

AERIAL & GROUND OPERATIONS (“Big Tusker Project”) SUMMARY:

Activity	Hours Flown	Miles Covered
Aerial Reconnaissance	128 Average 80 mph of low level flight	10,276 Flights carried out jointly with KWS staff
	No. Observed	
Big “Tuskers”	15 Tuskers - 10 bulls (4 Super Tuskers & 6 emerging Tuskers) & 5 cows	
	No. Recovered	
Ivory recovered	9 elephant tusks (13 for year to date - largest 53.5 & 52.5kg)	
Elephant carcasses	Fresh (less than 3 weeks old)	Recent (less than 3 months old)
	3 (c of d: 1 poached, 1 natural, 1 unconfirmed)	6 (c of d: 3 poached, 2 natural, 1 unconfirmed)
Carcasses/hours flown	1 every 14 hours of flight	
Poacher camps/hides	4	4
Arrests	9 - by KWS / TT – (2 ele. poachers, 2 bush meat, 5 livestock – 12 for year to date)	
Snares/traps recovered	99 (by Tembo Teams – 120 for year to date)	
Response/support to KWS - armed incidents	1 (TENP / Kulalu-Dakota elephant poaching gang – 2 for year to date)	
Other Illegal activities	31 cattle bomas (22,000 plus cows, 11,500 shoats & 173 + people seen)	
Written reports to KWS	26 (daily emails, various reports & 1 monthly report)	
General & significant notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12th to 26 Feb17 - TT took part in the tri annual TCA Aerial Census. TT aircraft & pilot Josh Outram covered 7,523 miles over 85 hours during the actual count. • 17/2/17 – TT aircraft & KWS / TT T1 Team involved in armed contact with Somali elephant poachers with 2 fatalities (1 on either side), 78 rds AK47 recvd. • 20/2/17 – Recent carcasses of “Tusker” KA1 found during TCA Aerial Census, ivory recvd. (53.5kg & 52.5kg). Natural cause of death thought to be from old age • Aerial support pertaining to rhino security in TW & TE as continued partnership with KWS / ZSL rhino program. 17 rhino specific flights carried out following TWNP / NRS rhino poaching (2) on 31/12/16 	

Photo below shows a rescued ground Pangolin on 6th February 2017. She was rescued from Galana Ranch and observed over night and free released in TENP along the same watercourse on 7th February.



Big Tusker Project - aerial and ground mobile teams:

Iconic Tusker – Kamboyo dies naturally of old age:

During the recently concluded Tsavo Conservation Area (TCA) Aerial Census, the recent elephant carcass of the Tusker known as Kamboyo was located with ivory intact on 20th February 2017. The aircraft and crew that found this carcass called in the Tsavo Trust aircraft that was counting the nearby block and Josh (TT pilot) confirmed this was indeed the carcass and ivory of Kamboyo. Kamboyo had been named by Tsavo Trust in March 2013 and was last seen alive on 17th January 2017. He was one of Tsavo's elephant Ambassadors. His ivory weighed 53.5kg and 52.5kg (118 and 116lbs).

Although Kamboyo will be sorely missed, the bright side of this story is that Kamboyo lived to a ripe old age of at least 55 years and he would certainly have spread his impressive ivory genes over that time frame. **In todays modern elephant world where elephant poaching for ivory, human elephant conflict, drought, livestock invasions and so on takes the head lines, it is very unusual for any elephant to die naturally of old age, and especially one that carries such magnificent ivory. This example clearly shows that something is being done right and the joint efforts of KWS and Tsavo Trust's *Big Tusker Project* is indeed showing positive results in both regularly monitoring and helping to secure these rare and iconic elephants through aerial surveillance – *eyes in the skies* and mobile ground teams – *eyes and ears on the ground.***

Photo below shows iconic Tusker called Kamboyo taken on 5th July 2016 in TWNP.



