

# Sustainability Challenges and Opportunities in East Africa

University of Michigan Experiential Learning Field Course  
Mpala Research Centre, Laikipia, Kenya  
Summer 2010

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with  
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## Course Outline

Dynamic Ecosystems  
Conservation in East Africa  
Local Histories  
Sharing Landscapes  
Understanding and Integrating Disciplines  
Balancing Conservation and Livelihoods

## **FRIDAY AUGUST 6: Arrival**

## **SATURDAY AUGUST 7: Dynamic Ecosystems**

### Morning

Teambuilding challenge  
Fieldwork: Introduction to savanna ecosystem diversity

### Afternoon

Fieldwork: Introduction to savanna ecosystem diversity [continued]

Reading and discussion groups:

- Palmer et al. 2008. Breakdown of an ant-plant mutualism follows the loss of large herbivores from an African savanna
- Pringle et al. 2010. Spatial pattern enhances ecosystem functioning in an African savanna
- Young 1997. Ants on swollen-thorn acacias: species coexistence in a simple system

### Evening

Free time and reading

## **SUNDAY AUGUST 8: Dynamic Ecosystems / Day Trip**

### Morning

Day trip: Mukenya hike [pack lunches]

### Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- Young 1995. Long-term glades in acacia bushland and their edge effects in Laikipia, Kenya
- Young 1998. KLEE: A long-term multi-species herbivore exclusion experiment in Laikipia, Kenya
- Stanton 1999. Sterilization and canopy modification of a swollen thorn acacia tree by a plant-ant

### Evening

Guest lecture: Rob Pringle, Senior Mpala Researcher

Discussion: Field ecology methods

## **MONDAY AUGUST 9: Conservation in East Africa**

### Morning

Fieldwork: Black cotton ecology project

### Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- Western and Maitumo 2004. Woodland loss and restoration in a savanna park: A 20-year experiment
- Western et al. 2009. The status of wildlife in protected areas compared to non-protected areas of Kenya

### Evening

Guest lecture: Dan Rubenstein, Senior Mpala Researcher

## **TUESDAY AUGUST 10: Conservation in East Africa**

### Morning

Data analysis and discussion: Black cotton ecology project

### Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- Georgiadis 2007. Savanna herbivore dynamics in a livestock-dominated landscape. I: Dependence on land use, rainfall, density, and time
- Georgiadis 2007. Savanna herbivore dynamics in a livestock-dominated landscape. II: Ecological, conservation, and management implications of predator restoration
- *Being Maasai*: Introduction. Thomas Spear

Lecture: Rebecca Hardin (Cultural ecology and political ecology of pastoralism in East Africa)

### Evening

Free time and reading

## **WEDNESDAY AUGUST 11: Conservation in East Africa**

### Morning

Fieldwork: "Interview throwdown"

### Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- *Being Maasai*: "Becoming Maasailand." J.E.G. Sutton
- *Being Maasai*: "Maasai Expansion and the New East African Pastoralism." J.G. Galaty
- *Being Maasai*: Conclusion. Richard Waller

Participant-observation: Community football game at MRC

### Evening

Free time and reading

## **THURSDAY AUGUST 12: Local Histories**

### Morning

Discussion: Interview methods and participant-observation

### Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- *Being Maasai*: "Becoming Maasailand." J.E.G. Sutton
- *Being Maasai*: "Maasai Expansion and the New East African Pastoralism." J.G. Galaty
- *Being Maasai*: Conclusion. Richard Waller

### Evening

Guest lecture: Nicholas Piyet, Assistant Secretary of Ilmotiok Group Ranch

## **FRIDAY AUGUST 13: Local Histories**

### Morning

Fieldwork: Animal behavior exercise

### Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- Cleaveland et al. 2007. The conservation relevance of epidemiological research into carnivore viral diseases in the Serengeti

### Evening

Game drive

Sundowner: Bakuli Dam

## **SATURDAY AUGUST 14: East African Pastoralism**

### Morning

Data analysis and discussion: Animal behavior exercise

Lecture: Johannes Foufopoulos (Wildlife disease ecology)

Laboratory work: Animal behavior with Andrea Durcik, Mpala Researcher

### Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- Foufopoulos 2003. Interactions between wildlife and domestic livestock in the tropics

Discussion: Rebecca Hardin (Property types and conservation agendas)

