



*Legendary  
Expeditions*



# ANNUAL REPORT

A commitment to the future

2024

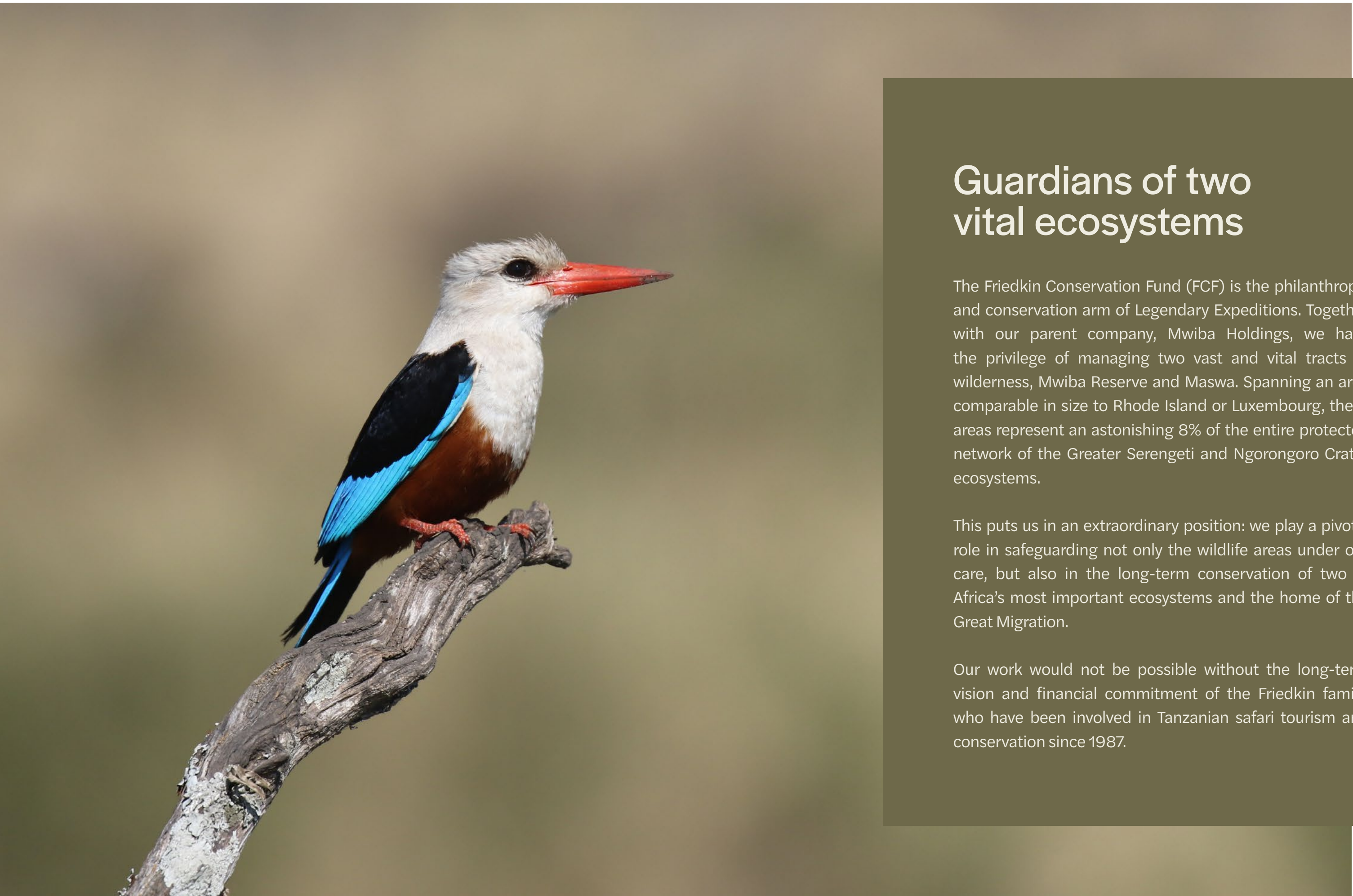




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## Guardians of two vital ecosystems

The Friedkin Conservation Fund (FCF) is the philanthropic and conservation arm of Legendary Expeditions. Together with our parent company, Mwiba Holdings, we have the privilege of managing two vast and vital tracts of wilderness, Mwiba Reserve and Maswa. Spanning an area comparable in size to Rhode Island or Luxembourg, these areas represent an astonishing 8% of the entire protected network of the Greater Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater ecosystems.