The Tsavo Trust's Big Tusker Project (BTP) recorded the following details in the BTP database:

- Total of 15 different individual Tusker's were observed from ground and air coverage
- 4 bull Super Tuskers – 13 different sightings
- 6 emerging Tuskers – 7 sightings
- 5 iconic cow Tuskers – 6 sightings
- **Total sightings – 26**
- **Weather conditions:** Hot and very dry.
- **Elephant mortality:** As reported above, there have been 9 fresh / recent carcasses found this month. Another armed elephant poaching gang was engaged in an armed contact just outside TENP boundary.
- **Rhino security:** 6 rhino specific aerial reces took place with KWS / TT aircraft mainly in TWNP but 2 in TENP. TT - Tembo 3 team joining KWS in ground operations in the TW IPZ. Continued strong and valuable 3 way partnership between KWS / ZSL & TT continues with specific focus on rhino protection in TWNP.

Table 1: Shows "Tusker" code, number of times observed during month and brief remarks.

Tusker Code	No. Times Seen / Month	Remarks
BULLS		
LU1	5	Crosses SGR regularly. Frequents an unsafe area!
KA1	-	Found dead on 20/2/17, died naturally of old age, ivory 53.5 & 52.5kg
BA1	1	Found well out of his normal area, not seen in 4 months!
WS1	6	Back to normal location
SL1	1	Moved outside the Park into worrying location! Not seen for 3 months
MU1	2	Back to normal area
BU1	1	Continues to roam far and wide
KI1	1	Back to normal area
KO1	1	Found well out of his normal area?
KM2	1	Back to normal area
DU1	1	Not seen in 5 months
COWS		
F KA1	1	Back to normal area
F XT	1	Moving big distances
F VPL	2	Back to normal location
F MU1	1	Back to normal area
F ND1	1	Not seen in 9 months
TOTAL	7 bulls, 3 cows: 33 different sightings	
<i>Close working relationship between KWS and Tsavo Trust (aerial and ground units combined) is without doubt adding to elephant security and safety of the big Tuskers and other elephants within the TCA through meaningful collaboration alongside KWS Security and Research & Monitoring Departments.</i>		

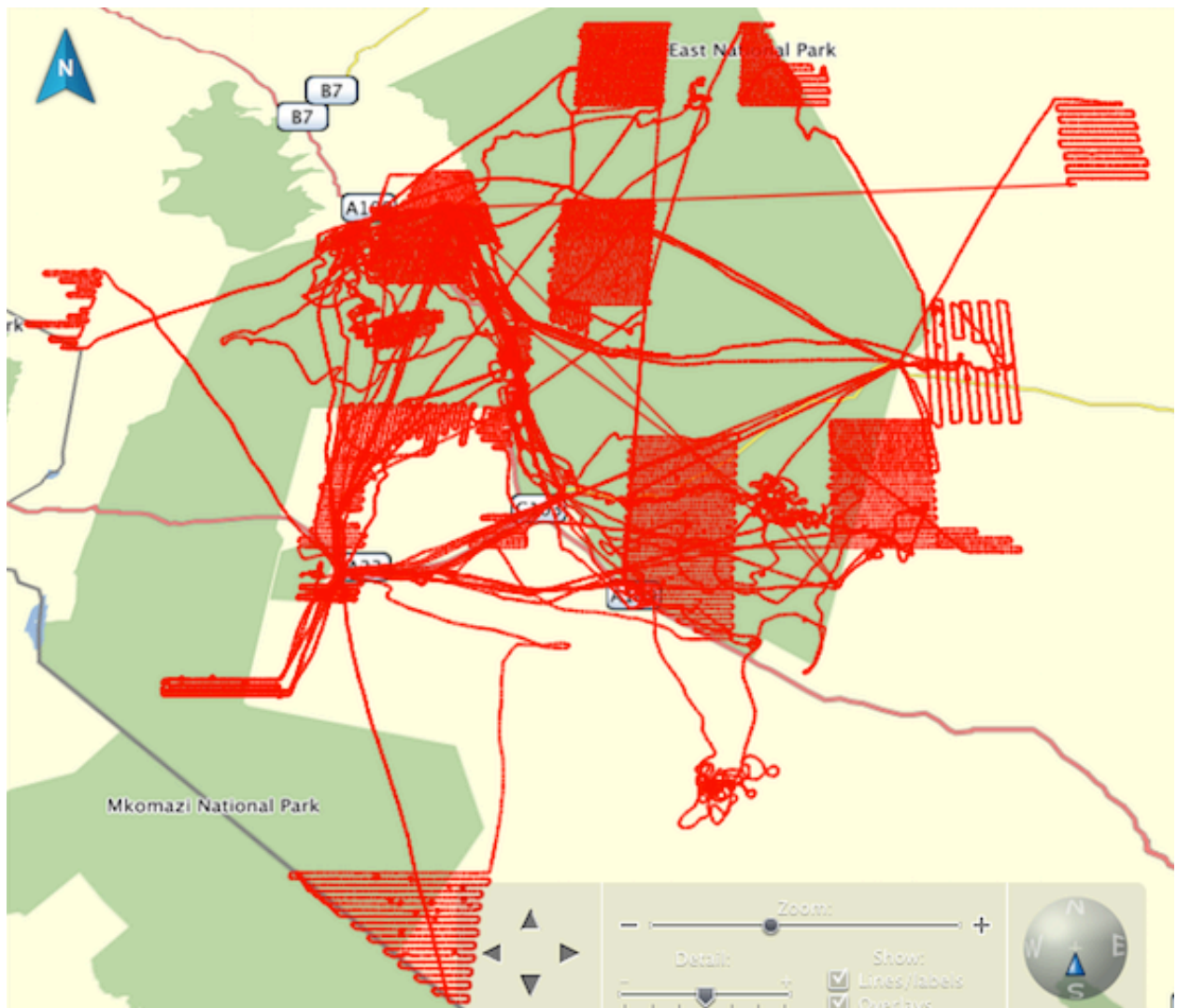
Photo below shows Kamboyo (far left) with 4 askaris (body guards) leaving a TW water hole in September 2016.



