

Masai Mara National Reserve - Kenya

At the brink of precipice?



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Presentation Outline:

1. Introduction
2. Location of the Mara
3. Historical Background
4. Wildlife in the Mara
5. The great migration
6. The Big Cat Diary
7. Challenges of the Mara
8. Conservation efforts in the Mara
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1. Introduction

- The name Masai Mara is derived from two words: **Maasai** after the Maasai tribe and **Mara** after the Mara River that runs across the reserve.
- The permanent **Mara** and **Talek** Rivers, and their tributaries, flow through the Reserve and approximately trisect it.
- Rainfall: In the **drier east** - c. **800 mm** rainfall per year and to the **wetter west** - c. **1,200 mm** per year.
- The reserve is primarily **open grassland**.
- It was voted in 2007 as the “**eighth wonder of the world**”.
- It is in the UNESCO tentative list as a **World Heritage Site** since 2010.



2. Location of the Mara



3. History of the Mara

Year	Development
1961	The Mara was first established as a wildlife sanctuary. It covered 520sq.km of the current area. Extended East to cover 1,821 sq.km. Converted to a game reserve. Management took over by Narok County Council.
1974	Part of the reserve was given National Reserve Status. An area of 159 sq.km was returned to the local communities.
1976	An additional 162 km.sq were removed from the reserve.
1984	The park was reduced to 1,510 sq.km
1995	Management of the park was divided between Transmara County Council and Narok County Council.
2001	The Mara Conservancy took over management of the Mara Triangle.

4. Wildlife in the Mara

- Mara has the largest number of savannah species in the world. They are as follows:
 - 2 million wildebeest
 - 200,000 plain zebra
 - 650,000 gazelle,
 - 62,000 buffalo,
 - 64,100 impala,
 - 61,200 topi,
 - 7,500 hartebeest,
 - 7,100 giraffe,
 - 3,000 eland and
 - 4,000 elephant(Source: Mara Research Station)
- More than 500 bird species are known to occur in the Mara.