This puts us in an extraordinary position: we play a pivotal role in safeguarding not only the wildlife areas under our care, but also in the long-term conservation of two of Africa's most important ecosystems and the home of the Great Migration.

Our work would not be possible without the long-term vision and financial commitment of the Friedkin family, who have been involved in Tanzanian safari tourism and conservation since 1987.



# Foreword

*Jean-Claude McMenamin, Managing Director of Friedkin Group of Companies Tanzania*

The Friedkin Conservation Fund's (FCF) legacy in Tanzania spans over 30 years. In 2024, we announced our commitment to protecting the country's natural heritage for another 20 years. This marks a significant milestone for FCF, as it cements our long-term vision to safeguard Tanzania's wild spaces and wildlife for future generations.

Committing to a further 20-year lease presents its fair share of challenges and opportunities. However, with a clear, multi-faceted strategy to guide us, along with a dedicated team, we will continue to build on the foundations we've laid for meaningful and long-lasting conservation in Mwiba Reserve (Mwiba) and Maswa.

This includes intensifying our anti-poaching efforts in our areas in 2024 through a combination of aerial surveillance and intelligence-driven patrols. Furthermore, we celebrated a successful black rhino microchipping exercise and expanded the Mwiba-Maswa Elephant Monitoring Project by collaring nine bull elephants. Our ongoing bush-clearing program, which aims to reopen overrun grasslands in Maswa, cleared more than double the number of invasive species in 2024 compared to the previous year. As a result, we're already seeing wildlife return to the newly restored plains.

Our communities are at the forefront of the conservation conversation due to the critical role they have and will continue to play in our efforts to preserve and protect our areas. Our empowerment initiatives continue to grow from strength to strength. This includes our beekeeping project, which is now generating income for our beekeeping groups and helping to lift many local families out of poverty. We've also laid the groundwork for a project with Hand in Hand Tanzania that aims to create 2,000 new jobs over the next five years.

One of FCF's primary goals is to increase school attendance in our communities. To do this, we champion school nutrition,

environmental education, school transportation and scholarships. These continue to show real impact: in 2024, we witnessed a significant decrease in student absenteeism and dropout rates.

Without the unwavering dedication of our team or the ongoing support of our founder and our partners, the achievements celebrated in this report would not be possible. Furthermore, it is this support that will enable us to seize the incredible opportunity this 20-year commitment presents: to turn our vision of protecting our vital ecosystems for future generations into reality.







*“Conservation isn’t just about protecting wildlife — it’s about people, communities, and securing a future for generations to come.”*

Aurelia Klassarah, Program Director at the Friedkin Conservation Fund (FCF).



# Putting open systems into perspective

All eyes are on human-wildlife conflict (HWC) in the conservation world. A rising issue in Tanzania, Africa and across the globe, HWC is a direct consequence of expanding human populations and shrinking wildlife habitats. But why does it pose such a problem?

## Open systems at a glance

Wildlife in Tanzania is not confined by fences. Our national parks, reserves and wildlife management areas all function as open systems with no fences to prevent wildlife from moving freely. Take the path of the Great Migration, for example, which extends beyond the boundaries of the Serengeti National Park and into the Ngorongoro Crater Conservation Area, Maswa, and, of course, the Maasai Mara in neighboring Kenya.

Although open systems help maintain a healthy ecosystem, the absence of fences leads to many issues. On the boundaries of these protected areas, where the lines between animal and human activity are blurred, human-wildlife interaction — and conflict — are a daily reality.

