where it is today without him.

With regard to our new board members, we are confident that they will help GCF to continue on its current impact trajectory. GCF's multi-national board includes professionals who represent seven countries, four continents, and diverse business profiles.

The Board of Directors includes the following members:

*Julian Fennessy*

*Stephanie Fennessy*

*Till Hollmann*

*Chris Kelsch*

*Lars Markgren*

*Melle Orford*

*Tim Tetzlaff*

*Lindy van den Bosch*

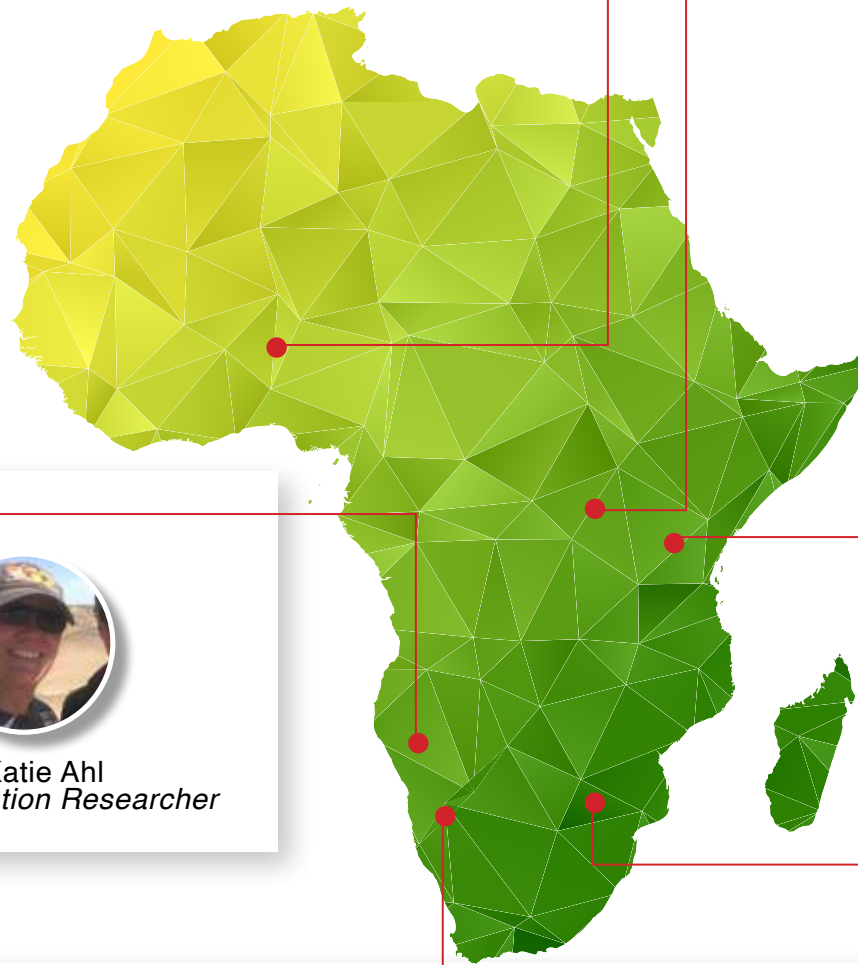


# GCF TEAM



Saving giraffe is a team effort and working with local and international partners is key. GCF's multi-national team includes people from 16 countries and four continents. Our team supports giraffe conservation initiatives in 16 culturally diverse African countries.

Meet GCF's international team:



## Northwest (Namibia):



Emma Wells  
Conservation Researcher



Katie Ahl  
Conservation Researcher

## Windhoek (Namibia):



Naemi Antonius  
Senior Environmental Educator



Petrus 'Audi' Ekandjo  
Environmental Educator



Martha Haukongo  
Environmental Educator



Steph Fennessy  
Co-Founder & Director



Dr Julian Fennessy  
Co-Founder & Director



Kudawashe Mbaiwa  
Finance Assistant



Maria Pimenta Shaetonhodi  
Finance & Operations Manager



Claire Gall  
Administrator

## Niamey (Niger):



Souley Kouato Larwanou  
Administrator



Cloe Pourchier  
Technical Coordinator



Abdoul Razack Moussa Zabeirou  
Programme Officer

## Murchison Falls NP (Uganda):



Dr Sara Ferguson  
Uganda Conservation Coordinator



Dr Patrick Okello  
Wildlife Veterinarian

## Nairobi (Kenya):



Matthew Muruana Wachira  
Programme Officer



Dr Arthur Muneza  
East Africa Coordinator

## Save Valley (Zimbabwe):



Livingstone 'Livi' Hoda  
Conservation Researcher

## Front Royal (USA):



Dr Michael Butler Brown  
Conservation Science Fellow







## KEY CONSERVATION PARTNERS

**Working with partners is the core of GCF's values and conservation approach.** Over the past years we have forged numerous key conservation partnerships around the world, particularly throughout Africa. We are proud to work closely with our partners towards saving giraffe in the wild.

This is not an exhaustive list; however, we would like to highlight our core conservation partners that we collaborated with throughout the African continent in 2020/21. We are fortunate that there are many more organisations and individuals who continue to provide invaluable support. All your assistance is important and together we stand tall for giraffe.

**Above:** Together with our partners, we stick our necks out for giraffe conservation in Africa. Photo Credit: © belizar - shutterstock.com



AFRICAN  
CONSERVATION  
CENTRE



Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute





# STATUS

**Today, the iconic giraffe and their habitat remain under a high level of conservation threat.**

In 2016, giraffe as a single species were categorised as 'Vulnerable' by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List, following the analysis of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Giraffe & Okapi Specialist Group (GOSG) with input from many GCF staff members (who are also members of the IUCN SSC GOSG).

To better understand the current situation and how giraffe numbers have evolved since the IUCN assessment was undertaken in 2015, we led a comprehensive review of their current abundance and evaluated these trends. With the new taxonomic classification of four distinct species of giraffe, we could better define the conservation status of each species and understand the diverse challenges they face throughout Africa.

The good news is that overall giraffe numbers are on the rise and that the conservation efforts we and many of our partners are undertaking appear to be successful. Estimated at a total of 97,562 individuals in 2015, our 2020 review shows a 20% growth to 117,173 giraffe in the wild today. Most importantly, these numbers are increasing across all four species of giraffe. This is the first time that such trends have been reported in recent history. The following is a brief overview of our findings.