5. The Great Migration



1,300,000 wildebeest

500,000 Thomson's gazelles

200,000 Zebras

100,000 Topi

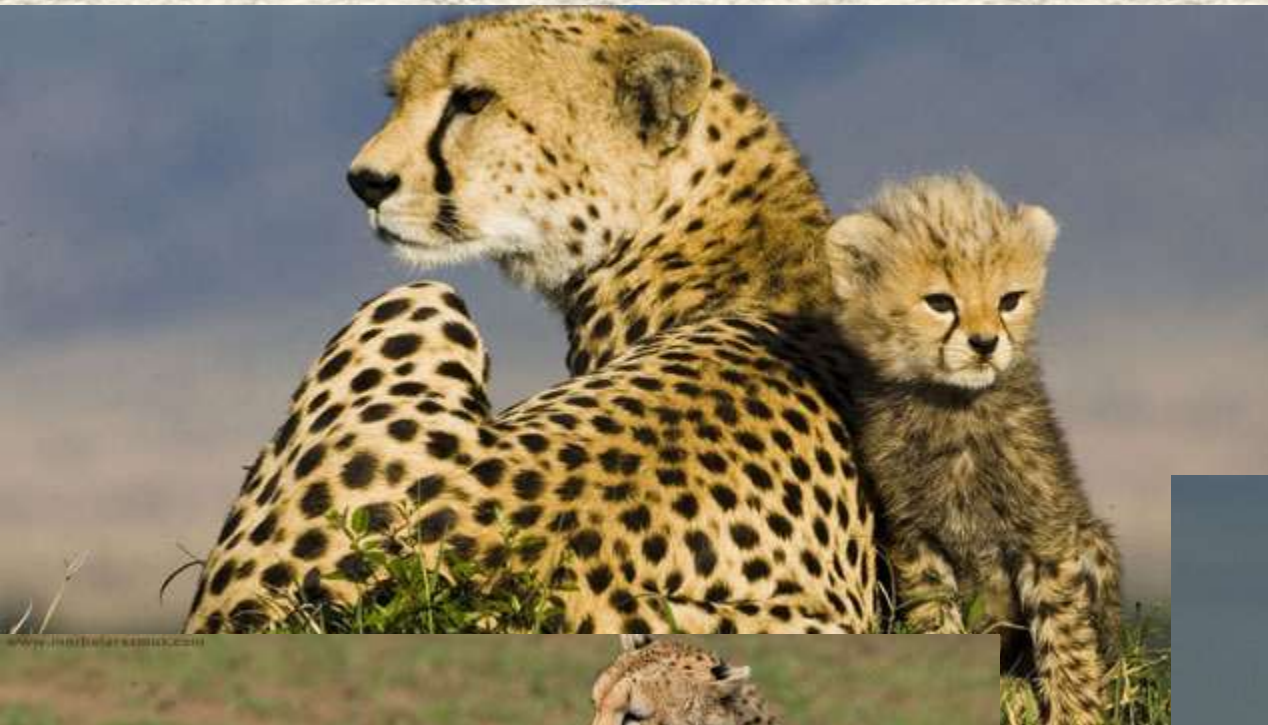
18,000 Elands

The **Great Migration** is one of the most impressive natural spectacles world wide. **Eight wonder of the world.**

Source: Johann du toit



6. The Big Cat Diary



The Mara is where the BBC series called the Big Cat Diary is filmed. It focuses on cheetahs, leopards and lions.



7. Challenges of the Mara

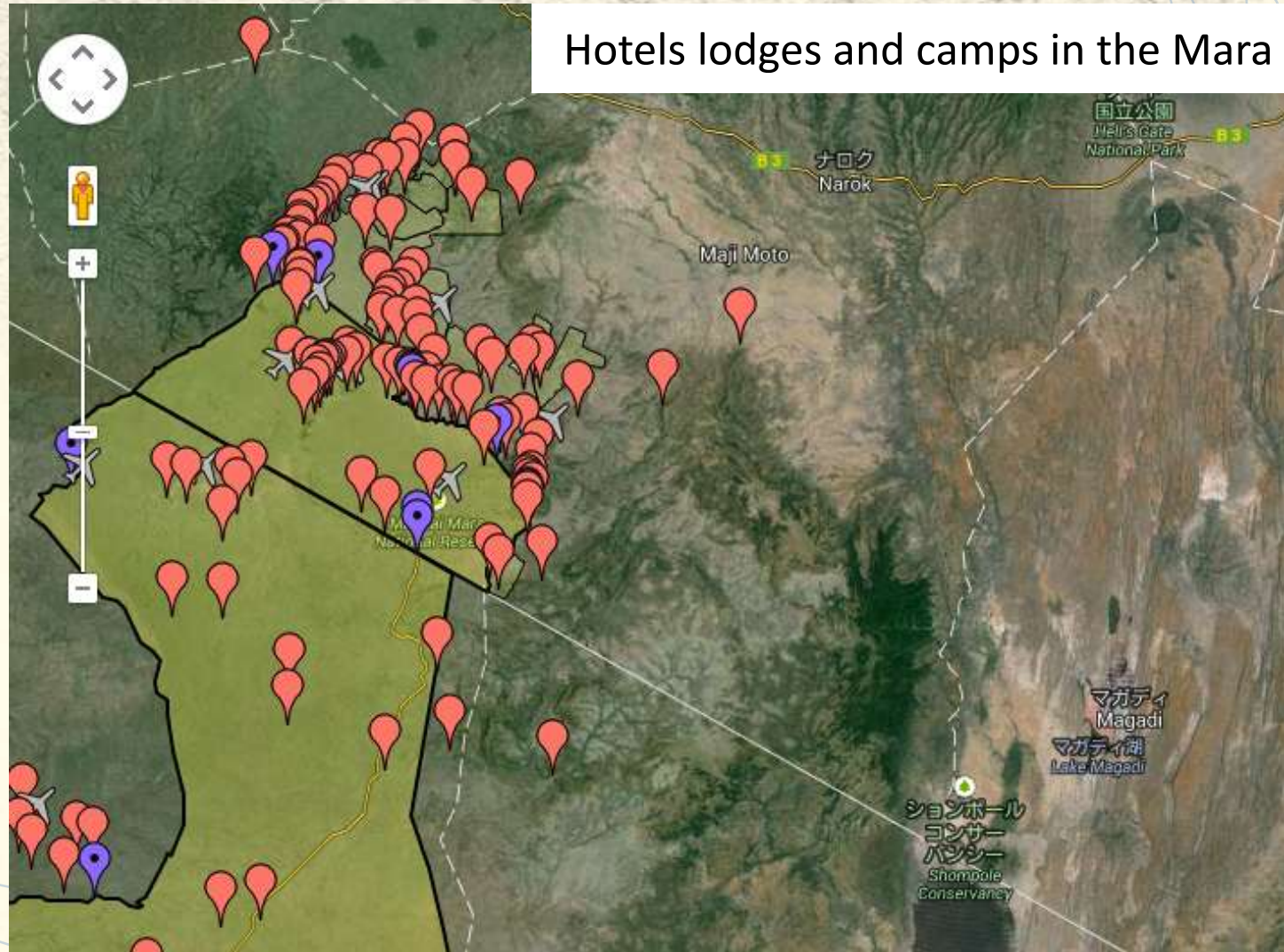
7-1. Loss of Wildlife:

- A study funded by WWF and conducted by ILRI between 1989 and 2003 monitored hooved species in the Mara on a monthly basis, and found huge wildlife losses as follows:
 - 95 percent for giraffes,
 - 80 percent for warthogs,
 - 76 percent for hartebeest, and
 - 67 percent for Impala.
- The study blamed the loss of animals on increased human settlement in and around the reserve.
- Wildlife migration to other parks is also caused by disruption of their migratory routes by human settlements and touristic developments.

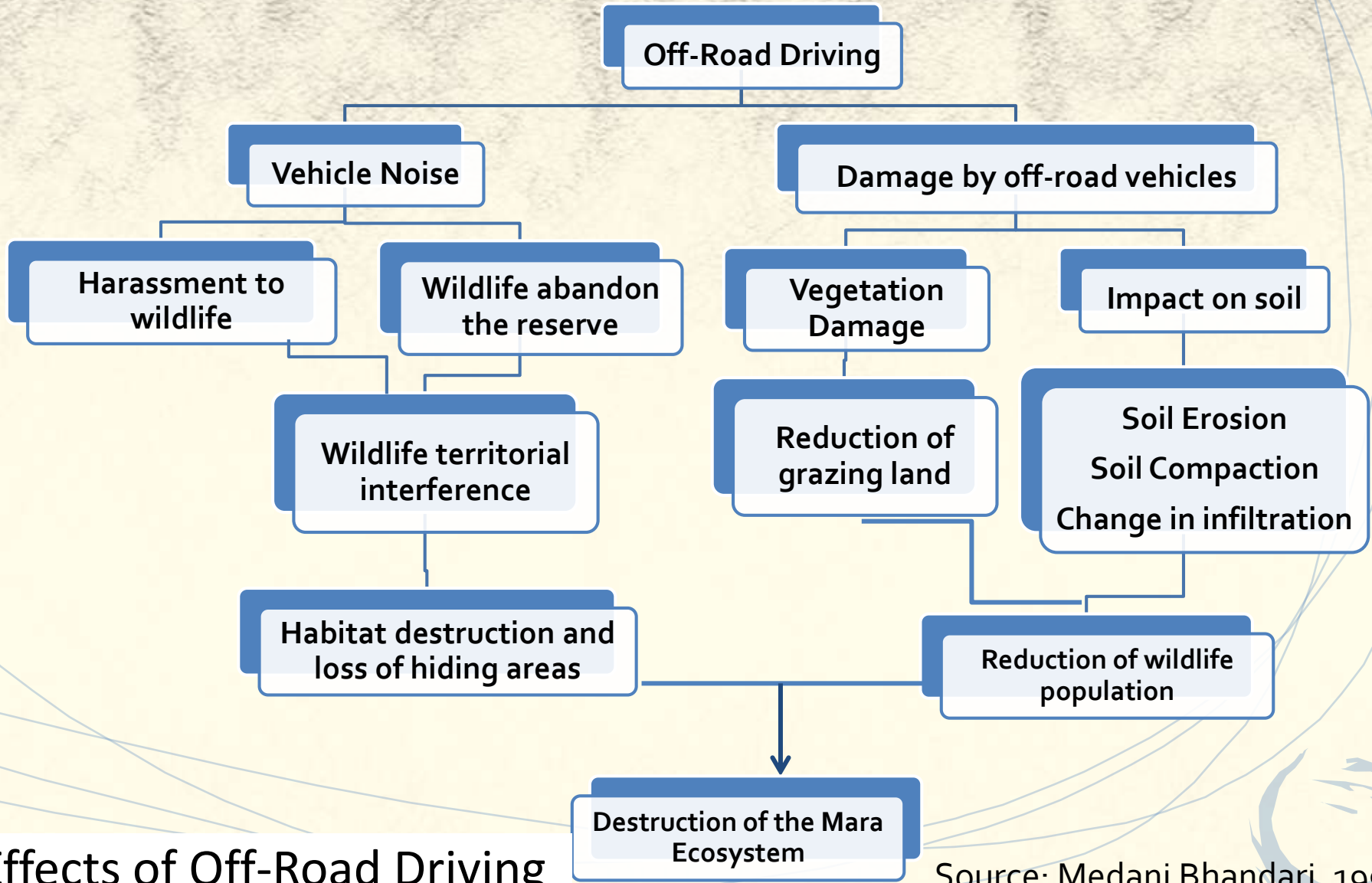
7-2. Uncontrolled Tourism

There are over 100 tourist camps and lodges.