## The benefits of an open system



### FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Open systems connect habitats, ensuring genetic diversity within species.



### MAINTAINING BALANCE

Predators, herbivores and plant species can interact naturally in an open system, preventing overpopulation or over-predation in a single area.



### ENHANCING RESILIENCE

Open ecosystems enable species to seek more suitable habitats if an area becomes too dry or lacks food.



### PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY

The free movement of wildlife within an open system helps to spread seeds, pollinate plants and enrich the soil to keep the environment healthy.



## Our place within the bigger picture

Maswa and Mwiba form part of an expansive open system encompassing the Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Crater Conservation Area, among other protected reserves. They also serve as crucial boundaries or zones of transition (known as buffer zones) that separate these ecologically significant ecosystems from surrounding human settlements.

As the guardians of these two buffer zones, we stand at the forefront of the conversation about HWC. The long-term conservation of Mwiba and Maswa depends on our ability to foster peaceful coexistence between the wilderness and the communities that share the land with us.





## 2024 at a glance



5,000

hectares of invasive  
whistling thorn acacias  
cleared.



2,300

daily meals provided  
to school students.



1,443 kg

honey harvested as part  
of our beekeeping project.



1,263

anti-poaching ground  
patrols conducted.



576

students received  
conservation education.



194

bicycles distributed to  
school students.



9

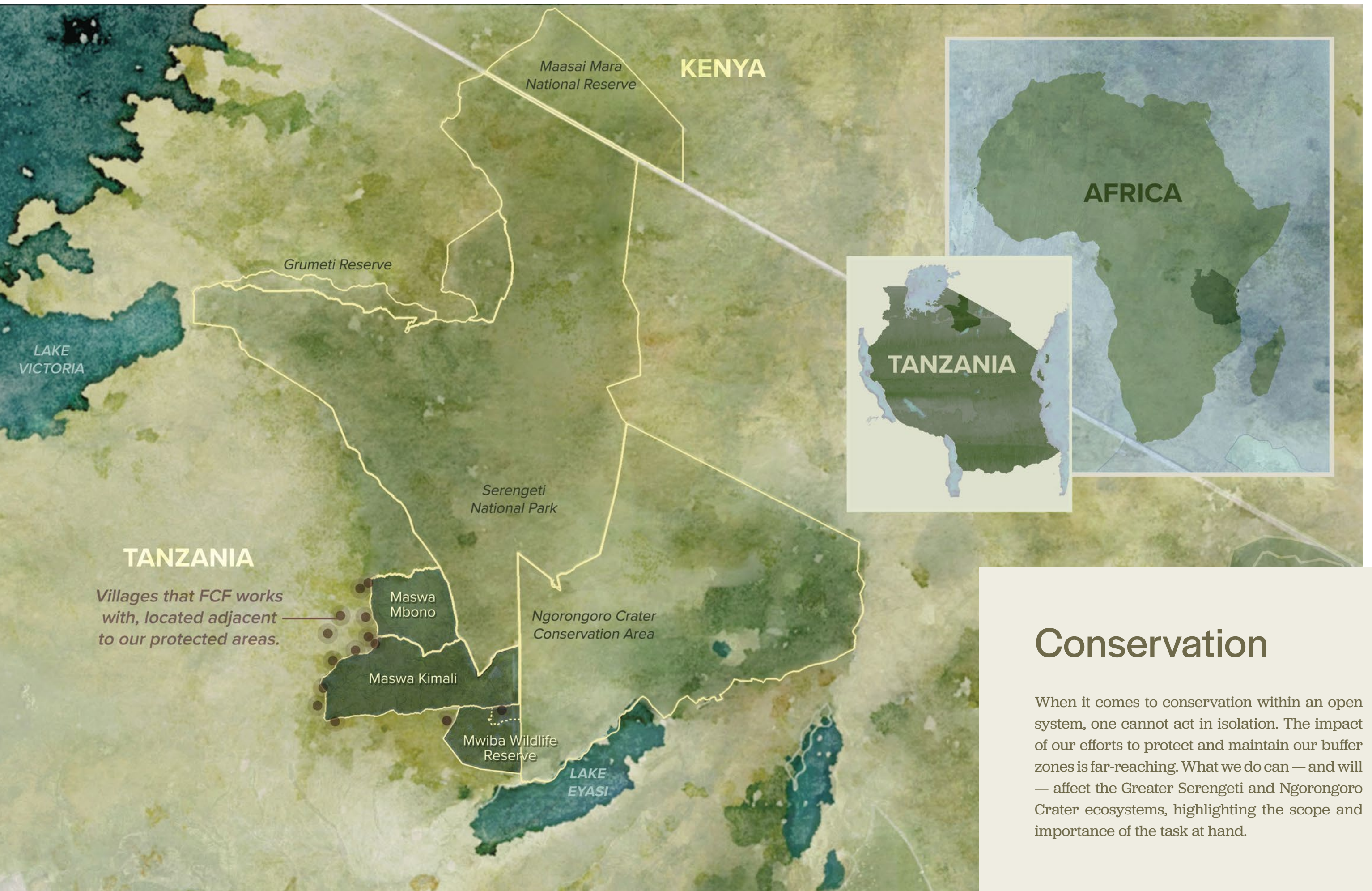
elephants collared as  
part of our Maswa-Mwiba  
Elephant Project.