## Northern giraffe (*G. camelopardalis*)

Consisting of three subspecies – Kordofan (*G. camelopardalis antiquorum*), Nubian (*G. c. camelopardalis*) and West African (*G. c. peralta*) giraffe – northern giraffe remain distributed in small, fragmented populations across East, Central and West Africa. Note that as the formerly recognised Rothschild's giraffe is genetically indistinguishable from the Nubian giraffe, they are therefore subsumed. While numbers remain precariously low, their increasing numbers show a positive trend, particularly in Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Niger.

**2015: 4,774**

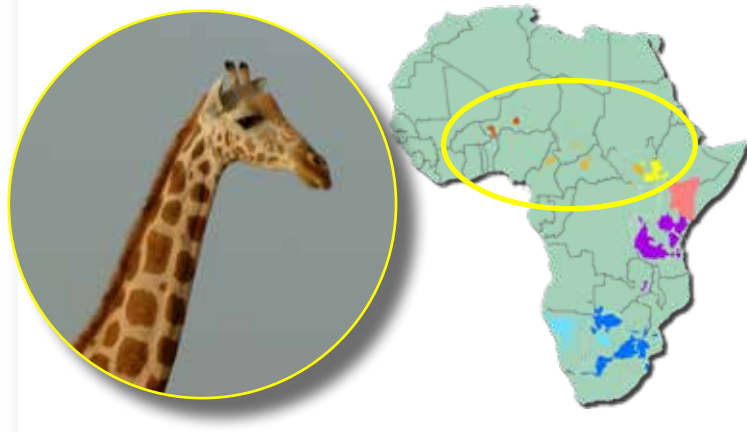
**2020: 5,919 (increased by 24%)**

**Proposed conservation status:**

**Critically Endangered**

**Country occurrence:**

**Native:** Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Niger, South Sudan, Uganda



## Masai giraffe (*G. tippelskirchi*)

Masai giraffe are now the second most populous giraffe taxa with a widespread distribution throughout East Africa, including large parts of southern Kenya and central and northern Tanzania. A small extra-limital population also exists in the Akagera National Park in Rwanda. Note that as the Luangwa giraffe (*G. t. thornicrofti*) is closely related to the Masai giraffe, the range of the Masai giraffe extends into the South Luangwa Valley in northern Zambia. The increasing number of Masai giraffe is a very positive trend, which can be attributed to a combination of improved and targeted surveys that capture more animals and localised successful conservation interventions.

**2015: 31,611**

**2020: 45,402 (increased by 44%)**

**Proposed conservation status:**

**Vulnerable**

**Country occurrence:**

**Native:** Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia

**Introduced:** Rwanda



# OF GIRAFFE 2020

## Reticulated giraffe (*G. reticulata*)

Historically, it is likely that reticulated giraffe had a relatively limited distribution in northern Kenya, southern Somalia and southern Ethiopia. Today, their numbers and range in Ethiopia and Somalia remain essentially unknown. Kenya, especially outside of formerly protected areas in the northern Kenyan rangelands and the Laikipia Plateau, remains their stronghold. In 2015, the first-ever IUCN Red List assessment for reticulated giraffe underestimated their total number, which was subsequently amended in 2016. As such, the large increase since the previous assessment can be attributed to more accurate survey data rather than a substantial population growth. Additional targeted surveys are required to better assess the status of reticulated giraffe in the wild.

**2015: 8,661**

**2020: 15,985 (increased by 85%)**

**Proposed conservation status:**

**Endangered**

**Country occurrence:**

**Native:** Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia



## Southern giraffe (*G. giraffa*)

Consisting of two subspecies – Angolan giraffe (*G. g. angolensis*) and South African giraffe (*G. g. giraffa*) – southern giraffe are now the most abundant giraffe species. Southern giraffe are distributed throughout most parts of southern Africa and more widely through extra-limital introductions. During the early 20th century southern giraffe populations were decimated, but they have since rebounded over the past few decades. Increasing habitat in formally protected areas and swathes of private and communal land combined with intensive management and translocations may not only have helped to increase their numbers but have also potentially resulted in hybridisation of the two subspecies, which may now threaten their genetic distinctness (biodiversity). Targeted research is needed to better understand the impact of hybridisation.

