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UNESCO's
Ngorongoro Declaration windfall for global natives...

Giraffes
uplisted by IUCN



Wangu-Wangu
The first driver to guide President Nyerere into Ngorongoro Crater

bed & breakfast
are they right for everyone?

Africa's Vultures may cease to soar

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CHECK IN

There's a saying, "When the going gets tough, the tough gets going". And here we are again bringing you the end-of-the-year edition, celebrating 2016. In spite of ups and downs that faced our industry, it's been an amazing year. It has been fun and exciting putting together this final edition, just like it's been with the previous editions in 2016, with stories that evoked the minds of our readers such as "THE AKIYE TRIBE", which was very insightful and enjoyable to most of our readers both local and international.

In this edition we bring you "Wangu Wangu", the first driver to drive the late father and founder of our beloved nation, Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere to the NgoroNgoro Crater; and he made a soulful unwritten history that only the A&L magazine has had the priviledge to interview and publish this true story for the first time.

Our all time international conservation ambassador, Miss Mallory Lindsay again gives out a cry to the world's most vulnerable birds, the "Vultures". The iconic conservator of all in the jungle.

Well, we appreciate our readers, contributors, the A&L team and all industry stakeholders for their true support. With so much to do in this 2017, we have positively responded to the views and opinions of our readers on introducing a new segment "OTHER PARTS OF AFRICA" which will be covering interesting news and stories from outside Tanzania.

Last but not least, we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year 2017. Cheers!

By A&L team

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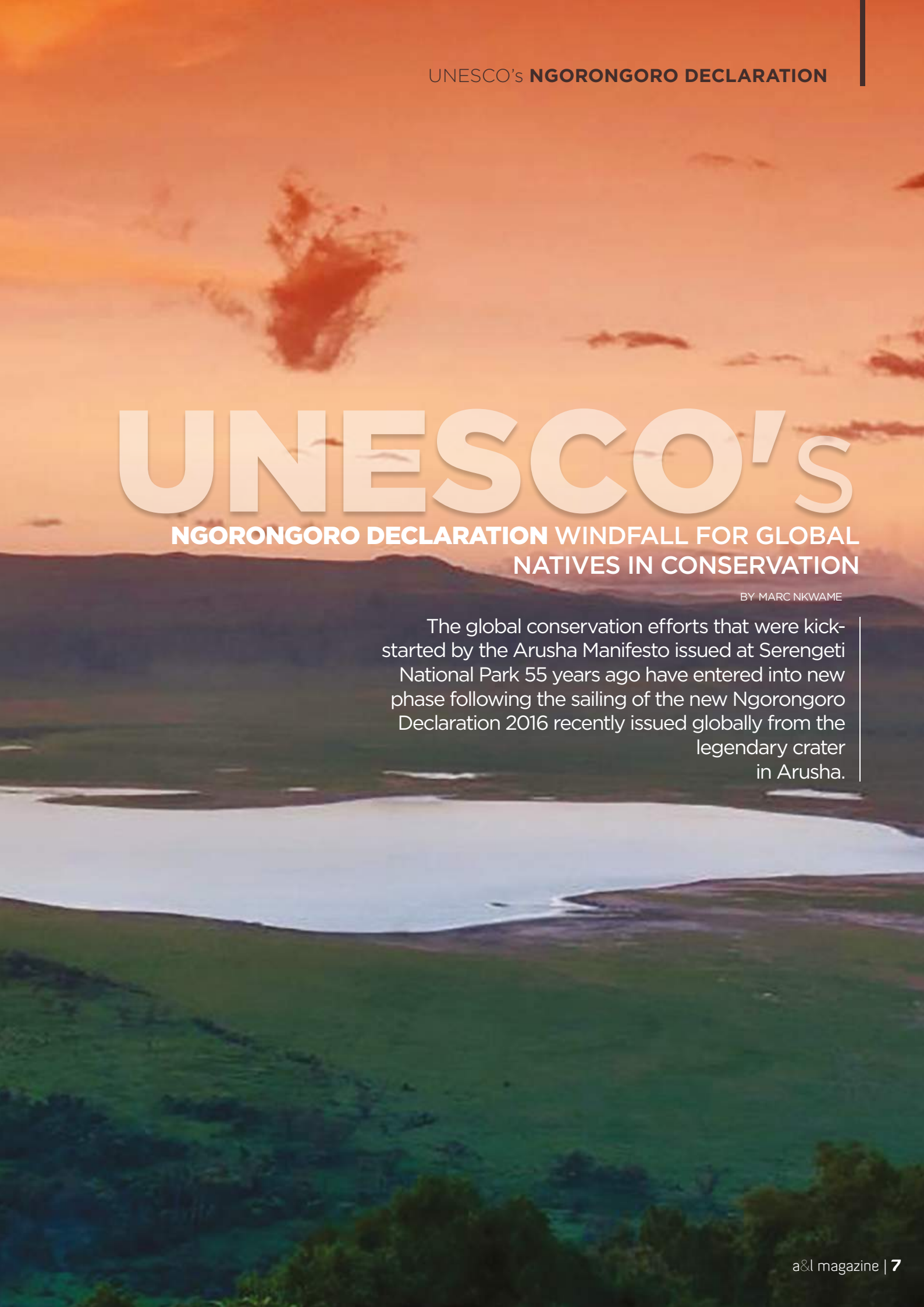