1

doctor's residence  
constructed at the  
Mwamhongo Village  
Dispensary.





**TANZANIA**  
*Villages that FCF works with, located adjacent to our protected areas.*

## Conservation

When it comes to conservation within an open system, one cannot act in isolation. The impact of our efforts to protect and maintain our buffer zones is far-reaching. What we do can — and will — affect the Greater Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater ecosystems, highlighting the scope and importance of the task at hand.





## Anti-poaching

Detecting and preventing poaching in an open system poses a significant challenge, which is only amplified by the size of our areas (approximately 2,000 square kilometers).

In 2024, we intensified our anti-poaching efforts, conducting 1,263 ground patrols and 106 aerial patrols for a total of 856 hours. Our collaboration with the Tanzanian Wildlife Authority (TAWA) has also been instrumental in ensuring the effectiveness of our patrols and increased prosecution rates.

### Our impact in numbers:

<div>1,263</div> <div>ground patrols</div>	<div>106</div> <div>aerial patrols</div>	<div>856</div> <div>total hours patrolling</div>	<div>561</div> <div>snare removed</div>
<div>39</div> <div>poaching camps located and dismantled</div>	<div>95</div> <div>poachers arrested by Tanzanian authorities</div>	<div>24</div> <div>convictions</div>	<div>4</div> <div>animals rescued</div>

## Eyes in the sky

Aerial reconnaissance has been a game-changer for our anti-poaching operations. With the help of our spotter plane, we can better monitor our vast areas, call for rapid response to poaching incidents and improve coordination with our ground teams.





## Vulnerable vultures

Often misunderstood and even feared, vultures are actually nature’s unsung heroes. These remarkable scavengers keep habitats healthy by devouring animal carcasses and, in doing so, preventing the spread of deadly diseases like anthrax. Yet, worldwide, vultures are under threat. Many vulture species are now considered endangered due to increasing habitat loss and poisoning as a result of the demand for their body parts in traditional medicine markets.

In 2024, we conducted a vulture training course aimed at raising awareness of their role in maintaining and protecting healthy ecosystems. We’ve also laid the groundwork for a vulture tagging project in early 2025 in collaboration with North Carolina Zoo, the Tanzanian Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) and TAWA.



# Wildlife monitoring

Wildlife monitoring is a crucial tool in open systems where animals roam freely. It enables us to track their movements, combat poaching and prevent or address incidents of HWC in nearby communities.