Areas Covered: Table 2: Shows the main areas covered within the TCA for this month:

TSAVO EAST NP	TSAVO WEST NP	RANCHES & DISPERSAL AREAS
<p>Northern Area – Yatta Plateau, Durusikale, Garasamuke, Emusaya, Golf Charlie, Koitu, Sobo, Sangayaya, Dabaduke, Mufupa ya Ndovu, Ithumba, Tiva River, Roka, Ithumba</p> <p>Southern Area – Voi, Ndololo, Kanderi, Wagalla, Ndara Plains, Buchuma, Maungu, Murondo, Dakota, Voi River, Dika Plains, Satao, power lines, Aruba, Mukuaju, Dika, Konu Moja, Dida Harea, Balguda, Sala, Lali, Sobo, TENP boundary, Koitu, Galana River</p> <p>Central Area – TE R/S, IPZ, Manyani east, Punda Milia, Hatulo Bisani, Lugards, Mbololo lugga, Balguda, Irima, Mudanda, Maka Hill, Man-eaters, Triangle, Mtitu Lugga, Zero Delta, Voi north & east, Galana River, Tsavo River and Yatta Central, SGR</p>	<p>Northern Sector – IPZ, Mangaleta, Kamboyo, Kisimeka, Chyulu south, Mtito lugga, Mungai Hill, Finch Hattons, Mzima Springs, Shetani volcano, Severin, Kilaguni, Ndawe, Tsavo River</p> <p>Southern Sector – Nil</p> <p>Central Sector – IPZ, Rhino Valley, NRS, Tsavo River, Kinyek, Maji ya Chumvi (north & south), Ziواني, Lesoito, Kyulu, Manda, Kishushe, Murka, Mombasa Highway, Man Easters, Kenani, Kanga, Manyani north and west, SGR line</p>	<p>TENP border – Ngiluni/Kamunyu, Kulalu, Derea, Murondo, Magram/Dakota Ranch, Ngutuni, Galana Ranch boundary</p> <p>TWNP border – Ziواني, Rombo and Lualenyi</p> <p>Chyulu Hills NP - Mukururo</p> <p>Taita Ranches – Rukinga, Taita, Kambanga, Amaka</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The locations mentioned above is only an indicator of flight paths taken, many other areas in between are also covered and in so doing providing “eyes in the skies” over Tsavo and directional guidance to ground units. • All flight paths are logged and recorded with all relevant real time observations relayed to KWS on a daily basis for their records as well as necessary rapid reaction. 		

