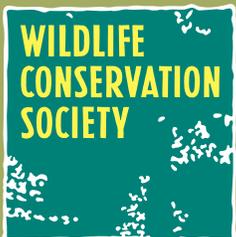
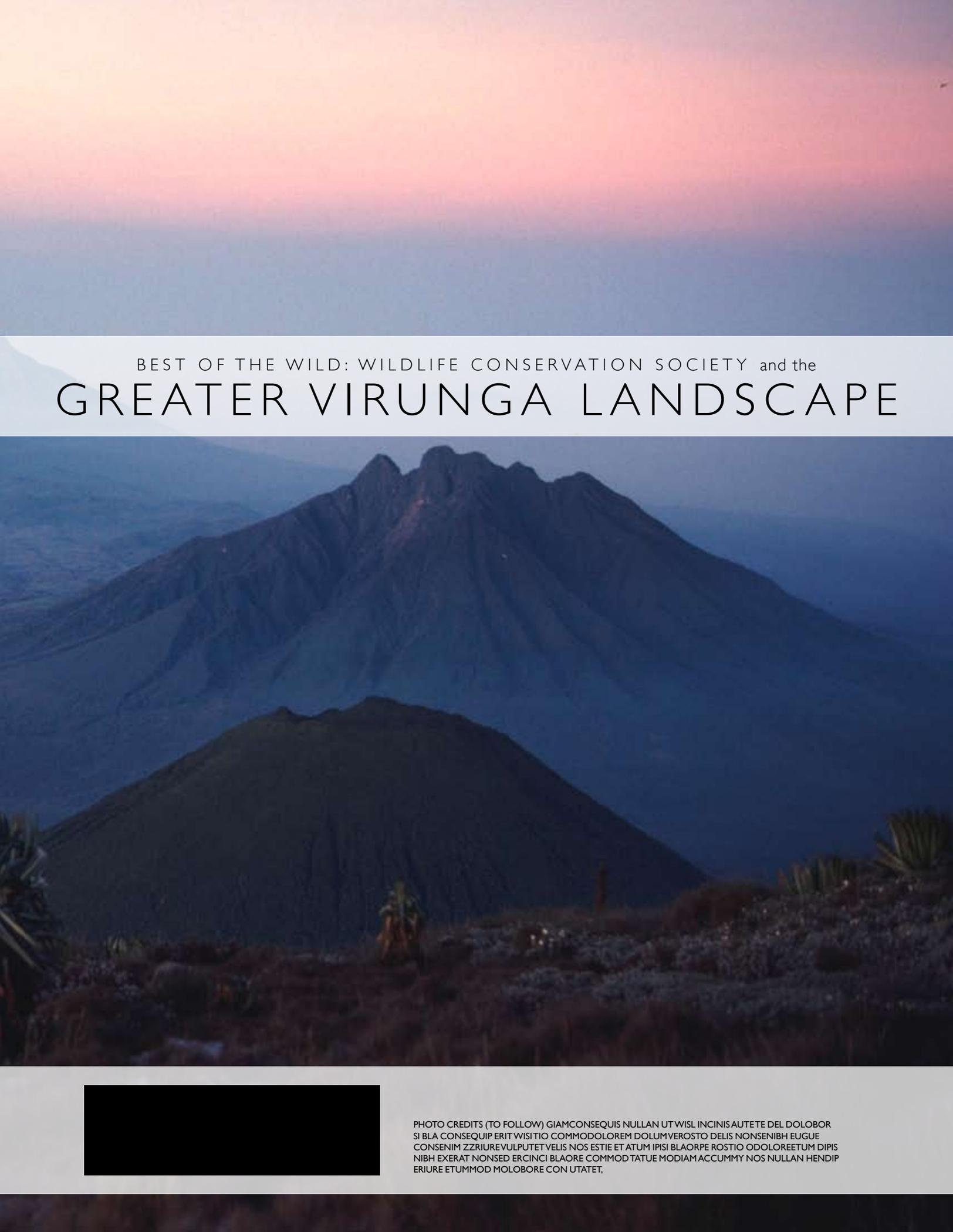