These developments are bound to cause a disturbance to the natural eco-system of the Mara.



7-3. Rampant Off-track Driving



7-4. Endangered Mara River



The Mara River Basin (13,325 Km²) is shared by Kenya and Tanzania of which about 65% is located in Kenya and 35% in Tanzania.

It is 400 km long from the Mau forest in Kenya to Lake Victoria in Tanzania.

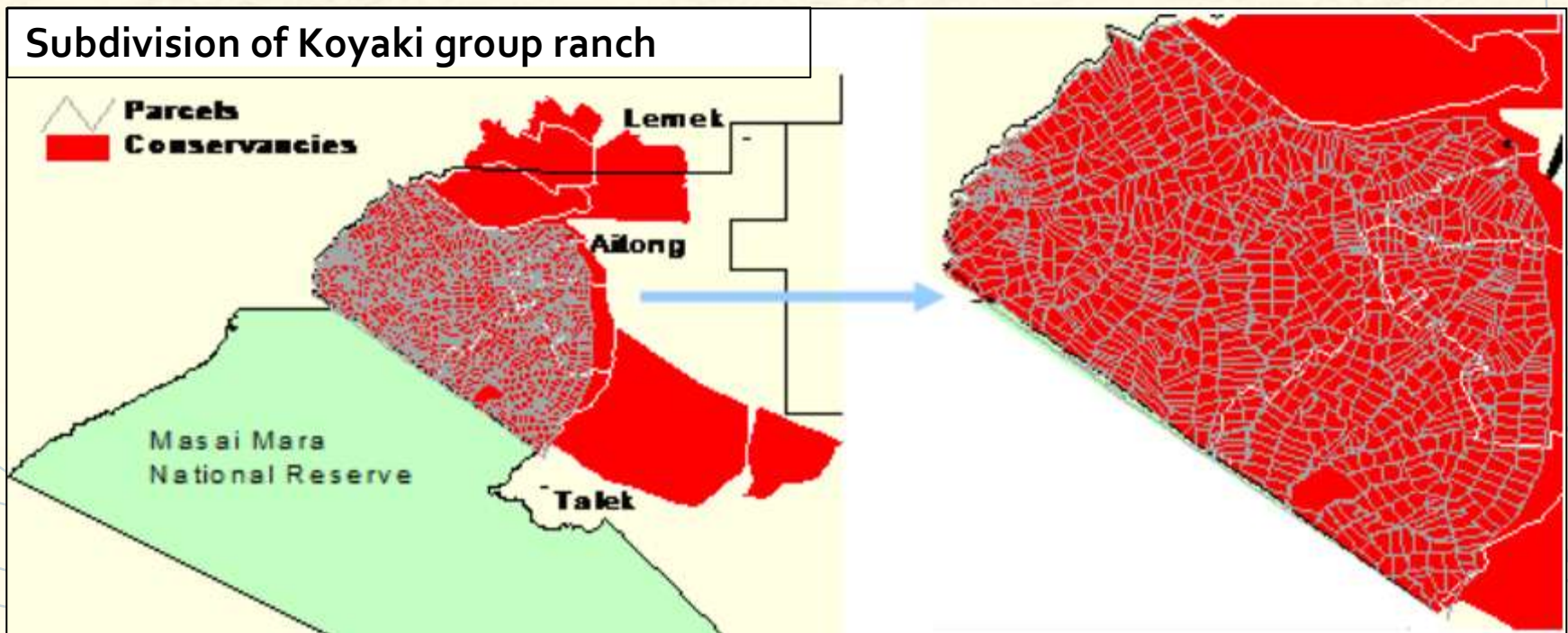
Challenges:

- Loss of natural land cover to man-made land cover. This affects water supply in the dry season.
- Low water levels due to climate change, deforestation and upstream extraction.
- Increased pollution due to many hotels and lodges that release effluence to the river.