**2015: 51,696**

**2020: 48,016 (decreased by 7%)**

**Excluding: 1,851 extra-limital giraffe**

**Excluding: 1,534 hybrid giraffe (Angolan/South African giraffe)**

**Proposed conservation status:**

**Least Concern**

**Country occurrence:**

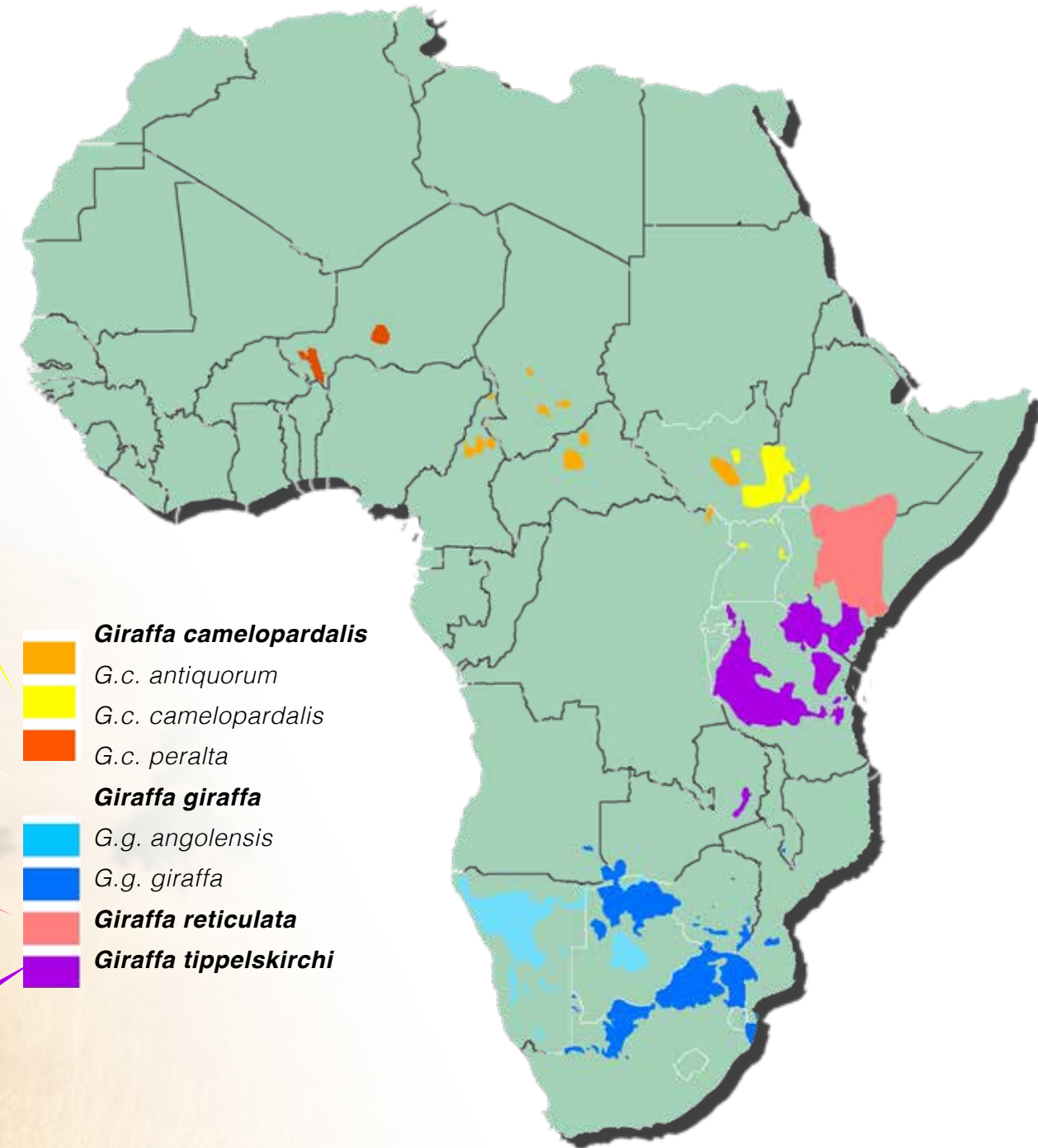
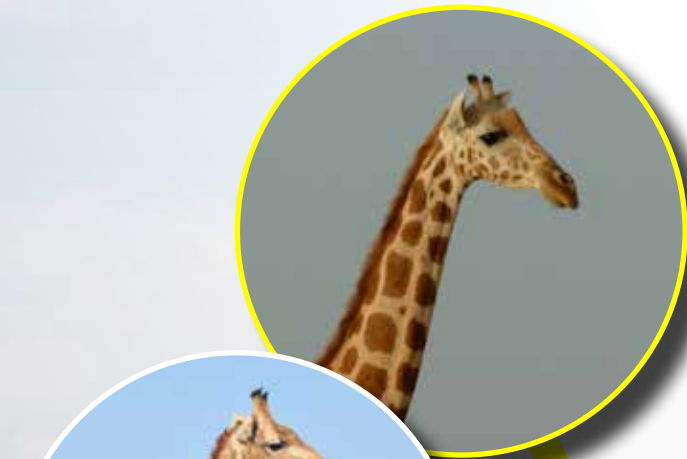
**Native:** Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe

**Extra-limital:** Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Senegal





# STATUS OF GIRAFFE 2020



For more details see  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-821139-7.00139-2>

**LEFT:** Giraffe have lost almost 90% of their historical habitat in the last 300 years.  
 Photo Credit: By Sergey Novikov / Adobe Stock





# GCF Programmes & Initiatives

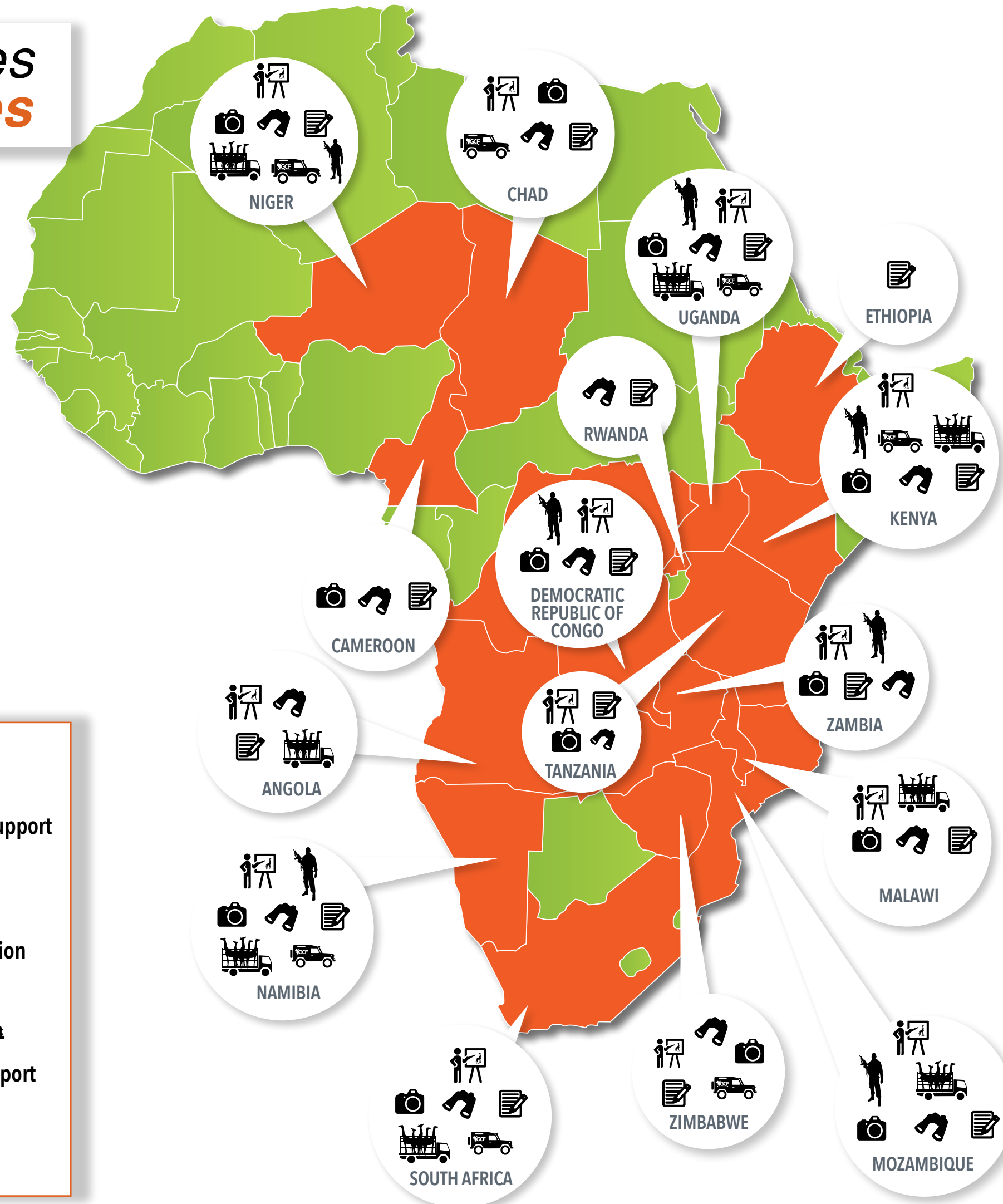
**GCF** currently works in **16 African countries** and has an impact in over 100 million acres of giraffe habitat. Our work concerns all four species of giraffe. As a lean and highly effective organisation, we strive to structure our initiatives and programmes in a way that allows our supporters to easily see where and how we work.