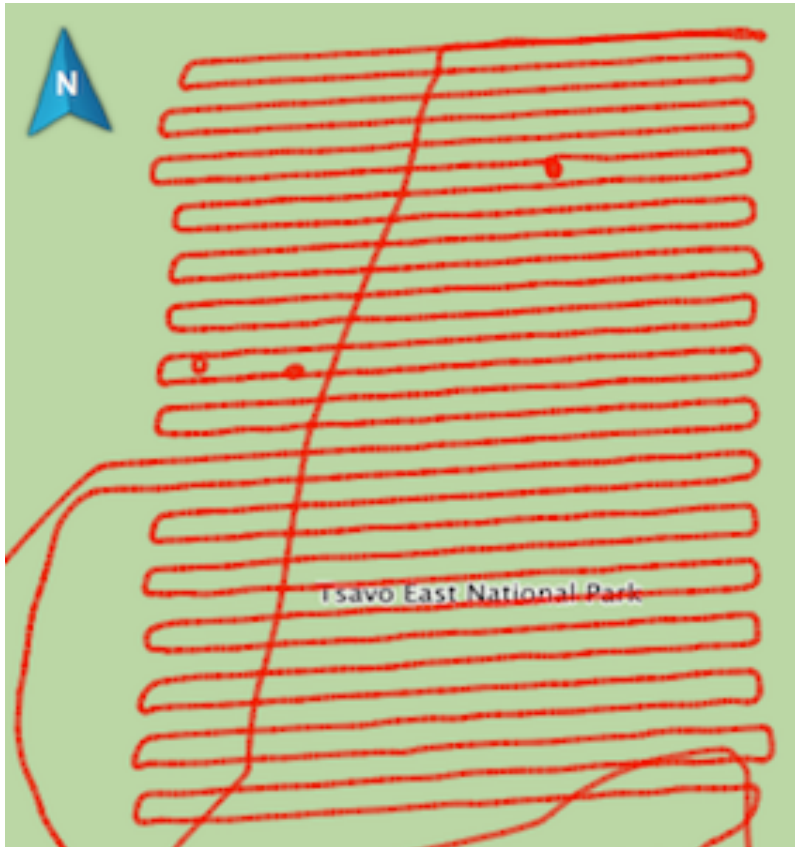
Map below shows flight paths for February 2017 where 128 hours were flown in support to KWS for anti-poaching, wildlife monitoring and aerial census operations covering 10,276 miles over the Tsavo’s.



Tsavo Conservation Area Census:

Tsavo Trust aircraft 5Y TTZ, piloted by Josh Outram and the Tembo 2 monitoring team, Joseph Kimaile and Christine Mwendu took part in the tri-annual Tsavo Aerial Census between 12th and 26th February 2017. Joseph was trained as rear seat observer (RSO) and Christine assisted back at base with daily data filling of count results.

During the count, the team flew 10 count blocks in 1 kilometer transects where each block was 600 kilometers squared. They also covered for other unfinished blocks as necessary. A total of 88 hours were flown that covered 7,523 miles over Tsavo.



This map shows a good example of a zoomed in cut of one of the counting blocks in the northern section of TENP.

Blocks are 600 kilometers squared and east / west transects flown that are 1 kilometer apart.

Many hours were flown each day and sitting in a small Super Cub seat can be quite challenging in hot and windy conditions.

Although official figures have not been released yet by KWS, the indication is that the elephant population of Tsavo is on the increase, which is a real positive.

Photo below shows Tsavo Trust Super Cub 5Y TTZ during TCA Aerial Census in February 2017.



Field Mobile Units:

All Tsavo Trust mobile field units work with and in support of KWS on a daily basis. *Tembo 1 & 3 teams* are anti-poaching focused *Tembo 2 team* is monitoring and research dedicated.