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UNESCO



UNESCO's

NGORONGORO DECLARATION WINDFALL FOR GLOBAL NATIVES IN CONSERVATION

BY MARC NKWAME

The global conservation efforts that were kick-started by the Arusha Manifesto issued at Serengeti National Park 55 years ago have entered into new phase following the sailing of the new Ngorongoro Declaration 2016 recently issued globally from the legendary crater in Arusha.

A new global affirmation for the conservation of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Human History for Sustainable Development across the world, was issued by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) management right from Tanzania.

It is going to be known as the 'Ngorongoro Declaration on World Heritage and Sustainable Development 2016,' which should be windfall to all communities living within or around World Heritage Sites across the globe because the new under the new UNESCO agreement, these societies must benefit from the properties.

The declaration read and adopted at the Ngorongoro Conservation Area this year becomes the first such official announcement of global concern in wildlife environment and wildlife preservation with focus of human and community development since the Arusha Manifest of 1961 which was announced by the Father of the Nation, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere at the Serengeti National Park, 55 years ago.

Permanent Secretary in the Tanzanian Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Major General Gaudence Milanzi read the UNESCO declaration in Ngorongoro area, during the climax of the UNESCO's International Conference on 'Safeguarding African World Heritage as a Driver of Sustainable Development.'

Earlier on during the preceding conference, the Director General for the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, Dr Mechtild Rossler thus said UNESCO will see ways of making people living near, around or within World Heritage Sites in Tanzania and the rest of the world are improved in sync with area conservations.

More than 200 participants from around the globe are attended the event organized in Association with China and Tanzanian governments and held at Arusha International Conference Center in Arusha. The delegates later travelled to the Ngorongoro Crater, which is one of the World Heritage Sites where they adopted the Ngorongoro Declaration 2016 in Ngorongoro.

"We call upon African Union and its Regional Economic Communities to promote sustainable development while guaranteeing the conservation of African Natural and Cultural Heritage in line with the AU visionary Agenda 2063." Read part of the Declaration Statement.

The lengthy document has more than 10 bulleted statements but there is one which stands out; "The UN General Assembly of State Parties, the World Heritage Committee and World Heritage Center and the Advisory Bodies to Work together with countries to support research in order to find appropriate and sustainable solutions for development projects within and outside World Heritage Properties," it reads.

The Ngorongoro Declaration thus answers long existed questions regarding how exactly do people who live within and around National Parks, Game Reserves and World Heritage Sites can benefit from the preserved properties.