Our programmes and initiatives range from on-the-ground desnaring and anti-poaching support to on-going continent-wide genetics assessments of giraffe, from primary school environmental education to providing expert advice to African governments, and from giraffe field surveys to using cutting-edge technology to track giraffe remotely. The figure provides a snapshot of the nature of our giraffe conservation involvement throughout Africa. Please visit our website for more information on these programmes. In addition, each of our three overarching Africa-wide initiatives – the Twiga Tracker, Twiga Wetu and the Giraffe Conservation Health Initiatives – expand across several countries and involve all four giraffe species.

The following are some key programme highlights of this financial year: In Uganda, our collaborative mobile veterinary programme with the Uganda Wildlife Authority desnared more giraffe (and other wildlife) than any other similar programme on the continent. In Kenya, we worked with and supported the Kenya Wildlife Service to better understand the bushmeat trade in the country. In Tanzania, we expanded our genetic sampling alongside skin disease monitoring with the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute and we supported local community conservation efforts in the north of the country. In Niger, our ongoing conservation monitoring and support of the last West African giraffe continued, despite security concerns. In Chad and the Cameroon, we provided additional support

to giraffe conservation efforts. Throughout Southern Africa, our work has expanded: In Zimbabwe, we worked closely with ZimParks and private concessionaires to support giraffe conservation; in Mozambique, we forged partnerships for new programmes; and in northwest Namibia, we continued our long-term monitoring programme, working closely with communal, private and public stakeholders, and we supported several giraffe conservation translocations. Against all the odds, it has definitely been a busy year for GCF.

Giraffe conservation cannot be addressed in isolation. This last year, GCF expanded its environmental education reach and materials across the continent, particularly amongst people who share their living space with giraffe. We are committed to enhancing conservation capacity and to instilling a way of life that embraces conservation principles in Africa by engaging with different people on all levels. ■







The UWA/GCF mobile veterinary team safely removes a wire snare from this Critically Endangered Nubian giraffe in Murchison Falls National Park, Uganda.

### Through our Giraffe Conservation Health Initiative,

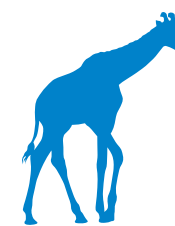
we are tackling innovative giraffe conservation management from a veterinary science and conservation medicine perspective.

This new initiative incorporates a wide range of aspects, from evaluating the best immobilisation practices for giraffe, addressing disease threats and health issues in wild giraffe populations, enhancing capacity building of the next generation of African wildlife veterinarians, to assisting in the development of new technology for satellite tracking and methods for conservation translocations.

Immobilising giraffe is a challenging task that many wildlife veterinarians shy away from. While their long necks and graceful legs make them one of the most iconic animals in Africa, their unique anatomy and physiology require a true mastery of wildlife capture and immobilisation. Through constant scientific analysis of current immobilisation practices and advanced training, we can significantly reduce the

risk that immobilisation poses to giraffe, which is a critical part of some of our work. With this knowledge that we have gained, we are able to inform our conservation programmes, to undertake conservation translocations that have already expanded the giraffe range in Africa by over 6.5 million acres, and to provide quick and effective treatment for giraffe entangled in illegal wire snares – all of which truly help to save the four giraffe species. Working together with foremost wildlife veterinarians and wildlife capture teams in Africa, it is our goal to continue developing and implementing best practice guidelines and to equip wildlife veterinary and capture teams with experience and knowledge to ensure the safety of wild giraffe.

Building the capacity of local Africans is at the core of our work throughout the continent and it is also one of the main priorities of our Giraffe Conservation Health Initiative. GCF has been instrumental in providing capacity building during our in-country projects and in supporting the additional training of African veterinarians



# Giraffe Conservation Health Initiative

in targeted wildlife medicine and game capture courses and exchange visits over the past decade. To provide increased training opportunities for African veterinarians, we are further developing our veterinary internship programme in the Murchison Falls National Park in Uganda. This programme offers a two-year, hands-on training opportunity for recent Ugandan veterinary graduates, who are paired with experienced practitioners to support the work of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). This internship programme builds off the incredible work the UWA/GCF mobile veterinary team has achieved over the past two years.