BEST OF THE WILD: WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY and the
GREATER VIRUNGA LANDSCAPE







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GREATER VIRUNGA LANDSCAPE

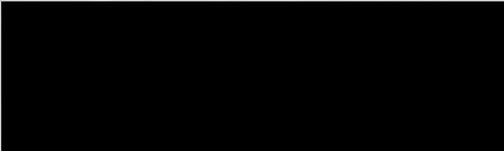


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A spectacular mosaic of forest, savanna, mountains, and lakes with the greatest vertebrate diversity in Africa, the Greater Virunga Landscape is home to elephants, hippos, lions, leopards, antelopes and all of the world's 700 mountain gorillas. It is the only place on Earth where 20 primate species coexist, including three of the planet's four species of great apes.

Situated where East and Central Africa meet along the Albertine Rift, the landscape straddles the boundary between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo), Uganda, and Rwanda. This 5,100 square mile area—one-tenth the size of New York State—rises from Lakes Edward and George at 3,000 feet above sea level to the glaciers of the Rwenzori Mountains at 16,000 feet and includes 13 national parks and reserves. Conserving this magnificent place will assure the survival of 43% of Africa's bird species, 27% of mammals, and more than 10% of reptiles, amphibians, and plants.

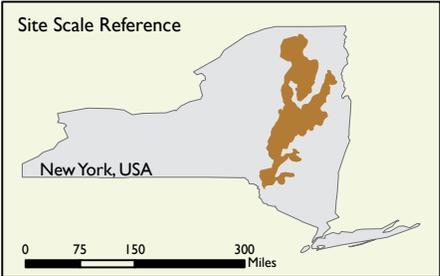
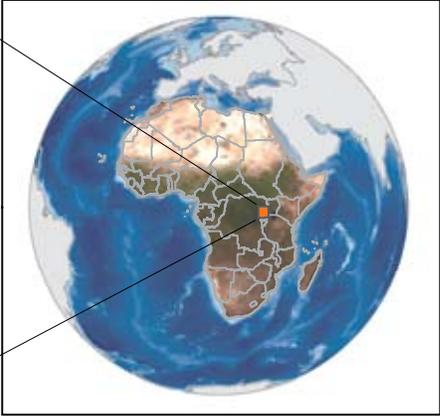
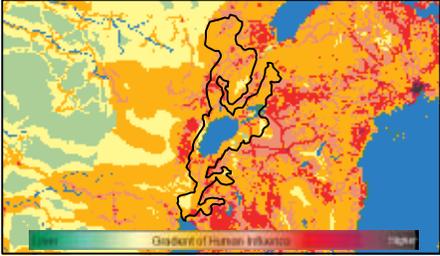
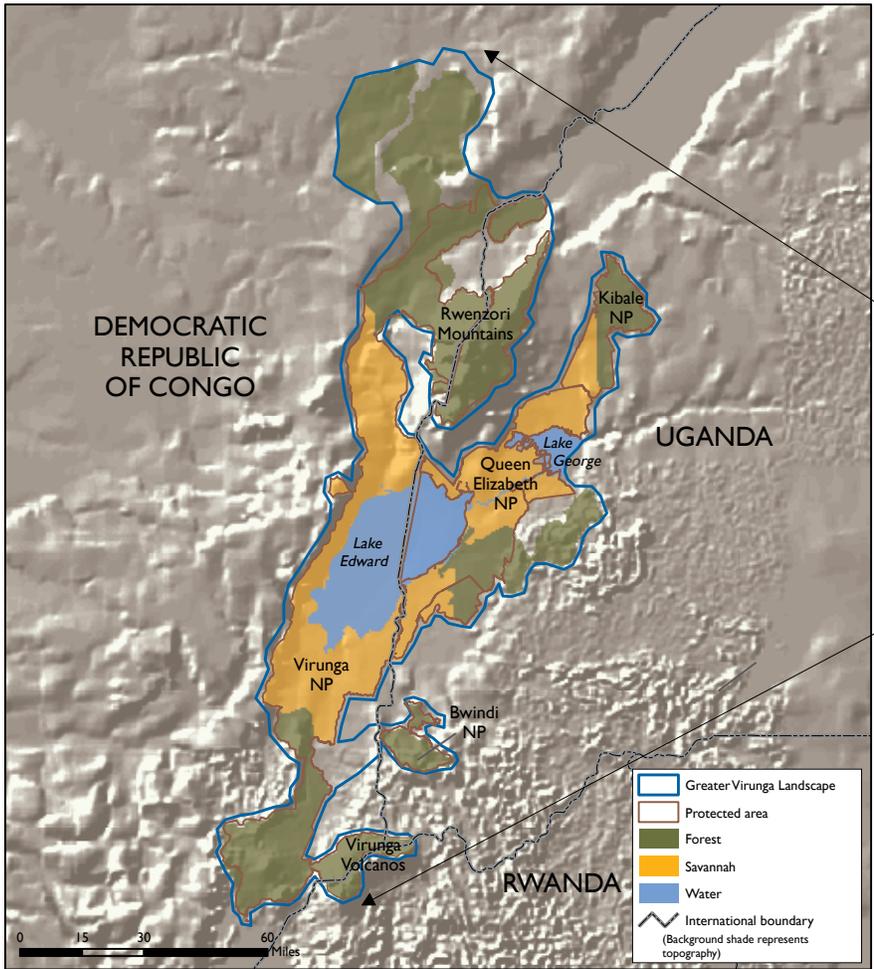
A large and growing human population relies on the landscape's rich natural capital. Forest products provide up to a third of peoples' incomes, supplementing revenue from small scale agriculture and fisheries, while ecotourism jobs and foreign exchange promise to generate significant tourism revenues as the region stabilizes after 15 years of conflict. The watershed provides millions of people with fresh water for drinking and farming.