Tanzanian Deputy Minister for Livestock and Fisheries, Mr William Ole Nasha, who is also the Member of Parliament representing Ngorongoro Constituency, previously expressed concern regarding the future and fate of people who live within the NCAA and around other Nationals Parks as efforts for conservation move into higher momentum.




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Africa's vultures May Cease to Soar

By Malory Lindsay

Once filling the African skies, one of the country's most important scavengers could be facing extinction within the turn of the century.

Deemed as nature's 'clean-up' crew, vultures are essential for the prevention of spreading deadly diseases and pathogens. Their stomach acid is so potent that potentially lethal bacteria- like the ones that cause hog cholera and anthrax- can no longer thrive once the contaminated flesh is consumed; thus making the vulture an invaluable 'dead end' host. In addition, their ability to clean a carcass within minutes also contributes to the control of mammal scavengers via food source availability, or lack thereof.

Nevertheless, this natural recycler is facing a fearful fate. All 8 vulture populations have declined in numbers averaging 62% in the last thirty years according to the African Programs for the Peregrine Fund. Seven of them – all but the bearded vultures – have declined by more than 80 percent and would be considered critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Causes

As one could guess, humans are at the top of the list. A demand for body parts to be used in witchcraft, urbanization, and poisoning- both intentional and accidental- have all led to plummeting vulture populations.

The demand for vulture parts for the use in muti – traditional medicine – can account for almost thirty percent of deaths. Harvested parts are said to cure illnesses and body ailments, but what has wildlife experts most concerned is the demand for the bird's brain in a gambler's superstition. This small organ is said to spawn the gift of premonition- basically, the ability to see into the future- when smoked and inhaled. Besides its depleting effects, little is known about this illegal and secretive trade.



THE iconic, soaring funnel has become an essential tool for wildlife authorities in finding poached animals- and, hopefully, the poachers themselves...

However, it is the use of poison that can take the blame for causing the most deaths- more than 60 percent.

Poisoning is often unintentional. A farmer may lace a carcass killed by a predator with poison intending to rid himself of the nuisance animal, but the unassuming vultures usually arrive to the carcass- and poison- first.

Sadly, not all vulture poisoning are accidental. The iconic, soaring funnel has become an essential tool for wildlife authorities in finding poached animals- and, hopefully, the poachers themselves. As a result, some poachers have begun to poison the carcasses in a means to kill off the 'silent snitches.'

Depending on the size of the decaying body, it is not uncommon to have hundreds of vultures feeding at one time. Since 2011, ten poisonings in six African countries have been responsible for the deaths of at least 1,500 vultures.

It is evident the death toll is taking affect. These long lived animals are slow producers, only hatching one offspring a year, and breeding pairs are unable to support the drastic decline in numbers.

Fortunately, in the midst of the chaos, there is hope. The 'thing' about man-made problems is that they can be resolved by man-made solutions. Regulations on poison control, more awareness in regards to the unsupported claims of vulture parts being used in traditional medicine, and educating more about the importance of these essential scavengers can become a tremendous benefit to ,both, the vulture's future the health of their human neighbors.

As human populations grow, so does the demand for the resources to allow the growth to thrive. A factor that cannot, nor should, be denied. Nonetheless, a massive growth in wind farms and electrical infrastructures across the continent is also a concern—the birds often collide with the turbines and power lines, resulting in nearly ten percent of the surveyed vulture deaths.



Bed & breakfast

BY SARAH SCHLICHTER

Opting for a bed and breakfast over other types of lodging is a great way to personalize your stay, get to know the locals and, in many cases, find a warm, cheerful room for the same price as a major hotel chain. There are so many varieties of B&B's that choosing the perfect one may seem overwhelming. In fact, the term has come to describe anything from an upscale, sprawling estate of restored cottages to a room and morning coffee at an unassuming farmhouse. There are plenty of great resources for searching out B&B accommodations, both online and offline.



Is a B&B Right for You?