Poaching, particularly the use of illegal wire snare traps, is a major conservation threat to the critically endangered Nubian giraffe (and other wildlife), especially in Uganda's Murchison Falls National Park. Since 2019, GCF has taken an active role in supporting veterinary response and anti-poaching operations with the UWA. As part of our targeted support to the UWA's mobile vet unit, we provide both technical and physical support to survey efforts for the identification of snared giraffe (and other wildlife) and to the subsequent appropriate veterinary interventions. Through this work we reduce the impact of wire snares on giraffe (and other wildlife) by facilitating the early identification and removal of wire snares, ideally before any significant damage occurs, and by providing the appropriate treatment and supportive care. The UWA/GCF team performs three to four vehicle patrols per week around the Murchison Falls National Park, focusing mostly on areas that are known hot spots for snare/poaching activities. So far, the UWA/GCF mobile vet team has desnares over 380 animals in total, including over 235 critically endangered Nubian giraffe. This

is the largest giraffe desnaring programme to ever be conducted in the wild. While it is not ideal that an intervention is necessary for so many animals, this programme offers an amazing opportunity for young Ugandan veterinarians to gain valuable experience in wildlife capture of giraffe and other wildlife species in the park, including lion, elephant, different antelope species, chimpanzees and more, by working alongside the UWA team in rescuing wildlife affected by illegal wire snare traps.

As with all our initiatives, we also aim to address key knowledge gaps in giraffe conservation. Relatively little is known about diseases that affect giraffe in the wild and whether any of these diseases or medical conditions are of concern to their survival. Giraffe Skin Disease (GSD) is one such condition and we continue to improve our understanding of it as well as the impact it has on giraffe. GSD is an emerging disease, largely observed in East Africa, which causes grey scaly lesions on the neck, shoulders and limbs. We are currently investigating how this disease, which is most likely caused by a skin parasite, is spread and its potential impact on the long-term health of giraffe. We work closely with African governments and national and international partners to identify and further investigate different aspects of giraffe health as they arise and to determine the best way to address them. At the same time, we constantly review current medical practices and new advancements in giraffe health to make best-practice protocols freely available to all interested parties.

Our ambition is to establish an Africa-wide network of highly qualified wildlife veterinary professionals who will collaborate and continue to enhance giraffe conservation throughout the continent. ■



# **TWIGA TRACKER** *INITIATIVE*

The **Twiga Tracker Initiative** is an ambitious conservation research programme designed to develop deeper understandings of giraffe spatial ecology and movement decisions across diverse habitat types throughout Africa. Habitat loss and fragmentation are among some of the greatest threats to giraffe conservation throughout their range; therefore, the identification of habitat needs, space use requirements, and corridors between habitat patches is essential for the conservation of intact landscapes for viable giraffe populations. Using cutting-edge GPS tracking technology and analytical techniques, GCF and partners are examining patterns of giraffe movement at scales previously unattainable by science; subsequently, these studies are yielding concrete conservation outcomes.

Over the past four years a growing network of research partners, spearheaded by GCF, has deployed over 200 specially designed GPS tracking units on all four species of giraffe in eight African countries. Along with informing conservation management at local scales and providing crucial insights, GCF is studying how giraffe interact with this remarkable diversity of habitats. Unifying the understandings of giraffe movement ecology and space use requires systematic analyses across these different ecosystems. Furthermore, the data collected from these studies is instrumental in guiding giraffe conservation strategies throughout their range.

The Twiga Tracker Initiative continues to yield incredible scientific insights into giraffe movement decisions, from the first descriptions of partial migration in giraffe, understanding giraffe connectivity across a multiple-use landscape in northern Kenya, to understanding giraffe chronobiology and movement responses

to lunar luminosity. This data is essential for deepening the scientific understandings of giraffe movement. So far, the Twiga Tracker Initiative has led to the publication of over ten peer-reviewed scientific studies, with many more in progress.

In addition to the valuable scientific data these units are providing, they are, most importantly, proving to be extraordinarily valuable for active conservation management programmes. In association with Vulcan's EarthRanger, GCF and partners (such as the Smithsonian Conservation

Biology Institute) are developing platforms to share giraffe location data in real-time with partners on the ground.

Using laptops or smartphones, our field teams and partners can access the latest locations of tagged giraffe to design more targeted patrols and monitoring programmes. Using these

technologies, ranger teams (such as those in Pian Upe Wildlife Reserve in Uganda) have been able to locate and

monitor tagged giraffe in the vast trackless savannahs to monitor their health and status, particularly after conservation translocations to new areas.

GCF recently partnered with the Kenya Wildlife Service to monitor giraffe movements in and around the Amboseli National Park. This collaboration has already documented one giraffe traversing the international borderline between Kenya and Tanzania. These transboundary movements further illustrate the value of directly engaging with the community and landscape-level conservation initiatives to ensure that these animals have the space and diverse habitats they need.

At the same time, our field team in Namibia has compiled an interesting and very encouraging statistic: 16 of the 18 female giraffe we are tracking remotely in northwest Namibia have



given birth while fitted with tracking devices. This means that these females were tagged either before or while in the early stages of pregnancy. This high reproductive success rate is a clear indication that fitting or carrying GPS tracking units has a minimal impact on giraffe.

GCF remains committed to using the best available science to design and support effective conservation strategies for giraffe throughout their range. The spatial data and habitat utilisation information collected by these units provide unique and critical insights into the resources that giraffe require. As data continues to stream into our servers from our various research sites, our team is hard at work monitoring their movements and analysing space use to figure out ambitious and creative new ways to conserve giraffe. Even during the travel restrictions imposed over the past year, data was continuously collected and transmitted, which provides critical insights into how giraffe move across diverse landscapes. ■



**ABOVE:** Twiga Tracker is the largest giraffe tracking initiative in Africa.

## **Twiga Tracker in numbers:**

Over **200** unique giraffe tracked

In **8** African countries

Covering all **4** species of giraffe and their subspecies

**459,803 hours** of giraffe tracking

Total travel distance travelled by all tracked giraffe: **135,493 km**

Most travelled: **3,442 km** by a female Angolan giraffe in northwestern Namibia

Over **10** peer-reviewed publications derived from Twiga Tracker data





# ‘Our Giraffe’

## The Twiga Wetu Initiative



**LEFT:** Giraffe can only be saved in Africa - by African people.  
Photo Credit: © Anabel / Adobe Stock

**BELOW LEFT:** Working with local communities is key to giraffe conservation.

**BELOW:** Most African children have never seen a giraffe in the wild.



Given the fast human population growth and expansion of settlements, it has become increasingly clear that saving and protecting giraffe requires enhanced participation and input from communities that share their living space with these gentle giants of Africa. In fact, a 2019 study by GCF and partners showed that 70% of Africa’s giraffe are found outside government-managed protected areas. As such, GCF recently grouped all its community-based programmes under one umbrella: the Twiga Wetu Initiative (Swahili for ‘Our Giraffe’). Giraffe roam freely in many landscapes close to human settlements, where they share living space and face many threats. Twiga Wetu aims to further partnerships with local communities

to support wildlife conservation and, more importantly, to protect giraffe and their habitats. The following are a few examples of Twiga Wetu in action in 2020/21.