This magnificent landscape is gravely threatened by commercial hunting for meat and ivory, unregulated agricultural expansion, and overharvesting of fuel-wood and timber. Planned oil production might lead to environmental degradation, and the region is vulnerable to climate change. The capacity of communities and governments to respond is compromised by poverty and civil unrest.

WCS had led conservation efforts here since George Schaller's pioneering work on mountain gorillas in 1959. Our vision for the Greater Virunga Landscape: Africa's greatest habitat and vertebrate diversity—including mountain gorillas, chimps, hippos, elephants, and lions—secured from illegal killing and habitat loss, and made resilient to climate change through a network of co-managed protected areas and wildlife corridors spanning three countries.

Realizing this vision will require \$12 million of new investment in WCS's work in the coming decade. Together with \$3 million in secured funds, this will leverage an estimated \$63 million from our conservation partners. With this investment, we can ensure that Africa's most biologically rich and spectacular wild landscape thrives.

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With some of the world's highest rural population densities and lowest incomes, communities living in and around the Greater Virunga Landscape subsist on farming and fishing. Population growth of 2-3% per year brings with it greater number of livestock and spurs demand for farmland, increases human-wildlife conflicts, motivates retaliatory killing of wildlife, and drives poaching for meat and ivory. This is particularly acute in DR Congo, where security is weak and livelihoods are tenuous.



Civil unrest, now beginning to decline, has caused people to seek refuge in protected areas, leading to overfishing in Lake Edward and declines in fish stocks. Overhunting for food and trade risks the eradication of large mammals and the further impoverishment of local people.

Two longer-term threats have emerged recently. Climate change is likely to increase temperatures and rainfall, imperiling fragile habitats and rare species and disrupting age-old patterns of the way humans use the landscape to support themselves. Oil discoveries in the Albertine Rift raise the specter of environmental degradation, increased demand for bushmeat, and social unrest.