Bed and breakfasts are a favorite options for many travelers, but they're not right for everyone. You may want to consider a B&B if:

- You prefer smaller, more intimate accommodations than a large hotel.
- You appreciate rooms that are individually decorated, especially with antiques or period furniture.
- You enjoy getting to know other travelers over a lavish communal breakfast.
- You prefer charm over amenities, and don't mind if your room doesn't have Internet access or other modern conveniences. (Editor's Note: More B&B's are adding such modern amenities every day -- so ask your innkeeper!).
- You like staying in residential neighborhoods or quiet rural settings.
- You're looking for adults-only accommodations (many B&B's do not accept children).
- You enjoy the experience of a "home away from home" -- including quirky touches like the innkeepers' cat curled up in the corner of the living room.
- You like having the personal attention and expertise of an innkeeper at your disposal.
- You appreciate transparent pricing (many B&B's list nightly rates on their Web sites).

Big-City B&B's

On the other hand, you may want to avoid B&B's if:

- You appreciate amenities like gyms, pools, room service and business centers.
- You appreciate the privacy and anonymity of a big hotel.
- You'd rather eat breakfast alone or with your travel companion than make small talk with a bunch of strangers.



- You're on a very tight budget (B&B's tend to be a little bit more expensive than ultra-budget hotels and motels).
- You'll be checking in and out at weird times (very early or very late); unlike a large hotel, B&B's tend not to have 24-hour front desk service.

What Makes a Perfect B&B?

Ask the Innkeeper, even if you decide to book your accommodations online, we recommend that you call the innkeeper at least one time before you go. Here are some topics you should consider discussing.

- While some B&B's are sophisticated and somewhat costly, others are very simple and can be a real bargain. Ask what you can expect in the way of room accommodations.
- Most B&B's have fairly strict check-in times. Find out what the policy is, so that you are not (as is often the case) barging into someone's home after hours.
- Most inns have individual in-suite bathrooms for all the guests, some will require that you share a restroom with an adjacent suite and some offer just one bathroom for several rooms. Ask!
- Contrary to what you may think, breakfast is not always included in the price of the room. It can also vary from a bagel and coffee to a sumptuous feast, and may be offered in the privacy of your room or in a public dining room. Also inquire when breakfast is served.
- Unfortunately for families who enjoy traveling together, you should not assume that an establishment will welcome children. Even if it does, find out if there is an age minimum.
- Does the bed and breakfast allow pets? If so, are there size and breed limitations?
- Ask if credit cards are accepted, and inquire about cancellation policies.
- Is there a restaurant on the premises?
- Is the B&B handicap-accessible? If it's in a historic building, it may not be.
- Always ask about special promotional offers or coupons.
- If you smoke, you must inquire as to the B&B's policy. You will find that a majority of them do not permit smoking of any kind. Some allow it outside or in designated public areas, but many will not allow it anywhere on the grounds.
- What kind of amenities are provided in your room? Some hotels offer free wireless Internet access, while others don't even have a TV.
- If you have allergies or other dietary restrictions, be sure to let your innkeeper know ahead of time so he or she can accommodate you.