## Elephant collaring

Human-elephant conflict (HEC) poses a significant challenge in our areas as elephants raid crops and damage property. Our Maswa-Mwiba Elephant Project aims to turn the tide on HEC by providing real-time tracking data for local elephant populations. In November, we fitted nine elephant bulls with GPS collars as part of this project.

## Rhino microchipping

Some of Tanzania’s remaining black rhinos roam between Maswa, the Serengeti National Park, and the Ngorongoro Crater Conservation Area. To safeguard these critically endangered animals, we joined forces with conservation partners, including TAWA, TAWIRI, TANAPA and the Frankfurt Zoological Society, to conduct a black rhino monitoring and darting exercise in October and November 2024. Our teams provided critical aerial and ground support during the exercise using helicopters and fixed-wing planes.

## How microchipping helps the fight against poaching

### FIGHTING ILLEGAL TRADE:

If a rhino is poached, the microchip allows us to track the horn through illegal trade networks.

### PINPOINTING POACHERS:

Microchips enable us to determine the exact location where rhinos were poached. We can take swift action and prevent further harm by identifying poaching hotspots.



Our support, in conjunction with the work of our partners, has contributed to the Ngorongoro-Serengeti Black Rhino population now being one of the largest free-ranging black rhino populations in Africa.



## A buzzworthy solution

### Did you know about beehive fences?

Beehive fences are a natural and effective way to protect farms from elephant raids. Elephants are afraid of bees and avoid areas where bees are present. By installing beehives around farm boundaries, we can create a barrier that keeps elephants at bay while also producing honey for communities to sell.



# Habitat management

At the heart of every thriving ecosystem is a balanced and healthy habitat. By virtue of the fact that our areas are extensions of the Greater Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater ecosystems, maintaining the overall well-being of our habitats is of the utmost importance.

## Reclaiming grasslands

During the calving season, the herds of the Great Migration spread across the southern Serengeti and Maswa’s short grass plains. However, invasive whistling thorn acacias — which over many years had overrun a portion of Maswa’s grasslands — have disrupted wildlife movements. In 2024, we cleared 5,000 hectares of whistling thorn acacias to restore the plains as part of our ongoing habitat management initiative.

## Restoring roads and revitalizing quarries

During the past year, we restored over 250 km of roads to enhance access and connectivity within Mwiba and Maswa while simultaneously preventing erosion. Additionally, we began a project to revitalize old quarry sites, which will be transformed into crucial water sources for wildlife during the dry season.

## Recycling for regeneration

We repurposed waste from our bush-clearing project into nutrient-rich mulch. This organic fertilizer will enhance the rehabilitation of newly cleared grasslands.







# Community

Community upliftment and conservation are two sides of the same coin. The well-being of Tanzania's open systems is directly connected to that of the communities that live side by side with them. Therefore, the road to safeguarding these ecosystems is paved through education, economic empowerment and ensuring our communities come to see the role protected wildlife areas can play in improving their lives.

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## Empowering our communities economically

Located far from Tanzania's economic hubs, people in our communities face limited employment opportunities. And so, in order to support their families, they turn to activities like poaching that are harmful to the environment.

Our economic empowerment initiatives aim to give our communities the tools to secure stable incomes so they can create better lives for themselves and their families.



# The buzz about our bees

## Beekeeping Project

There’s an amazing story behind the honey served at Legendary Expeditions’ camps and lodges. Every spoonful is harvested from beehives in our community-run apiaries at Mwiba Lodge, Legendary Lodge and Makao Village. In just two years, our community beekeeping project has grown in leaps and bounds, and the impact is clear: it has significantly boosted the household income of group members, setting them on the path to financial stability.

The project, which we launched in 2022, focuses on establishing community-run apiaries and training community members in practical beekeeping skills so that the hives flourish. We also assist them in monitoring the hive and provide support to the beekeeping groups.



## (Bee)keeping an eye on impact in 2024



**200**

hives built, repaired, and distributed to surrounding communities.



**1,443 kg**

honey harvested.



**214**

214 people trained in beekeeping since the project’s inception.