7-4. Human Wildlife Conflict:

- The **rapidly growing human population** and accelerating land-use changes are increasing pressure on the reserve.
- **Demarcation and sub-division of land** has led to the splitting up of group ranches to individual plots that can be fenced, leased or sold. As sub-division proceeds, the movement of wildlife is inevitably impeded, and human-wildlife conflict increases.



Source: MEMR, Task force 2012

7-5. Poaching

- Poaching for meat both for subsistence and on a commercial scale, especially along the western boundary.
- In the last eight years rangers have arrested more than **1,372 poachers** in the Maasai Mara.
- Between January and August 2013, **34 rhinos** and **190 elephants** were killed in the country and the Mara is affected as well (source: daily nation, 29th October 2013).
- The Anne K. Taylor Fund (AKTF) works with the Authorities in Maasai Mara to fight against poaching.



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8. Conservation Efforts in the Mara

- The creation of the **Maasai Mara National Reserve Ten Year management Plan (2009-2019)**, organized by the Mara conservancy, Transmara and Narok County Councils.
- **Capacity Building:** For Example -The ***Koiyaki Wilderness Guiding School***. A capacity building facility that trains young Maasai women and men about the environment and tour guiding.
- **Sustainable ranching and agricultural ventures** within conservancies to supplement their management solutions.
- Increased **scientific research** through the help of international agencies e.g GLOWS (Global Water for Sustainability) and TransBoundary Water for Bio-Diversity and Human Health in the Mara River Basin(TWB-MRB).



8-1. Conservancies around the Mara



The map displays the Masai Mara National Reserve and surrounding conservancies. The conservancies are color-coded: purple for Enonkishu, yellow for Mara Naboisho, orange for Mara North, green for Ol Kinyei, and brown for Olare Motorogi. Numerous location pins are scattered across the map, indicating specific camps and lodges. The Masai Mara National Reserve is shown in a dark green color at the bottom left.