Anti-poaching teams:

Table 7: Shows outcomes from anti-poaching activities from Tembo 1 & 3 teams:

Anti-poaching teams	No. Field days	No. Arrest	No. Ivory recvd.	No. Snare recvd.	Bushmeat recvd.	Poachers equip. recvd.	No. Poacher camps	Vehicle mileage km
Tembo 1	25	3 (1 shot)	3	96	101kg lesser kudu, dikdik, baboon	42 AK47 rds, 1 axe, 3 pangas, 2 axes, 2 bicycles, 1 horn, cooking equip	6	3,397
Tembo 3 Kamungi	20	1	2	3	1 ele foot, 5kg kudu meat	-	-	2,415
Others Chui team	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	45	4	5	99	As above	As above	6	5,812
Total 2017	107	7	9	120	-	-	14	11,029



Photo shows joint KWS / TT Tembo 1 team having found a freshly poached lesser kudu in a snare on Giriama Ranch on 10th February 2017.

Another 2 kudu were found in snares on the same day and 10 snares recovered.



Photo shows Tembo 1 team inspecting an elephant carcass found during an aerial recce in the southern sector of TENP.

Monitoring teams:

Table 8: Shows activities carried out by Tembo 2 team:

Monitoring team	No. Field days	Activities	Endangered species records / sightings	Operating locations	Vehicle mileage km
Tembo 2	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tusker monitoring • Endangered species – database records • Road and SGR kill surveys • Camera trap surveys • Fixed point photos • Predator monitoring 	Tuskers – 11 sightings Hirola – 3 sightings Grevy’s Zebra – 2 sighting Predators – too many to mention	TENP, Voi River, Satao, Buchuma, Ndara, Aruba, Manyani, KMC, Lugards, Galana River, Msa Rd., Dida Harea	1,988
TOTALS	14	As above	As above	As above	1,988
Total 2017	34	-	-	-	5,055

Tembo 2 team took part in the TCA aerial census between 12th and 26th February, hence monitoring days were low for this month.

Other Tsavo Trust Activities in brief:

Community Program: KAMUNGI CONSERVANCY:

Ongoing partnership and engagement between Tsavo Trust and the registered Kamungi Conservancy have continued in varying ways:

- 3/2/17 - Kamungi Conservancy Board meeting held at TT HQ
- 27/2/17 - Water bore hole drilled and good water struck. This is a game changer for the marginalised villagers of Kamunyu and Ngiluni that fall under Kamungi with TT stewardship.
- Have started the Human Elephant Conflict – Bee Hive Fencing project with kind support and advice from Save The Elephants and Dr. Lucy King.

Leopard Cub Release:

- The now 9-month-old leopard cub, Dotty, is at her final release site inside TENP. She has been fitted with a collar to assist in post release monitoring. Dotty has made her own kills and is looking fantastic.



This water supply will assist the villagers of Kamunyu and Ngiluni where previously they had to walk many kilometers daily for water from contaminated wells.

The Ngiluni clinic can now have taped water also.

Unusual Photo of the Month:



This photo shows the true desperations of some very marginalised and poor people living within the greater Tsavo ecosystem.

This bush meat poacher was arrested on 8th February 2017 on Kizingo Ranch outside TENP in possession of 3kg dikdik meat, 1 cooked baboon (shown here), 4kg dried kudu meat, 8 snares and a poacher's night horn.

With sincere thanks and appreciation to the Kenya Wildlife Service, Save The Elephants/Wildlife Conservation Network Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF), US Fish & Wildlife Service, The Oak Foundation, Stuart Herd, Nick Southgate, James Robertson, International Foundation for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Tusk Trust UK & USA, The Woodtiger Fund, Zoological Society of London (ZSL), Ndovu Trust (UK), US State Dept., Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, International Elephant Foundation (IEF), Wines of the World Ltd, Africa Spirits Ltd, Mike Kirkland/Torben Rune, Satao Camp (Tsavo East) & Southern Cross Safaris (Msa), Tropical Ice Ltd, Salama Fikira, Origins Safaris, The Art of BAS & Oak Furniture Ltd (UK), Geri Bauer, Kathy Snowden, Simon Herd, Saving the Survivors, Karen Laurence-Rowe, Anadarko Kenya Co., Askari Project – Australia, Chris Acreman, Paul & James Wilson, Enable Green Energy, Eaton Electric, Michael Cheffings, Pembroke House School and numerous other individual supporters.

Report compiled by Richard Moller – Chief Executive Officer, Tsavo Trust
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