



policy forum

PRESS RELEASE
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Policy Forum has decided to dedicate this month's debate to the on wildlife conservation policy. The debate is titled "***Does current wildlife conservation policy and law address economic and livelihood issues for all Tanzanians? A debate on the Wildlife Act 2008***"

Although Tanzania has the most substantial large mammal populations left in any nation on earth including the largest populations of lions, buffalos, wildebeest, gazelles, and antelopes, the latest research based on scientific data collected from the late 1980s to the early 2000s provides clear evidence that Tanzania is gradually losing its wildlife. These findings, collected under the auspices of the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI), suggests that wildlife is declining in all of Tanzania's main wildlife areas and ecosystems, including those which feature large protected areas such as National Parks and Game Reserves. Most species, with the exception of giraffes and elephants, have undergone widespread declines in their populations since the mid 1980s.

The reasons for this decline include: national parks and reserves often being insufficient for conserving wildlife in any given area as many species need resources during certain times of the year which are found outside the protected areas; protecting wildlife outside the parks and reserves is more costly than it is beneficial to villagers; and the current management of wildlife in Tanzania not being able to provide effective mechanisms for enabling local communities to legally benefit from wildlife.

To this end, Policy Forum, together with the Tanzania Natural Resources Forum (TNRF) is holding this debate to hear views on how best to reverse this decline of wildlife in Tanzania and how the natural resource can be better managed to benefit more Tanzanians.

Is the declining wildlife a threat to the tourism industry given that Tanzania has benefited from wildlife-based tourism for its foreign exchange over the last 15 years? What steps are being taken by the Government to ensure that the new Wildlife Act is responsive to the needs of rural communities who are the guardians of wildlife and other stakeholders? These issues, along with how an improvement in policies can enable the reversal of this decline in wildlife will feature as part of the discussion during the Breakfast Debate on Friday, 31st of October 2008. Invited participants at the meeting include Government representatives, private sector, civil society, donors, the media and concerned citizens. The discussions are held over light breakfast and enable participants to reflect and debate the issues.

The 7:30 People and Policy Debates are held on the last Friday of every month and this month the venue will be the BRITISH COUNCIL along **Ohio Street**, from 0730 to 0930. Their main purpose is to examine and debate the extent to which policies serve ordinary people, and identify imaginative questions and solutions.

The debates are organised by Policy Forum. The main presentations will be made by **Edward Porokwa** of the Pastoralists Indigenous NGOs Forum (PINGOS) and a representative of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (name yet to be confirmed).

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Signed for Policy Forum