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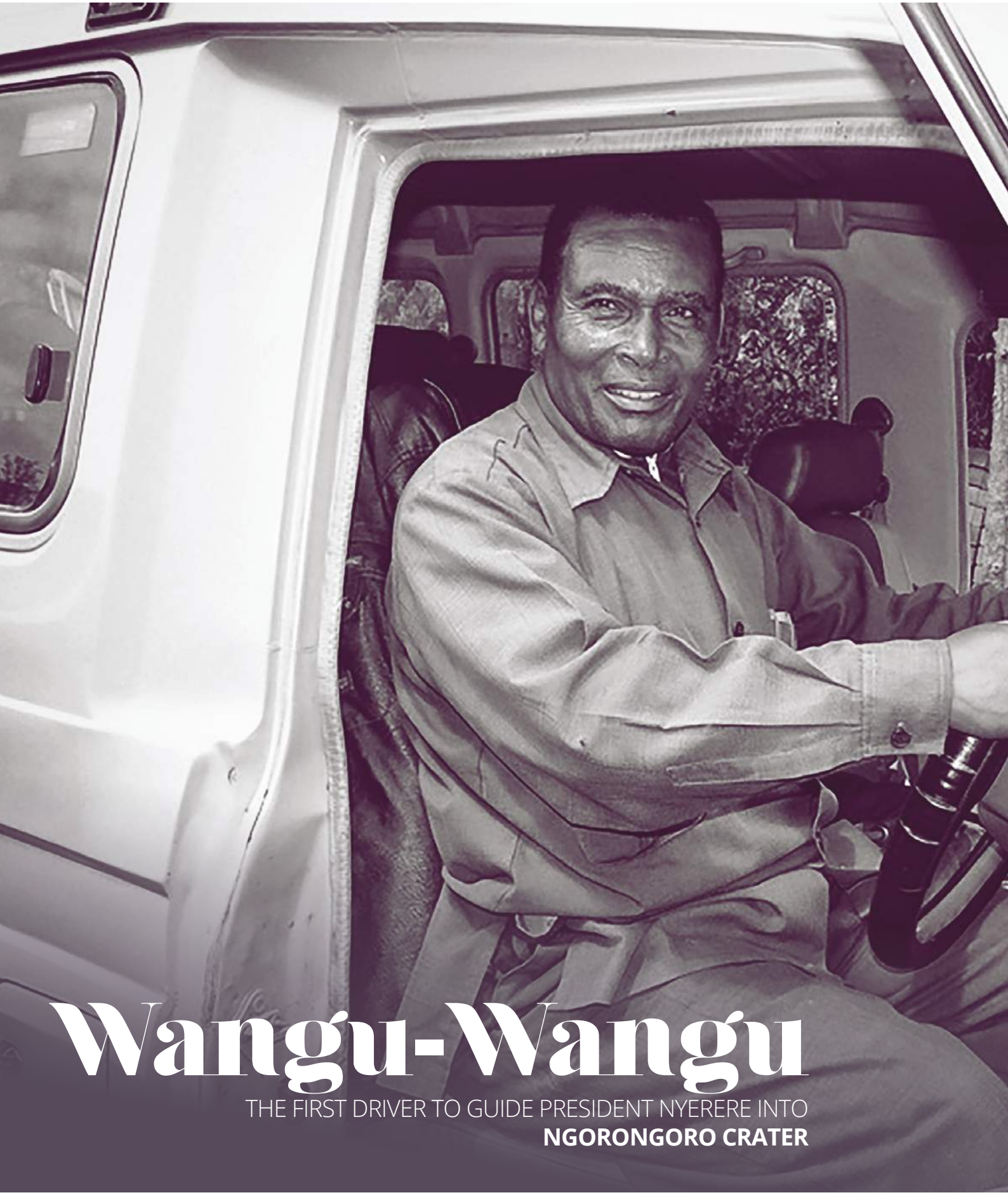








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Wangu-Wangu

THE FIRST DRIVER TO GUIDE PRESIDENT NYERERE INTO
NGORONGORO CRATER



Aloyce Songai started out as a tractor mechanic during the days of wheat plantations in Karatu District, then one day he came upon an ad, calling for qualified drivers to apply for jobs at the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority.
How this former farm-tractor mechanic ended up driving one of Africa's most respected Heads of State into the wild beasts infested crater remains one of the most dramatic stories.

Q Any special reason that made authorities to pick you to drive the president into the crater?
In those days the tracks leading down the crater were in very poor condition and on that particular day it had rained heavily so even the state house drivers could not negotiate their way down the crater.

Q And what made Nyerere visit Ngorongoro that day?
The conflict between the first Arusha Regional Commissioner and pioneering indigenous Conservator at Ngorongoro forced Mwalimu Nyerere to driver into Ngorongoro Crater in the late 60s, for the first time.