In **northern Kenya** we work with the Twiga Walinzi team (Swahili for ‘Giraffe Guards’), which works to conserve the endangered reticulated giraffe across northern Kenya in the Loisaba Wildlife Conservancy, Namunyak Community Wildlife Conservancy and Ruko Wildlife Conservancy. The Twiga Walinzi Initiative was established by the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, with support from GCF and other partners. The community outreach research conducted by the Twiga Walinzi has been crucial for the documentation of human-related mortalities of giraffe and road kills in major wildlife

corridors, as well as the monitoring of giraffe population trends in northern Kenya. In the last year, despite the challenges posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Twiga Walinzi team coordinated community meetings, school visits, and the placement of camera traps. Additionally, the team facilitated giraffe surveys in the Mugie Wildlife Conservancy and Ol Jogi Wildlife Conservancy. As part of our ongoing partnership, we have expanded our environmental education programme to incorporate the GCF Nature Workbook in school trips organized by the Twiga Walinzi.

In **Uganda**, in addition to the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), we work with two main partners to implement community outreach programmes. In and around the

Lake Mburo National Park, we support the Giraffe Education and Research (GEAR) programme to engage local communities during site visits, and radio and print media outreach to raise awareness for giraffe conservation. Even though schools were closed for most of 2020 due to the pandemic and elections, GEAR continued to field monitor the translocated giraffe (15 introduced in 2015 and now yielding 37 individuals!) and focused on conducting radio interviews and shows to discuss the dangers that wire snares pose to giraffe populations. We hope that the giraffe conservation message driven by local researchers will connect with more people in the country to drive up support. ■





**FAR LEFT:** During the KEEP Field Day, Namibian children learn a lot about giraffe.

**LEFT:** Working with local communities is key to giraffe conservation.

**BELOW:** Getting close to a giraffe on foot is a very special experience.

In the Murchison Falls National Park we partner with the Snares to Wares Initiative. As part of our partnership with Snares to Ware and the UWA, wire traps are removed from the park through regular sweeps and then repurposed into works of art. To provide income for these conservation craftspeople, their artworks are sold locally and internationally. To address the root cause of the problem, we have also expanded our collaboration to include live call-in radio talk shows, informative movie nights, the disbursement of education materials, and the incorporation of the GCF Nature Workbook in communities through school visits around the park.

To document the distribution of giraffe populations and the threats they face in the village lands between the Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Conservation Area in Tanzania, we recently partnered with the Traditional Ecosystems Survival Tanzania (TEST). Through this partnership, TEST has initiated a community outreach programme using giraffe, the national animal of Tanzania, as the key flagship species. TEST conducts field surveys of giraffe in the

Ngorongoro district, where Masai giraffe live between human settlements in the Masai community. As a result, several young Masai have volunteered to continue monitoring the giraffe population near Oloipiri, which will promote interest in giraffe conservation initiatives.

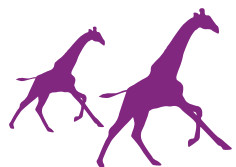
In **Namibia**, we work closely with communal conservancies where people live alongside giraffe. The support of local community members is most important for our efforts to learn more about giraffe in the wild and to increase their range in the country. Our flagship environmental education programme is the Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP), which aims to inspire young Namibians to develop a passion for nature and to learn more about their environment. In a normal, pre-COVID year, the KEEP team took an average of 2,500-3,000 Namibian primary school students into the field for an exciting and hands-on outing. Unfortunately, the programme came to a grinding halt with school closures and other restrictions. In spite of this, the KEEP team was not deterred from sharing important

conservation messages. The team started to film its own environmental education videos, which were shared widely on social media and by WhatsApp with children and teachers in Namibia. Based on these episodes, we forged a partnership with One Africa TV (a Namibian TV station) and Tribefire Studios (a Namibian TV production company). Together we produced a series

of eight environmental education episodes, which will be screened on DSTV's One Africa – Learning on One channel. Against all the odds, the KEEP team hosted over 650 Namibian primary school students and their teachers, as well as several dedicated groups of teachers, tour guides and students from the Namibia University of Science and Technology. ■







# Conservation Translocations

## *Giraffe were on the move again!*

While many people around the world were stuck at home during this past year, GCF and giraffe were on the move all over Africa! In 2020/21, GCF supported conservation translocations of 55 giraffe in three African countries. Together with our many partners, we successfully translocated giraffe in Namibia, South Africa and Uganda. Conservation translocations are an important conservation tool to bolster existing small populations and to bring giraffe back to areas where they have become locally extinct.

We are very excited to let you know that Operation Twiga V was another great

success in Uganda! Thanks to YOUR support on World Giraffe Day 2020, in November 2020 15 critically endangered Nubian giraffe were safely translocated from the Murchison Falls National Park to the Pian Upe Wildlife Reserve, where they joined the giraffe that were moved in Operation Twiga IV in 2019.

Also in November 2020, we moved 10 South African giraffe to the Somkhanda Community Game Reserve in South Africa to give the small existing giraffe population a boost. This translocation is not only good news for giraffe but also for the local community that owns the reserve. A healthy

giraffe population has the potential to attract more tourists, which in turn will provide employment opportunities and income for the local community.

Last but not least, in June 2020, together with the Namibian Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and other partners, we moved 30 Angolan giraffe in Namibia. These Angolan giraffe made their way safely to the Mangetti National Park and two communal conservancies across northern Namibia to

bolster the existing populations. Namibia's Community-Based Natural Resource Management Programme, which shows that people can share their space with wildlife, is often used as a model for community conservation programmes.