**US\$10,000**

generated annually for our beekeeping groups.

## Women in beekeeping

Beekeeping is more than just an economic opportunity — it’s a pathway to empowerment for women in our communities. Today, 80% of the beekeeping groups we’ve established are made up of women. But we’re not stopping there. We’re actively training women to join (and thrive in) pre-existing community beekeeping groups that have become part of our program. Until now, these groups have primarily consisted of men.

By breaking these barriers, we’re empowering women to become financially independent.





## Opening doors for entrepreneurs

### Partnership with Hand in Hand Tanzania

In 2024, we laid the groundwork for a project with an ambitious goal: to create 2,000 new jobs over the next five years. Each job created supports up to 10 members within our communities.

To achieve this, we've partnered with Hand In Hand Tanzania to provide our community members with entrepreneurial skills and training in four sustainable income-generating opportunities:



Beekeeping



Sunflower  
farming



Honey and its  
byproducts



Poultry  
farming

With these skills, they will be able to start businesses and support their families.



## An emphasis on education

Education is a powerful catalyst for breaking the cycle of poverty in rural communities. It opens doors to future opportunities, laying the foundation for long-term economic transformation.

## Inspiring a new generation

### Environmental Education Program

The impact of environmental education in our communities is twofold. On the one hand, it engages students, taking them out of the classroom and into nature, which has proven to increase school attendance. On the other hand, it helps reshape fears and misconceptions about wildlife to nurture respect for the environment. In doing this, we're inspiring the future custodians of the land.

Our Jasiri Environmental Ambassadors Program, now in its third year, provided environmental education to 576 students from nine secondary schools in 2024. With every student we reach, we take another step toward building a future where conservation is not just a lesson — it's a part of daily life.

## A new perspective

### Taking school children on safari

Despite having the wilderness on their doorstep, most Tanzanians will never experience the wonder of a safari. Our Jasiri Environmental Ambassador trips to the Serengeti National Park aim to change this by allowing students to see nature through a new lens — and, in doing so, inspire them to help protect it.

Over the past year, we've taken 192 students from our communities on unforgettable safaris, accompanied by teachers, life skills coaches and district game officials. For many, this is their first time witnessing these breathtaking landscapes and experiencing wildlife encounters without fear.







## Nourishing hungry minds

### School Nutrition Program

For many families in rural areas, education is not a priority — especially when children are needed to work or assist around the home. Our school nutrition program is changing this narrative by providing students with daily free meals, giving parents a compelling reason to send their children to school.

Currently, we provide 2,300 meals every day to students at schools. The results speak for themselves: at Makao Primary School, for example, absenteeism has dropped dramatically from 30% in 2023 to just 5% in 2024.

## Sustainable school gardens

We have introduced sustainable school gardens in nine secondary schools to promote food security and self-sufficiency. Here, students grow various vegetables, including drought-resistant Chaya, which is rich in vitamins and nutrients.

The gardens do more than just supplement school meals — they serve as living classrooms where students learn about nutrition and sustainable farming practices that can, in turn, benefit their families and communities.



# Breaking down barriers to education

## School Transport Program

The journey to school can be extremely long in rural communities — in some cases, as much as 11 miles each way. As a result, late arrivals, absenteeism and students dropping out of school are common occurrences.

To tackle this, we started our school transportation program in 2023, donating 200 bicycles to Paji Secondary School. This year, we expanded our efforts, distributing a further 194 bicycles to children at Busangwa Secondary School. With this simple solution, we're providing students with a lifeline to education.

# Nurturing bright young minds

## School Scholarship Program

In 2024, we provided financial assistance to high-achieving students in secondary school, advanced-level secondary school and those pursuing higher education. 60% of students supported by our scholarship program are female.

Additionally, we're working with life skills coaches to encourage more students to apply for higher education. Looking to the future, we aim to introduce an entrepreneurial training program for youths that will equip them with the skills to support their families while continuing their education.