Q What was your job description by that time?
I started out as the truck driver for NCAA before being temporarily elevated to serve as acting driver for Mr Solomon Ole Saibul, the first indigenous conservator at Ngorongoro.
Steven Ngereza who used to drive conservator Saibul had taken ill so I had to fill his
position.

Q So what happened on the day of Nyerere's visit toNgorongoro?
It was late in the year 1969 when the late Father of the Nation was compelled to visit Ngorongoro Conservation Area following an incident in which the first Tanzanian NCAA conservator, Mr Solomon Ole Saibul quarrelled with the then Regional Commissioner for Arusha, Mr Aaron Mwakang'ata.

LEFT:
Mr Songai alias 'Wangu-Wangu,' on the other hand is a retired pensioner who has chosen to devote his remaining time in preserving the environment as green activist who now heads the 'Hifadhi Mazingira Karatu' (HIMAKA), organization.

Q What was the problem then?

Mr Mwakang'ata had earlier on 'forced his way' into the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, by-passing the regulations that required all newcomers to sign in the official guest book placed at the Park's entrance gate.

Driving in a government car, a Peugeot 403 with registration numbers GT 519, Mr Mwakang'ata simply zoomed past the NCAA entrance after ordering the guards there to open the gates before proceeding into the park where was to meet some foreigners at one of the lodges.

On hearing that the RC had refused to sign into the visitors' book the NCAA conservator, Ole Saibul himself took the register from the gate and went to confront Mr Mwakang'ata at the lodge in which he was meeting some foreigner, demanding to know why the RC ignored the park procedures.
Mr Mwakang'ata however ignored the conservator; reminding him he was the boss in the region and does what he wanted.

Q So what did Mr Saibul do afterwards?

The opportunity presented itself a month later when President Nyerere was staying in Arusha. Saibul still angry he instructed me to drive him to meet the Head of State at the State Lodge.
Ole Saibul asked to see President Nyerere who agreed despite the short notice based on the fact that the late father of the nation cultivated deep respect to conservation efforts.
The furious Saibul was carrying under his arm, the disputed NCAA gate register which he showed to Nyerere telling the President about the incident in which the Regional Commissioner, Mr Mwakangata had belittled him and the fixed regulations at the Conservation Area.

Ole Saibul expressed his concern before Mwalimu Nyerere, while the Regional Commissioner himself sat there staring helplessly.

When asked about the matter, Mwakang'ata defended himself that he was rushing to sign a very important 'tourism development project' that was to be executed in the NCAA.
The President then asked both the RC and the conservator to forget their differences, then promised to personally visit the Ngorongoro Conservation Area and that is how the father of the nation got to visit the crater.
Nyerere was also curious to find out more about the alleged hotel project which Mr Mwakang'ata was so much occupied with in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

Q How did Nyerere get to Ngorongoro in those days when the roads were bad as you said?

He arrived in a black Jeep belonging to the state house, however it was later discovered that none among the drivers in the President's motorcade had ever driven into the crater before so Mwalimu had to be placed under my charge.

Q So you got to drive Mwalimu's Jeep?

No, I took the president down the crater driving in the conservator's own Land-rover 109.
The vehicle needed some rushed modifications because it lacked an open roof top which was important for the President to look around the crater during the ride.
We unscrew and took off the entire rooftop, replacing it with another one taken from a different Land-Rover with an open roof hatch. Under expert mechanics, it took less than an hour and soon we all set out going down into the crater.

The conservator rode with me in front. Saibul also served as guide, while President Nyerere sat in the second row with a bodyguard, with two other guards seated on jump seats in the rear.
The usual protocol had to be broken because jungle laws had to take over. I was the only one who knew the crater well thus compelled to lead the motorcade while also carrying the president in the same car
And that is how I got the name 'Wangu-wangu' becoming the most respected driver in the NCAA and eventually working his way to the top of his career as the head Transport Officer, a position I held until retirement.

Q And that is how the story ended?