Research discussion: Walker DePuy and Rebecca Hardin

Evening

Campfire discussion: Mike Littlewood, Mpala Ranch Manager

### **SUNDAY AUGUST 15: East African Pastoralism**

Morning

Field observation: Wild Dogs, followed by Bore Hole Measurements

Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- Bollig 1999. Environmental change and pastoral perceptions: Degradation and indigenous knowledge in two African pastoral communities
- Bruyere et al. 2008. Differences in perceptions of communication, tourism benefits, and management issues in a protected area of rural Kenya
- Gadd 2005. Conservation outside parks: Attitudes of local people in Laikipia, Kenya

Evening

Lecture/Discussion: Rebecca Hardin and Johannes Foufopoulos (Rangeland monitoring program)

Project group formation

### **MONDAY AUGUST 16: Sharing Landscapes**

Morning

Project fieldwork [small groups]: interviews and archives/ monitoring fieldwork / sustainability activities

Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- Hingston 1931. Proposed British National Parks for Africa
- Mwangi 2009. Top-down solutions: Looking up from East Africa's rangelands
- Remis 2009. Transvalued species in an African forest

Evening

Guest lecture: Mohammed Lamine Sagna, Visiting Researcher

### **TUESDAY AUGUST 17: Sharing Landscapes**

Morning

Project fieldwork [small groups]: interviews and archives/ monitoring fieldwork / sustainability activities

Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- Butt 2010. Seasonal space-time dynamics of cattle behavior and mobility among Maasai pastoralists in semi-arid Kenya
- Galvin 2009. Transitions: Pastoralists living with change
- Mulder 1994. Pastoralist decision-making: A behavioral ecological perspective

Evening

Guest lecture: Bilal Butt, Visiting Researcher

### **WEDNESDAY AUGUST 18: Day Trip**

Ol Pejeta visit [pack lunches]

### **THURSDAY AUGUST 19: Understanding and Integrating Disciplines**

Morning

Project fieldwork [small groups]: interviews and archives/ monitoring fieldwork / sustainability activities

Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- Odadi 2007. Effects of wildlife on cattle diets in Laikipia Rangeland, Kenya
- Yanda and William 2010. Livelihoods diversification and implications on food security and poverty levels in the Maasai plains: The case of Simanjiro District, Northern Tanzania

Evening

Guest lecture: Wilfred Odadi, Senior Mpala Researcher and University of Nairobi Professor, Jesse Njoka

### **FRIDAY AUGUST 20: Understanding and Integrating Disciplines**

Morning

Field Trips to Ilmoteok/Flower Farm in Nanyuki

Afternoon/Evening

Review and discussion groups with faculty (Hardin and/or Foufopoulos):

- Brosius 1999. Analyses and interventions: Anthropological engagements with environmentalism
- Drew 2006. Conservation biology and traditional ecological knowledge: Integrating academic disciplines for better conservation practice
- Peterson 2010. Seeing (and doing) conservation through cultural lenses
- West 2005. Translation, value, and space: Theorizing an ethnographic and engaged environmental anthropology

**SATURDAY AUGUST 21: Balancing Conservation and Livelihoods**

Morning

Project fieldwork [small groups – one to Ilmoteok, others to Nanyuki; sustainability masters students leave]

Afternoon and Evening

Review and discussion groups with faculty (Agrawal):

- Adams et al. 2004. Biodiversity conservation and the eradication of poverty
- Agrawal and Ostrom 2006. Political science and conservation biology: A dialogue of the deaf
- Sunderland, Ehringhaus, and Campbell 2008. Conservation and development in tropical forest landscapes: A time to face the trade-offs?

**SUNDAY AUGUST 22: Synthesis**

Morning

Final Writing Exercises

Afternoon

Reading and discussion groups:

- Agrawal and Redford 2006. Poverty, development, and biodiversity conservation: shooting in the dark?
- Robinson and Redford 2004. Jack of all trades, master of none: Inherent contradictions among ICD approaches

Evening

Sundowner: Baboon Cliffs

**MONDAY AUGUST 23: Synthesis**

Morning

Presentations

Afternoon / Evening

Packing

**TUESDAY AUGUST 24: Departure from Mpala**

Game drives in the Aberdare Mountains/Overnight at The Ark

**WEDNESDAY AUGUST 25: Departure from Nairobi**

