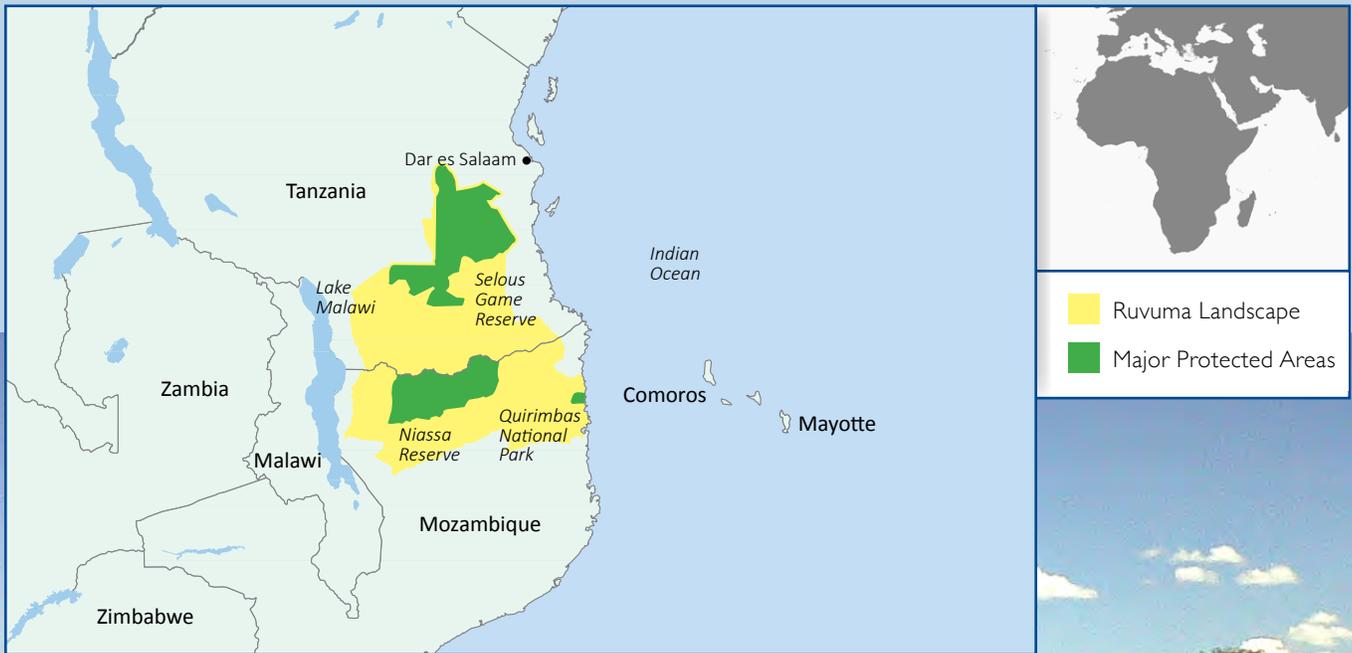




USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SCAPES LANDSCAPE PROFILE:

THE RUVUMA LANDSCAPE



RUVUMA LANDSCAPE, MOZAMBIQUE, 2013: Chipanje Chetu Block farms. Photo © Erica Rieder, WWF-US / WWF-Canon

THE RUVUMA LANDSCAPE AT A GLANCE

- The Ruvuma landscape covers 280,000 square kilometers in northern Mozambique and southern Tanzania.
- The project was implemented by the World Wildlife Fund and CARE.
- The project leveraged \$759,000 in matching funds from private family foundations and individuals in the United States.

THE PLACE AND THE PEOPLE

Sprawling across northern Mozambique and southern Tanzania, the Ruvuma landscape is a vast expanse of coastal forests, mangroves, woodlands, savannas and marine regions. It is home to a declining but still substantial elephant population and features a national park and two major game reserves, the Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania and the Niassa National Reserve in Mozambique. Threatened and endangered species such as black rhinos, savanna elephants, wild dogs, lions and leopards inhabit the landscape.

Life is hard for the people who live there. Average life expectancy is 35 years, the infant mortality rate is 29 percent, and the average annual income is \$150. Most people rely on subsistence agriculture to survive. Thanks to its large deposits of oil, gas, and other minerals, the sparsely populated region is drawing investment in infrastructure and speculative activities, which pose a long-term threat to the landscape if not handled carefully. Other threats include poaching, retaliatory killing of wildlife that raid crops or prey on livestock, habitat loss due to agricultural conversion, and illegal logging.