Well after the visit Nyerere declared that from that day, the post of the Chief Conservator at Ngorongoro will become a presidential appointment making him answerable only to the head of state and that no other leader should look down upon him as the Arusha RC had tried to do.

That is how the Ngorongoro Conservation Area became an autonomous authority as far as management of its resources, wildlife and visitors in the area are concerned.
Nyerere also put a stop to a hotel project which was being planned at the base of the crater, terming it as environmental destructive, while also ordering the gas-filling station which used to operate inside the caldera to be removed.

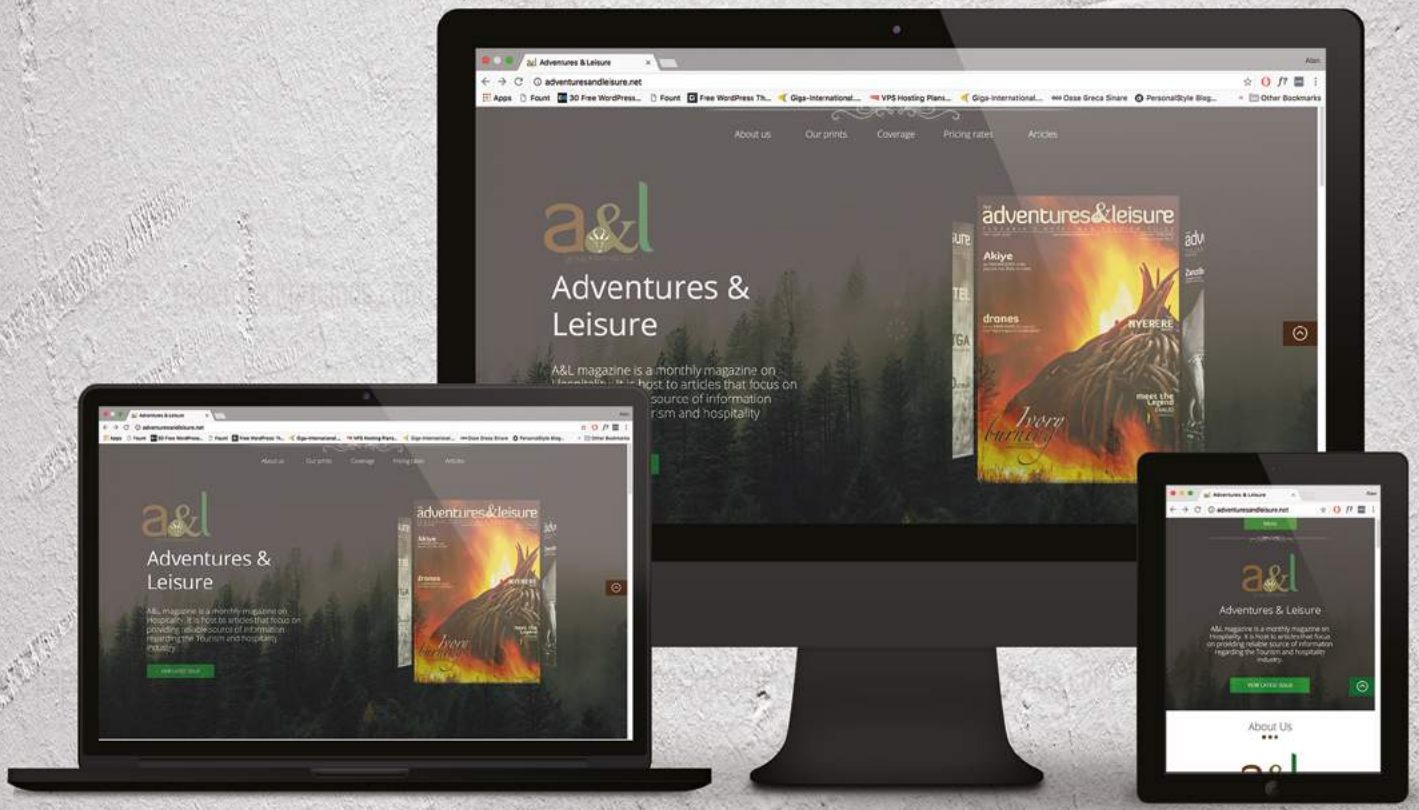
Q So there was a hotel planned to be built in Crater?