The 13 protected areas of the Greater Virunga Landscape are linked by narrow corridors, threatening the viability of species that need large, connected habitat blocks to survive, including lions, leopards, chimpanzees and elephants. Historically, these protected areas have been managed independently, exacerbating landscape fragmentation. Climate change will increase the biological impact of fragmentation because species and habitats will be driven across the landscape and out of areas that are currently under protection.

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WCS's vision for the Greater Virunga Landscape: Africa's greatest habitat and vertebrate diversity—including mountain gorillas, chimps, hippos, elephants, and lions—secured from illegal killing and habitat loss, and made resilient to climate change through a network of co-managed protected areas and wildlife corridors spanning three countries.

To attain this vision, we shall hold ourselves accountable over the next ten years for stemming the loss of vertebrate and habitat diversity in the Greater Virunga Landscape. More specifically, we will ensure that:

- Elephant populations increase 20% to 3,900.
- Mountain gorilla populations increase 10% to 770.
- Chimpanzee populations stabilize at the current population of 4,000.
- Lion populations increase 60% to 250.
- Hippo populations increase 60% to 8,000.
- No large mammal species are lost from the landscape.
- The current extent of moist and montane forest, savanna, and wetland is maintained.

We shall attain this vision when:

- The protected area authorities of Uganda, Rwanda and DR Congo work together to co-manage, protect, and monitor the Greater Virunga Landscape.
- Communities living in and around the landscape support protection of habitat and wildlife.
- The Uganda, Rwanda and DR Congo governments, together with local people, identify and protect priority wildlife corridors allowing species to move freely, maintain viable populations and adapt to changing climate.
- Oil exploration and exploitation companies act to minimize their environmental impact.
- A national and international constituency for the conservation of the Greater Virunga Landscape generates the political will and financial resources necessary to ensure the landscape's long-term conservation.

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ADDRESSING THE RISKS

To ensure that protected area authorities effectively manage the landscape, WCS will:

- Facilitate trans-boundary collaboration, including coordinated anti-poaching patrols at international borders.
- Train and support protected area staff to monitor species and wildlife crime.
- Build the capacity of national institutions to monitor the changing status, requirements, and threats facing wildlife species.
- Advise on the establishment of ecologically sensitive tourism.
- Train protected area staff in business planning and financial management.

To ensure that communities protect habitat and wildlife, WCS will:

- Build capacity of protected area institutions to resolve clashes over natural resources.
- Implement livelihood options compatible with conservation such as community ecotourism and identifying niche markets for agriculture products.
- Improve livestock management where allowed in protected areas.
- Pilot and implement techniques to reduce human-wildlife conflict, particularly placing trenches and barriers around corridor areas.
- Help fishing communities to sustainably manage fisheries.
- Minimize risks of disease transmission between wildlife, domestic animals and people.

To ensure that wildlife corridors are protected, WCS will:

- Identify key corridors in the landscape for wildlife movements, model impacts of climate change and identify mitigation measures.
- Work with national protected area institutions to purchase land to widen existing corridors.
- Pioneer community protection of new corridors linking protected areas.
- Help revise management plans to link protected areas.