# Creating opportunity

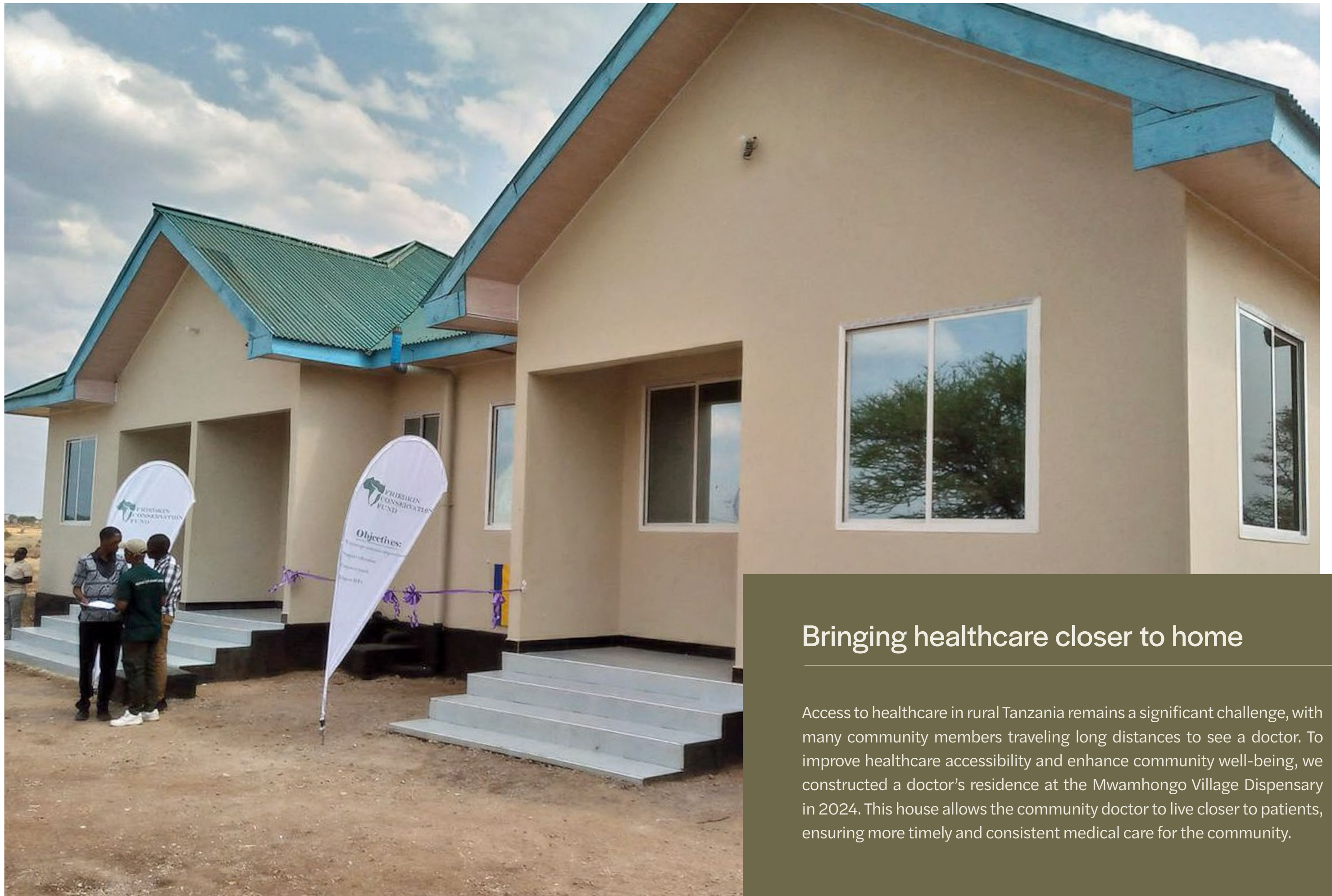
## Internship Program

Highlighting our commitment to nurturing talent in the communities that surround us, we launched our hospitality internship program in 2023. This initiative equips interns with practical skills and professional experience in hospitality, opening doors to stable careers in the industry.