Yes there was actually a hotel project, planned for the crater basin, which was to be undertaken by the 'Fletcher Hotels' of Netherlands and it seemed the former Arusha RC, Mr Mwakang'ata was also pushing for it before Nyerere stopped the plan.



...from that day, the post of the Chief Conservator at Ngorongoro will become a presidential appointment making him answerable only to the head of state and that no other leader should look down upon him as the Arusha RC had tried to do. That is how the Ngorongoro Conservation Area became an autonomous authority...

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Giraffes

UPLISTED BY IUCN

BY THE GIRAFFE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION



The iconic giraffe (Giraffa camelopardalis), one of the world's most recognisable animals and the tallest land mammal, has moved from 'Least Concern' to 'Vulnerable' in the newly released International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.





LEFT:
Angolan giraffe family in Damaraland, Namibia ©Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF)

BOTTOM:
Reticulated giraffe in Samburu National Park, Kenya ©Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF)



Widespread across southern and eastern Africa, with smaller isolated populations in west and central Africa, new population surveys estimate an overall 36-40% decline in the giraffe population from approximately 151,702-163,452 in 1985 to 97,562 in 2015. Of the nine currently recognised subspecies of giraffe, five have decreasing populations, whilst three are increasing and one is stable. This updated assessment of giraffe as a species was undertaken by the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Giraffe & Okapi Specialist Group (GOSG), hosted by Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) and Zoological Society of London (ZSL).

"Whilst giraffe are commonly seen on safari, in the media and in zoos, people – including conservationists – are unaware that these majestic animals are undergoing a silent extinction. With a decline of almost 40% in the last three decades alone, the world's tallest animal is under severe pressure in some of its core ranges across East, Central and West Africa. As one of the world's most iconic animals, it is timely that we stick our necks out for giraffe before it is too late," says Dr. Julian Fennessy, co-chair of the IUCN SSC GOSG, and Director of the Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF).

Recent genetic-based research by GCF, Senckenberg Biodiversity and Climate Change Research Centre and other partners, suggests that there are four distinct species of giraffe instead of only one, however, the IUCN currently only recognises giraffe as one species. Should these new genetic findings be confirmed and become widely accepted, this would likely result in three of the four giraffe species being listed as under considerable threat on the IUCN Red List. Taxonomy is just one of many gaps that still exist in our overall understanding of giraffe and highlights that they are indeed Africa's forgotten megafauna.

Human population growth poses the largest threat to giraffe in Africa today. Habitat loss and changes through expanding agriculture and mining, illegal hunting, increasing human-wildlife conflict, as well as civil unrest, are all factors that are pushing giraffe towards extinction.

However, with GCF giraffe have a strong advocate. During this year alone, GCF and its partners have supported and collaborated on many critical giraffe conservation initiatives including Operation Twiga, a Uganda Wildlife Authority effort to translocate and establish new ranges for the endangered Rothschild's giraffe in Uganda; a detailed assessment of range and numbers of West African giraffe in collaboration with the Niger government and AVEN; development of an Africa-wide Framework Strategy for giraffe conservation in Africa; and the ongoing development of National Giraffe Conservation Country Profiles for all giraffe range states, which have provided an invaluable baseline for the development of this new IUCN Red Listing.

Steph Fennessy, Director of GCF, points out that, "while GCF is a small organisation, we are increasing our reach, working with partners throughout Africa to enhance giraffe conservation on the ground, while at the same time collaborating with partners internationally to rally support and awareness for giraffe, which will ultimately help to save them in the wild in Africa."

At the IUCN World Conservation Congress in September this year a resolution (008 – Giraffids: reversing the decline of Africa's iconic megafauna) was adopted by the members and called for action to reverse the decline of giraffe in the wild.

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