Saving giraffe is a collaborative effort. As an indicator of the impact GCF is having on helping to better conserve and manage giraffe throughout the continent, over the past five years GCF has helped translocate 157 giraffe more than 11,000 km to re-establish or augment more than 6.5 million acres of land across Africa. Excitingly, since these translocations more than 40 calves have been born in these new populations, increasing their overall numbers by almost 130%. We could not do this important work without our many partners. Thank you for standing tall! ■



**ABOVE:** First steps in their new home: these Angolan giraffe will roam freely on communal land in Namibia.



**LEFT:** GCF continues to explore different attachment methods for tracking units.



**BELOW:** Giraffe on the move.





**ABOVE:** Getting close to a giraffe is a unique and unforgettable experience.  
Photo Credit: © digitalskillet1 / Adobe Stock

# Capacity Enhancement & Awareness



**W**ith a firm base in Africa, it is only natural that GCF is involved in conservation and development initiatives that reach far beyond giraffe; however, giraffe conservation and management will always be at the core of all GCF activities. All GCF activities are based on our core belief that giraffe can only be saved in Africa by African people.

Enhancing the capacity, education and awareness in conservation is an important aspect of our work and one of our priorities throughout the continent. GCF has and continues to support students at all levels throughout Africa in developing a passion for conservation, enhancing their skills and, most importantly, protecting giraffe.

To further engage young Africans in conservation and to encourage a positive and caring attitude for their natural environment, we have expanded our environmental education efforts and now support environmental education programmes for primary and secondary school students in many countries, including Kenya, Namibia, Tanzania and Uganda. Our Africa-wide Nature Workbook is a popular resource that is used widely in programmes and initiatives that aim to create more awareness and education for Africa's future leaders.

Additionally, we continue to provide professional training and support to conservationists with special focus on giraffe through supporting dedicated field programmes, courses and workshops/symposiums. Despite the limitations in 2020/21, GCF continued to work closely with a host of conservation, natural science and veterinary students, NGO and government staff, tourism operators, and community conservancy teams in Kenya, Namibia, Niger, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

## Students supported by GCF:

- Ali Abagana (Niger),  
*PhD – Maridi University, Niger*
- Kateřina Gařparova (Niger),  
*PhD – Czech University of Life Sciences, Czech Republic*
- Jackson Hamutenya (Namibia),  
*MSc – Namibia University of Science and Technology, Namibia*
- Emma Hart (Namibia),  
*PhD – University College Dublin, Ireland*
- Clíodhna Hynes (Namibia),  
*MSc – University College Dublin, Ireland*
- Arthur Muneza (Kenya),  
*PhD – Michigan State University, USA*
- David O'Connor (Kenya),  
*PhD – Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany*
- Jaco Olivier (Zimbabwe),  
*PhD – Stellenbosch University, South Africa*
- Matthew Wachira (Kenya),  
*MSc – Nairobi University, Kenya*

Although travel restrictions have made it more difficult to engage with our supporters face-to-face, the GCF team has continued to embrace new communication technologies. Our team participated in numerous virtual Social Media Live events, online meetings and conferences, and Podcast interviews, reaching tens of thousands of people. If we cannot travel to talk about giraffe, we have to explore alternative ways to spread our important conservation message. ■





# GCF FINANCIAL SUMMARY

This year has placed many financial challenges in front of most people. A heightened level of insecurity and unpredictability has become part of our lives. However, despite these difficulties and the unprecedented global situation, we have continued to receive valuable support for giraffe conservation. In saying that, our accumulated reserves of the past few years have put GCF in a solid financial position and have allowed us to promise all staff a secure employment position when so many of their family members and colleagues – particularly in Africa – have lost their jobs. We are incredibly proud of this achievement and we would like to thank all our donors for their support and the trust they have put into GCF and our team. We can only do what we do because of you; so, thank YOU!

## Funds Received

**Donations & Grants**    \$ 1,319,797

**Other Income**    \$125,881  
*(merchandise sale, interest received and other)*

**TOTAL**  
**\$ 1,445,678**

91%

9%

Photo Credit: © By mbolina / Adobe Stock

All amounts  
are in USD.

## Expenditure

**Programme & Grant Expenses**  
*(conservation, education & awareness)*  
**\$ 881,070**

**Operational & Administrative Expenses**  
**\$ 73,628**

**TOTAL**  
**\$ 954,697**

92%

8%



In June 2020, Guidestar awarded GCF with a Platinum Seal of Transparency. This seal is only awarded to charities that can fulfil their rigorous criteria and display the highest levels of transparency within their operations and results. We are proud to have satisfied their strict scrutiny, which means that as a supporter, you can be assured that all your donations are put to good use in securing a future for giraffe in the wild throughout Africa.



# **D O N O R S**

Our increasing number of generous donors is a testament to GCF's success. Again, this year, we received financial support from organisations, foundations and private donors from over 40 countries. Without this support, we would not have been able to do our work and save giraffe in Africa.

As our donor list continues to get longer and longer, we have decided to include only those who donated US\$300 and above in this report. However, every donation helps. We appreciate all your amazing support, and we could not continue with our important work without you – thank you!

We would like to extend a special thank you to Shores, Tagman, Butler & Company and The Metzger Group at Morgan Stanley for their administrative and financial management support.

## **\$50,000 and above**

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo  
Ivan Carter Wildlife Conservation Alliance  
Lars Markgren  
Moet Hennessy US / Glenmorangie  
Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens  
Royal Zoological Society of Scotland

## **\$25,000 - \$49,999**

Chantecaille Beaute  
Cheyenne Mountain Zoo  
Eric Flossic & family  
IUCN Save Our Species / European Union  
Kratt Family  
Randall Lamb & Carvel Glenn  
The Safari Collection  
San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance  
Kathleen Patricia Trasler  
Waterloo Foundation

## **\$10,000 - \$24,999**

Auckland Zoo  
Beauval Nature  
Born Free Foundation  
Detroit Zoo  
Friends of Zoo Boise  
Galanthus Foundation  
Gerald the Giraffe  
(Lauren Kimbro & Daniel Houck)  
Lehigh Valley Zoo  
Mey Share Foundation  
Omaze  
Save Giraffes Now  
Tapeats Fund  
Topeka Zoo  
Zoo New England