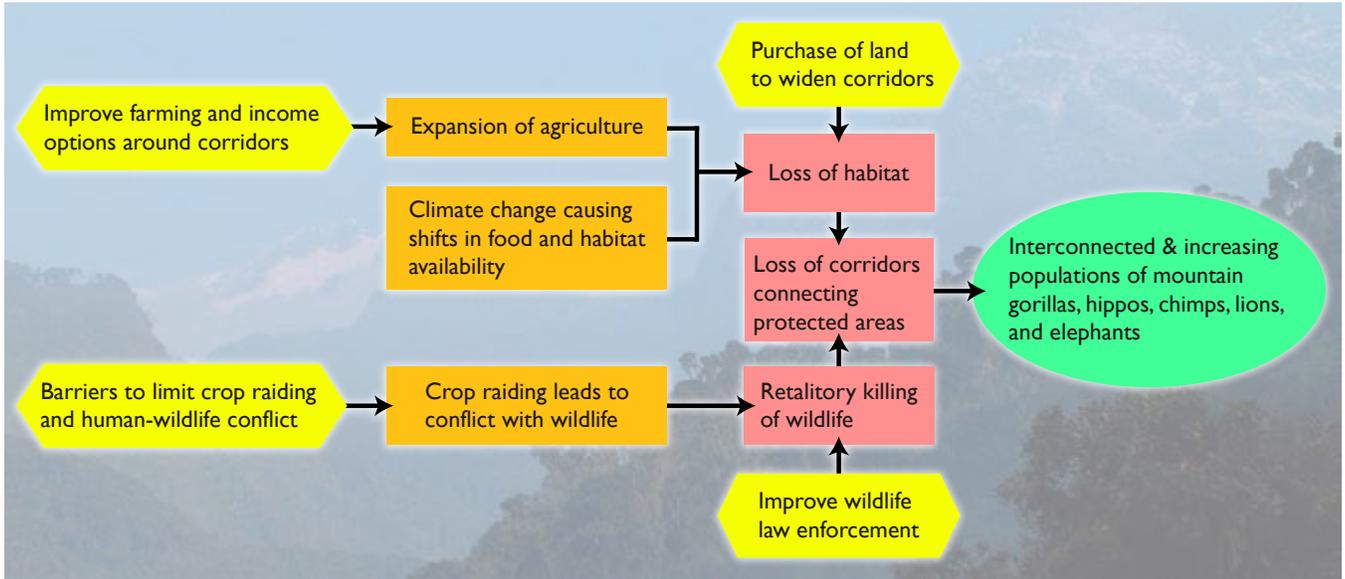
To ensure that oil companies minimize their environmental impact, WCS will:

- Help policy makers site oil production facilities to minimize negative environmental impacts.
- Implement biodiversity offset programs with private companies.
- Improve best practices for minimizing impacts of oil exploration on wildlife.

To ensure that the political will and financial resources to ensure long term conservation are generated, WCS will:

- Promote the global value of the landscape in international meetings and media.
- Assess and publicize the monetary value of the landscape's ecosystem services.
- Build sustainable finance initiatives such as trust funds and payments for ecosystem services.

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WCS has led efforts to explore and conserve the Greater Virunga Landscape since George Schaller carried out the first study of the mountain gorilla in the 1950s. Today, WCS brings a unique suite of capabilities and partnerships to the challenge of safeguarding the Greater Virunga Landscape's extraordinary wildlife and habitat diversity.

Through the 1970s and 1980s, WCS supported Dian Fossey's studies in Rwanda's Virunga Volcanoes, launched the Kibali Forest Project in Uganda, and built Uganda's Makerere University Biological Field Station. Bill Weber and Amy Vedder took on the challenge of saving the mountain gorilla after Fossey's untimely death and successfully pioneered mountain gorilla tourism in the region.

In the 1990s and 2000s, WCS helped create and manage the Institute for Tropical Forest Conservation and Bwindi Trust supporting research, conservation, ecotourism and community development in Uganda's Impenetrable Forest. Efforts by WCS and our partners efforts have led to a rebound of mountain gorilla numbers in both the Virungas and Bwindi from 500 to 700 individuals, and gorilla tourism now provides the main funding for both Uganda's and Rwanda's parks departments.

In 2000, WCS launched the Albertine Rift Program to galvanize efforts to conserve Africa's most biodiverse region. Knowledge generated by WCS has driven the creation of three national parks and two World Heritage Sites, facilitated consensus on a three-nation strategic conservation plan for the landscape, and helped protected area staff to develop the first monitoring plans for all parks and reserves in the landscape. WCS's conflict resolution work recently assisted voluntary resettlement of 20,000 refugees from Virunga National Park in DR Congo, securing both the park and local livelihoods.

The challenges facing conservation of the Greater Virunga Landscape are daunting, but our track record of effective conservation and the strength of our local partnerships make us confident of success.