CHIPANJE CHETU, MOZAMBIQUE, 2014: Anton Said, government ranger shows a farm area damaged by elephants. Photo © James Morgan / WWF-Canon

CHIPANJE CHETU, MOZAMBIQUE, 2014: Jafari Aide with his grandson in Nova Madiera block farming area. Photo © James Morgan / WWF-Canon

THE CHALLENGE

The Ruvuma landscape was one of nine transboundary landscape-scale efforts in USAID's Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems (SCAPES) project. Conservation was undertaken by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in partnership with CARE and local institutions. In the Ruvuma, SCAPES had three priorities: unite Mozambique and Tanzania on transboundary conservation issues; promote community-based natural resource management; and help communities and governments adapt to climate change. This work was channeled into four wildlife corridors deemed vital to the long-term health of the landscape.

To encourage stakeholders to think about the landscape in a holistic way, the project coordinated visioning activities that brought together government agencies, communities, private-sector actors and non-governmental organizations. For the first time, central and provincial government agencies joined forces on landscape-level issues, including cross-border illegal trade and law enforcement. The project also led a landscape-level, participatory climate change vulnerability assessment for the four wildlife corridors through 2050. This helped stakeholders arrive at a common language, and it gave rise to the first coordinated wildlife censuses between the two countries.

Almost 28 percent of Tanzania's land is protected, and tourism plays a big role in the nation's economy. Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are a common means of protecting land in the country, through which communities share the benefits from tourism in exchange for their commitment to, and participation in, conservation measures. Historically, however, WMAs have lacked reliable monitoring tools. To address this, the project took the management-oriented monitoring system developed by WWF for conservancies in Namibia and applied it to seven WMAs, where it was used to track data on visitors, hunting activities, poaching, encroachment, wildlife sightings, human-wildlife conflict, patrol efforts and more. This data can guide management decisions and ensure that hunting quotas are set to preserve wildlife population levels while maximizing community benefits. The management-oriented monitoring system is being shared with other WMAs in

Tanzania, and villages in Mozambique are adapting the system for their own community conservation areas.

WWF teamed with CARE to develop 11 climate change vulnerability assessments at the community level in Mozambique and Tanzania, through which 782 people increased their capacity to adapt to climate variability. Income diversification and education are key adaptation strategies, but smallholder farmers are often unable to pay their children's school fees, finance a new business venture, or even improve seed, fertilizer, water management and post-harvest storage. In response, the project helped create five rotating credit and savings groups in Mozambique and eight village community banks in Tanzania. Some 240 people have benefited from those micro-financing schemes, allowing them to improve their living conditions and prospects for the future.

In Mozambique, WWF and CARE created farmer field schools in 11 villages, through which farmers learned conservation agriculture methods, tested climate-resilient crop varieties and shared the lessons with the wider community through field days. The project also introduced block farming in three areas, enlisting a total of 402 families on 1,016 hectares. Block farming, in which villagers farm in a single area rather than scatter their fields throughout the forest, is more consistent with conservation agriculture and allows them to better defend their crops against wildlife. The project trained farmers on how to use fireworks and other deterrents, including the use of sesame and sunflower plants as buffer crops, as they are unpalatable to elephants.

With support from the project, the forest agencies of Tanzania and Mozambique signed a memorandum of understanding to improve measures to stop illegal logging and the timber trade across their borders. In Mozambique, the project had a hand in developing two pieces of landmark conservation legislation: The Reduced Emissions for Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) Strategy and the Conservation Areas Act. The former establishes a framework for future REDD+ projects and carbon finance in the country, while the latter criminalizes poaching for the first time and includes provisions that support community-based natural resource management and strengthens the rights of communities.

THE LESSONS

Although Tanzania and Mozambique have much in common, their differences — most notably, their levels of economic development and conservation policies — required a “soft” approach to transboundary work. The project used the landscape-level climate change vulnerability assessment as a tangible, non-controversial activity for stakeholders from both countries to address together. Transboundary cooperation in the Ruvuma could have been a project unto itself, rather than one of several interventions, as it was in this landscape.

Effective monitoring systems require regular patrols, but the WMAs in the Ruvuma corridors have struggled to generate enough revenue to support them. More work is required to help the WMAs earn more from endeavors such as trophy hunting for high-value antelope, photographic tourism or forest carbon finance initiatives.

Changing minds and habits takes time. Honoring cultural differences while demonstrating the benefits of new farming techniques requires patience, respect and effective communication. Collaborative approaches are

essential, particularly when engaging communities as partners. Five years is a short window in which to launch nearly a dozen farmer field schools, persuade most farmers to adopt new practices, and generate evidence that links the approach to broader conservation outcomes. The results of this work may not be observed for years and depend, in part, on the extent to which SCAPES investments are sustained and scaled up.



TUNDURU WMA, TANZANIA, 2014: Erica Rieder, WWF-US, reviewing progress with WMA monitoring systems leaders and VGS at the Tunduru WMA office.
Photo © James Morgan / WWF-Canon



RUVUMA LANDSCAPE, MOZAMBIQUE, 2013: MOMS Training with Lipilichi Rangers. Photo © Erica Rieder, WWF-US / WWF-Canon