In 2024, we welcomed a new group of interns who joined us for seven months of hands-on experience at various Legendary Expeditions camps. By investing in local talent, we're cultivating a new generation of hospitality professionals ready to excel in the industry.







## Bringing healthcare closer to home

Access to healthcare in rural Tanzania remains a significant challenge, with many community members traveling long distances to see a doctor. To improve healthcare accessibility and enhance community well-being, we constructed a doctor's residence at the Mwamhongo Village Dispensary in 2024. This house allows the community doctor to live closer to patients, ensuring more timely and consistent medical care for the community.





# Building a strong foundation

With the right team, we can move mountains. In 2024, we laid the groundwork for the team that will help us carve the path to success. Under the leadership of Program Director Aurelia Klassarah and Mike Kirkinis (Advisor to FCF), we focused on establishing a solid and cohesive organizational structure and welcomed new faces — young, dynamic Tanzanians with a passion for conservation and community empowerment.

## These are the people who turn our vision into a reality

- Jean-Claude McMenamin | CEO
- Aurelia Klassarah | FCF Tanzania Program Director
- Julius Robinson | Group Conservation Manager
- Bwasama Sylvester | Community Program Manager
- Ebenezer Mollel | Mwiba Concession Manager
- Christian Lucas | Habitat Coordinator
- Macarios Gisberth | IT and Operations Coordinator
- Baraka Lucas | Beekeeping Training and Youth Programs
- Lameck Stanslaus | Community Conservation Liaison
- Cleopa Sikawa | Community Projects Liaison
- Richard Mulisu | Senior Village Liaison Officer
- Herieth Nnko | Office Administrator

## Consultants

- Mike Kirkinis | Strategy
- Andrea Frey | Donor Relations
- Dave Rudolph | Sustainability
- Adam Makis Kossioris | Community Development



# Harnessing the power of collaboration

Collaboration is the key to conservation success. The many achievements we've celebrated in 2024 would not have been possible without the partners who share our vision.



**FRANKFURT  
ZOOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY**





## Conclusion

# We're here and we're committed to the journey ahead

As an organization, we've always emphasized opening doors to opportunity, whether through education, economic upliftment or career development within our team. In turn, signing this 20-year commitment to Mwiba and Maswa opens the door to opportunity for us — giving us the time and resources to make a tangible impact in protecting our areas and ensuring they thrive for generations to come.

As guardians of ecologically significant buffer zones that are part of an open system spanning some of Tanzania's most iconic

national parks, we stand at the intersection of community and conservation. Here, at the frontlines of the fight against HWC, we're creating a conservation model that centers around fostering a lasting and peaceful coexistence between humans and wildlife in rural areas.

Ultimately, it is the communities that share this land with us and bear the cost of living alongside wildlife that will carry the torch for real, lasting change. The success of our community initiatives is therefore inextricably linked to achieving our vision.

As we look to the future, we will continue to prioritize improving the lives of our community members through our economic empowerment initiatives. We collaborate and engage with our communities, listening to their problems and working hand-in-hand with them as partners in conservation. In doing so, we are shaping the future custodians of the land, who, in turn, will take up the mantle of protecting Tanzania's natural heritage.

Low-impact, high-value ecotourism has and will continue to play a vital role in helping our communities see the value in — and directly benefit from — protecting wilderness areas like ours. From job creation and funding community initiatives to driving demand for products

from local artisans, tourism is a vital tool for improving people's lives. As such, our tourism operations form a crucial part of the journey ahead.

As we navigate the complex balance between protecting Tanzania's natural heritage and supporting the communities that share the land with us, one thing remains clear: our efforts today will shape the future of the Greater Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater ecosystems, home of the Great Migration.

To find out more about our work and to contribute to our projects, please contact [andrea.frey@friedkinfund.org](mailto:andrea.frey@friedkinfund.org).







Let's connect



@legendaryexpeditions