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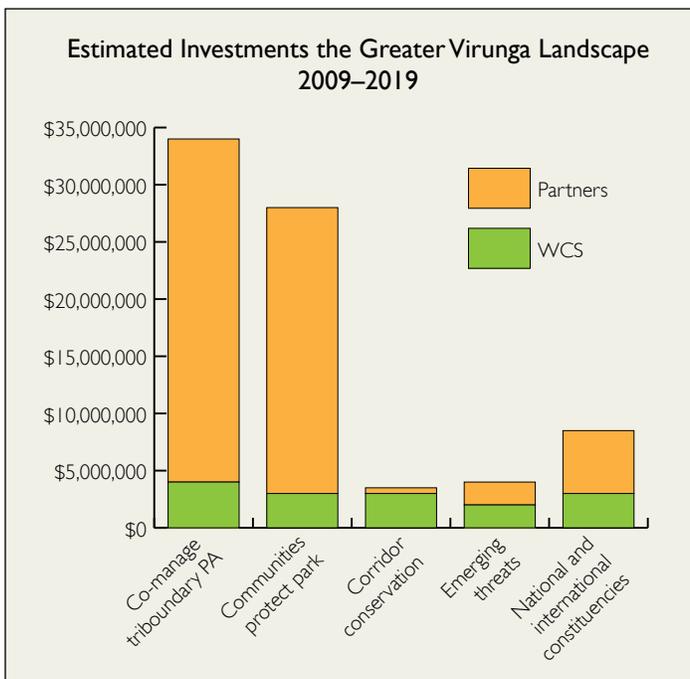
We estimate the cost of realizing this ten-year vision for the Greater Virunga Landscape and safeguarding Africa's greatest repository of habitat and vertebrate diversity at \$95 million, or \$2.91 per acre per year. Of this sum, WCS needs to raise \$12 million in new private and public funds. This \$12 million, together with \$3 million we have already raised, will leverage approximately \$63 million in conservation investment from WCS's partners in the landscape.

More specifically:

- \$4 million of investment through WCS will leverage \$30 million through partners to ensure that the protected area authorities of Uganda, Rwanda and DR Congo effectively manage the landscape.
- \$3 million of investment through WCS will leverage \$25 million through partners to ensure that communities of the landscape protect habitat and wildlife.
- \$3 million of investment through WCS will leverage \$1/2 million through partners to ensure that government and local communities protect wildlife corridors.
- \$2 million of investment through WCS will leverage \$2 million through partners to ensure that oil companies minimize their environmental impact.
- \$3 million of investment through WCS will leverage \$5 ½ million through partners to ensure that constituencies for the conservation of the Greater Virunga Landscape generate the political will and financial resources to ensure long-term conservation.

The return on conservation investment that can be achieved by conserving the Greater Virunga Landscape is unparalleled. More species and habitats will be saved per acre than almost anywhere else in continental Africa. We invite you to join us and our partners to safeguard forever this landscape of extraordinary diversity and spectacular wildlife and scenery, here where East and Central Africa meet.

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WCS IS GRATEFUL TO THE FOLLOWING FOR LEADERSHIP SUPPORT
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National Aeronautical and Space Agency (NASA)

US Agency for International Development (USAID)

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Mr. And Mrs. William Hamm, III

WCS'S SUCCESS IN THE LANDSCAPE CAN BE ATTRIBUTED IN PART
TO OUR STRONG LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS:

African Conservation Fund

African Wildlife Foundation

Birdlife International

CARE

Conservation through Public Health

Coopérative des Pêcheries de Virunga

Durham University

Frankfurt Zoological Society

Gorilla Organisation

Innovation pour le Développement et
la Protection de l'Environnement

Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature

Institute for Tropical Forest Conservation

International Gorilla Conservation
Programme (AWF, FFI, WWF)

International Institute for
Sustainable Development

Karisoke Research Centre and
Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund

Makerere University Biological Field Station

National Forest Authority, Uganda

Office Rwandais pour Tourisme et Parcs Nationaux

Syndicat pour la Défense des Intérêts Paysans

Uganda Wildlife Authority

Woods Hole Research Centre

World Wide Fund for Nature

Zoological Society of London

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