

SCB Regional Meeting  
From Conservation Science to Policy in Africa  
January 30, 2009, 13:30 - 15:00 HRS  
University of Ghana

---

*Symposium on Unsustainable Bushmeat Trade in Eastern Africa*

Sponsors: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group, College of African Wildlife Management- Mweka, Tanzania

---

The unsustainable bushmeat trade in Eastern Africa has emerged in the last decade as a priority conservation issue. The bushmeat trade in this region differs from West Africa where many areas have evidence of post-depletion trade being prominent where larger species have been hunted to local extinction and habitats modified so only smaller highly-reproductive species tolerant of human disturbance remain. Eastern Africa is fast approaching such biodiversity loss where local communities have become increasingly dependent on wildlife meat and trade to supplement lacking protein and income availability. A difference between these regions is that wildlife-based tourism is a significant foreign exchange earner for Eastern Africa and wildlife declines may have far-reaching development and livelihood impacts as well as ecological shifts. This symposium brings together eight conservation professionals from Kenya, Southern Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda who are studying and addressing bushmeat challenges and solutions through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Wildlife Without Borders- Africa program. Through the USFWS MENTOR Fellowship Program implemented by the College of African Wildlife Management, Mweka, Tanzania, and the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group, the Fellows conducted evaluations which indicate that the commercial bushmeat trade is having a significant impact on wildlife populations across the region within and outside protected areas. These evaluations show a need for region-wide improvement in policies that promote partnership-building in communities and among stakeholders (private industries, development agencies, NGOs, conservation practitioners, and government institutions) to implement an approach for addressing the trade including improved law enforcement, awareness, and protein and income alternatives.