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**GAME DEPARTMENT
ANNUAL REPORT
1960**

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**GAME DEPARTMENT
ANNUAL REPORT
1960**

KENYA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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GAME DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT, 1960

PART I—STAFF AND GENERAL

During the first half of the year under review the non-clerical establishment of the Game Department consisted of one Chief Game Warden, two Senior Game Wardens, 16 Game Wardens and 280 Game Scouts, plus a temporary Game Control Unit brought into being in 1957, principally to assist private land owners.

The 1960/61 approved estimates envisaged the upgrading of one Game Warden post to that of Biologist (Scale A) and an increase of three Game Wardens and 60 Game Scouts. The new posts had not been filled by the end of the year however, and shortly after its close the Game Control Unit was abolished and the establishment reduced by two Game Wardens and 31 Game Scouts. The third Game Warden post had had to be used to meet the urgent need for a licensing officer at headquarters so the expected increase in field staff was brought to naught and the Department was in fact reduced by the loss of its Game Control Unit.

Considerable redistribution of staff was necessitated by the impending abolition of National Reserves. A small Colonial Development and Welfare financed Fauna Research Unit consisting of a Biologist, three Game Scouts and a Stenographer came into being on 1st July, the Biologist post being filled by Mr. D. R. M. Stewart, who took up his appointment in September.

The Galana River Game Management Scheme, partly supported by a grant from the Nuffield Foundation, went into full operation in April, the two Game Warden posts involved being filled by secondment from the regular establishment.

Major I. R. Grimwood was appointed Chief Game Warden with effect from 1st February, on transfer from the Northern Rhodesia Department of Game and Fisheries.

Honorary Game Wardens once again displayed varying degrees of activity. The Department is wholly dependent on these volunteer officers to make up for the inadequacy of its permanent staff and without their efforts the position of fauna in many districts would be even more parlous than it is. Duties variously undertaken consisted of supervising and directing the work of subordinate Game Department staff throughout large areas, active patrolling and the bringing to justice of poachers and law breakers generally, the control of dangerous and other game and the conservation of isolated pockets of often rare species of animals. There is little glamour and a great deal of hard work attached to most of these activities and it is impossible adequately to thank those who devoted their time, and often money, to such ends. Those others who could not take an active part but who brought their influence to bear on public opinion are also deserving of gratitude.

Close liaison was maintained with the Director and staff of the Royal National Parks, to whom the Department is indebted for many acts of assistance, particularly in the Nairobi area and in getting the Galana River Game Management Scheme under way.

The Kenya Wild Life Society, which continues to grow in numbers, stature and authority, also afforded practical as well as moral support on many occasions and thanks are due in particular to those individuals who, together with

representatives of the East African Natural History Society and members of the staff of the Coryndon Museum and the Royal National Parks, regularly gave up their time to sit on the Game Capture Advisory Committee, which controls the very considerable trade in live wild animals.

The East African Professional Hunters' Association maintained its policy of close co-operation and consultation with the Game Department, to the benefit of both, and continued to be a powerful force in the conservation world.

The Game Department was again relieved of many of its duties in gazetted Forest Areas which, where not required for plantation development, serve as reservoirs of wild life, and thanks are due to officers of the Forest Department, as well as to many members of the Administration, for their personal interest and often strenuous efforts on behalf of wild life.

An Interim Advisory Committee on Game was set up in June pending the introduction of the legislation necessary fully to implement the recommendation of the 1956 Game Policy Committee for a statutory board.

This Committee sat under the chairmanship of Sir Ferdinand Cavendish-Bentinck and consisted of the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry, Dr. Likimani, the Director of National Parks, and representatives of the Administration, the Wild Life Society and the East African Professional Hunters' Association as well as the Chief Game Warden. It met four times during the course of the year.

PART II—CONSERVATION AND EXPLOITATION

A—Future Status of National Reserves

In Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1959/60 Government accepted the recommendation of the Game Policy Committee that National Reserves should be abolished, and the carrying out of that recommendation became the main preoccupation of the year.

The failure of the National Reserve concept had been due, as the Committee's report stated, to the Trustees having been charged with the conservation of wild life without being given powers to control human activities and other factors inimical to its continued existence. The regulations applying to successor conservation areas would therefore have to overcome that difficulty.

The same regulations would also have to overcome the growing antagonism to game of the pastoral tribes inhabiting the reserves arising from the feeling that game animals were "Government's cattle" maintained at their expense in terms of competition for grazing and for water, and to their detriment in respect of losses of stock and often human life, with nothing to show in return.

If game was to continue to exist it would have to share the land with man and his domestic stock, and it was therefore logical that the people who would have to concede it living room should derive the benefits accruing from its presence.

The policy adopted was therefore to attempt to get local authorities, in the shape of African district councils, themselves to institute conservation measures by supplying the incentives of profit and prestige and to convince them that, if properly exploited, game could increase the overall yield of their land.

In the previous year the Meru African District Council had set an example by creating its own 600 square mile Game Reserve by passing by-laws controlling entry, grazing, cultivation, the destruction of vegetation and similar practices which, superimposed on its status of a Controlled Area in which all

animals had been declared to be game animals, gave the same degree of overall control as prevails in National Parks and in Game Reserves in countries other than Kenya.

This was the model followed where animals still existed in numbers sufficient to be exploited by tourism for the benefit of people wishing to see and photograph them and by the end of the year agreements on these lines had been reached concerning all but the Marsabit National Reserve.

Thus the African District Council of Narok had agreed to create a Game Reserve, to be known as the Masai Mara Game Reserve, covering some 700 square miles of the best of the Mara country and including the whole of the Mara National Reserve.

In this region the annual grass fires lit to improve grazing for the flocks of sheep and goats which are yearly pushing their way further into the tsetse country present the greatest threat to wild life, because they are rapidly destroying the thickets and riverside vegetation essential to species such as buffalo, rhinoceros and lion.

The only by-law applying to the whole reserve prohibits such burning, but an inner area of some 200 square miles lying between the Talek and Mara rivers is to be made a complete sanctuary by by-laws controlling entry, grazing and all human activities, and it is there that the visitors' lodge to be presented to the African District Council by the Government, will be built.

In the Kajiado District the African District Council have agreed to pass by-laws prohibiting burning, cultivation or the enclosure of land in the Kitengela area of the Ngong National Reserve, thus preserving the migration route of game from the neighbouring Nairobi Royal National Park, and throughout the West Chyulu National Reserve which borders on the Tsavo Royal National Park. By-laws similar to those for the Meru and Masai Mara Game Reserves will apply to the Amboseli National Reserve which will be taken over by the African District Council and run under the name of the Masai Amboseli Game Reserve. Here, too, Government is presenting a new visitors' lodge to the African District Council.

Both the Narok and the Kajiado African District Councils will employ their own Wardens with subordinate staffs to administer their Game Reserves, which will come into being when the National Reserves cease to exist in 1961.

In both districts, the prospects of direct harvesting of common species such as zebra and wildebeest for the value of hides and meat, as a second form of exploitation, is under investigation in areas adjacent to the African District Council Game Reserves.

The Marsabit National Reserve presented a more difficult problem because the tourist potential will be largely absorbed by the two tiny National Parks which are to be created, the one covering Marsabit Mountain itself, and the other an area on the Uaso Nyiro River near Archer's Post. The bulk of the African District Council's revenue must therefore come from other forms of exploitation.

Of these sport, hunting and direct harvesting of animals offer the greatest possibilities and before the National Reserve was degazetted on 1st January, 1961, agreements concerning both had been reached with the Samburu African District Council.