## **\$5,000 - \$9,999**

Alabama Safari Park  
Otis & Elizabeth Chandler family  
Cranaleith Foundation  
Fota Wildlife Park  
Sallyann Garner  
Cathy & Sandy Godwin  
Michael & JoAnn Hamm  
Natural Selection  
NedBank GoGreen Fund  
Parc Animalier d'Auvergne  
Riverbanks Zoo & Garden  
Rufford Foundation  
Stichting Wildlife Beekse Bergen  
Gail Stockman  
Pamela Tate  
Total E&P Uganda B.V.  
Vulli - Sophie la girafe  
Wags & Menace Make a Difference Foundation  
Wilhelma Zoo Stuttgart  
Woodland Park Zoo  
World Giraffe Day  
Celebration Facebook Group  
Zoo Atlanta

## **\$1,000 - \$4,999**

Linda Bickham  
Big Dawg Shirt Shack  
Joseph Boenitz Jr  
Linda Borders  
Buffalo Zoo  
Susan Carey  
Conservation Film Company  
Nedra Crow  
Colleen Crowley  
Donna De Weil

Catherine Elhoffer  
Jaya Jovita Flores-Dixit  
Friends of the Zoo of Springfield  
Robert Fulton  
Victoria Gordon & Bob Bradley  
Greater Cleveland AAZK Chapter  
Guardian of Wildlife  
Meryt & Peter Harding  
Vaughn Hasslein  
Joy Helbing  
Henry Vilas Zoo  
Maya Higa  
Till Hollmann  
Honolulu Zoo  
Graeme Hunter  
Joyce Kaneshiro & James Poley  
Kansas City Zoo  
Kristine Karnos  
Lehman Keen  
Ann Marie Kohlligian  
La Passerelle Conservation  
Lake Tobias Wildlife Park  
Lewina's Safari  
Tzu-Chi Lin  
Los Angeles AAZK Chapter  
Sheryl & Gary Lum  
Jason Martin  
Milwaukee County Zoo  
Sandra Moss  
Linda & Bill Murray  
Missy Nowell  
Zeus & Stephanie Peleuses  
Dave Penswick  
Sandi Perlman  
John & Nuri Pierce  
David Posner  
Pupkewitz Foundation

Cheryl Rothman  
Safari Game Search Foundation  
Sedgwick County Zoo  
Seneca Park Zoo  
Seril Pixel Biologist!  
Fred Terman & Nan Borreson  
Toronto Zoo  
Robert & Margaret Van Andel  
Jorge Vazquez  
Joseph Vervaecke  
Laurel Walsh  
White Post Farms  
Zoo de la Boissiere du Dore  
la Chataigneraie  
Zoo Dresden  
Zoos South Australia

## **\$300 - \$999**

Active Alternative Energies  
Elena Adrianza-Tangrea  
Saadia Akhtar  
Jaennette Allen  
Sydney Arkowitz  
Brigitte Baldo  
Carol Barrett  
Yury Belyaev  
Rachel Bhattacharyya  
Guy Bibby  
Lauren Birk  
Daniela Bliem  
Eleanore Bonyun  
Brights Zoo  
Sharron Juliet Brill  
Coreen Brubaker  
Shirley Brueggeman  
Guido Bruins  
Jan Bruner  
Thomas Burton  
Joseph Cassis  
Frank Cermak  
Qiqi Chin  
Barbara Clark  
Peter Clayworth  
Erika Compart  
George Corrente  
Jennifer Cory  
Erin Cunningham  
Jo Anne Dale  
Pamala Davis  
Simone De Gregorio  
Josh de Waard  
John DeMarco  
Desert Spring Family Care  
Mark Donovan

John Douglass  
Nancy Duarte  
Andrea Ewald & Stephan Meyer-Ewald  
Mareike Ilse Fabig  
Andreas Faerber  
Elizabeth Fain  
Lucas Fernandes  
Judy Ficociello  
Sandra Fodey  
Nancy & Chip Ford  
Vicki Fragasso  
Frank Buck Zoo  
Andreas Franz  
Gloria Freeman  
Denise Gaines  
Nicole Gallo  
GigiRaffe  
Lynn Gilbert  
Edward Gilpin  
Giraffa.co  
The Glenmorangie Company  
Veronique Gonneville  
Damon & Teri Ground  
Alison Heathcote  
Dirk Heimermann  
Monica Howard  
Mark Januszewski  
Christopher Jarvis  
Edward Jones  
Jason Kanter  
Bruce & Barbara Kantner  
Beth Kolbe  
Mark & Karen Koten  
Klara Kurowski  
Karen LaForest  
Lee Richardson Zoo  
John Lindquist  
Gracie Liphard  
Donald Livingstone  
Mark Lobene  
Loggerhead Marinelife Center  
Frank Maeden  
Mahon-Sanfilippo Family  
Jean McCarty  
Barbara McIntyre  
Bruce & Eleanor McLearn  
Katya Melliush  
Memphis Zoo AAZK Chapter  
Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden  
Thomas & Alison Milkman  
Dinah Miller  
Lynette Morgan

Michael Mould  
John Murphy  
Juliann Newcome  
Vicky Oberlander  
Omuta City Zoo  
Parco Natura Viva / ARCA Foundation  
Parco Zoo Punta Verde  
Erik Patzold  
Dani Paz  
Linda & Hartmut Peters  
John Price  
Michelle Ragg  
Joseph Rajewski  
Reid Park Zoo  
Mary Reilly  
Terry Reinbold  
Mieka Ritsema  
Monika Rodas  
Deborah Rogers  
Rolling Hills Zoo  
Julie Ross  
Zachary Russell  
Anna Schnetzer  
Seneca Park Zoo AAZK Chapter  
Brenda Serniak  
Lisa Shields  
Derek Sinclair  
Carol Smith  
Cynthia Snyder  
Sorbo Family  
Alex Spooner  
Heather Stout  
John Sturtevant  
Peter Sufka  
Ellen Sullivan  
Steve & Sandra Sykora Ross  
Cynthia Synar  
Tanganyika Wildlife Park  
Kristen Tauber  
CK Torrence III  
Andre Uckert  
James & Judith Wall  
Wendy Wanlass  
Bettina Weber  
Aimee Weiss  
Jona Werkheiser  
Jeff White  
Martin Whiting  
Emily Winter  
Tracy Wotten  
Samantha & Tabytha Zitola





# CONTACT

Giraffe Conservation Foundation



giraffeconservationfoundation



giraffe\_conservation



Save\_Giraffe



giraffeconservation.org

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