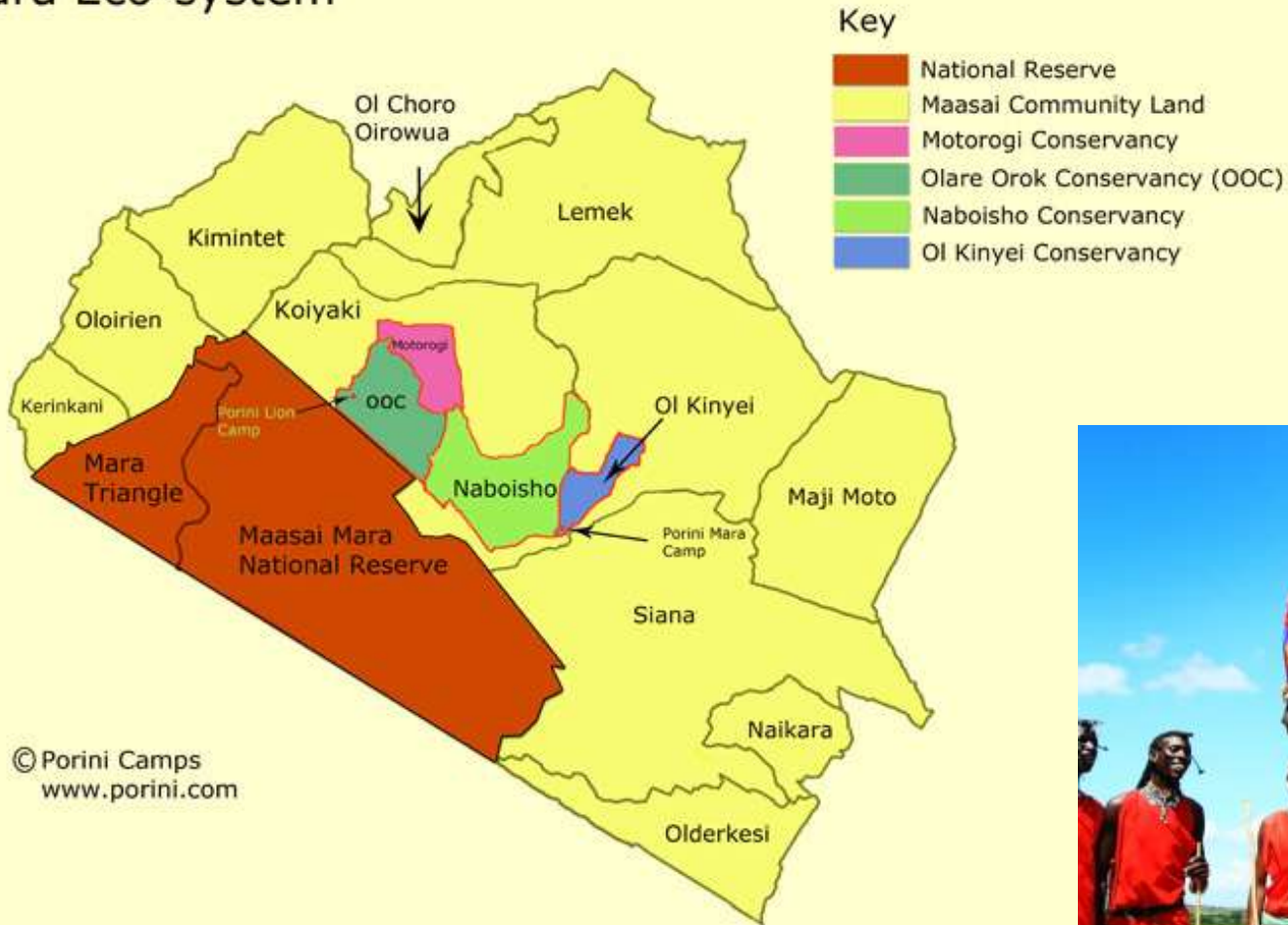
Conservancies | 地図 | 航空写真

The Conservancies

- Enonkishu Conservancy**
- Mara Naboisho Conservancy**
 - Dorobo Bush Camp
 - Eagle View Mara Naboisho
 - Encounter Mara
 - Kicheche Valley
 - Naboisho Camp
 - Oi Seki Hemingways Mara
- Mara North Conservancy**
 - Alex Walker's Serian
 - Asilia Africa Acacia & Mara House
 - Elephant Pepper Camp
 - Exploreans Mara Rianta Camp
 - Karen Blixen Camp
 - Kicheche Mara Camp
 - Offbeat Mara Camp
 - Royal Mara Safari Lodge
 - Saruni Lodge
- Ol Kinyei Conservancy**
 - Gamewatchers Adventure Camp
 - Porini Mara Camp
- Olare Motorogi Conservancy**
 - Kicheche Bush Camp
 - Mahali Mzuri
 - Mara Plains Camp
 - Olare Mara Kempinski
 - Porini Lion Camp

8-2. Park-People Interaction

Mara Eco-system



The **Maasai** people are the main creators of the **culturescape** of the Mara. They are settled all around it and their activities are very important to the reserve.



8-3. Civil Society Efforts



Kenyans United Against Poaching - KUAPO is on Facebook.

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Community
This is a consortium of civil society organisations , community groups, media personalities, popular artistes and Kenyans from all walks of life under the auspices of the group



2,341 2

9. Recommendations:

- **A concerted effort from all the stakeholders:** Government(local and central), Kenya Wildlife Service, the Maasai Community, conservancies management, tour operators, hotel and camp owners to conserve the Mara.
- **Harmonization and enforcement of the existing laws** e.g Environmental Management and Control Act (EMCA), The Water Act and The Tourism Act.
- **Further education for the local community** on proper agricultural practices especially for livestock, and on proper settlement patterns that will reduce human wildlife conflict.
- **Balance between tourism and conservation.** Practice the real concept of eco-tourism to ensure minimum disturbance of the eco-system and at the same time ensure optimum economic and environmental benefits to the Maasai and other communities surrounding the Mara.



Ahsanteni (Thank you)!