



RAPID ASSESSMENT REPORT: Impact of Fenced Properties on Wildlife in Matapato North/South Wards, Kajiado Central



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Background

Matapato North and South Wards, located in Central Kajiado, are strategically situated between the iconic Amboseli National Park and Lake Magadi. This region is a critical wildlife dispersal zone for the Amboseli ecosystem and an essential migratory corridor connecting southern Kenya to northern Tanzania landscapes. Communal group ranches (Mailua, Oldoinyo Orok, and Meto) in this area have been subdivided into individually owned parcels that support a dual livelihood of pastoralism and seasonal agriculture but have continued to host significant wildlife populations.

Over the past three years, local communities with the support of [RAMAT Wildlife Society](#) have established community-led conservancies as a strategic effort to engage with the wildlife-tourism economy and promote sustainable livelihoods while minimizing instances of human-wildlife conflicts. Despite these conservation efforts, the RAMAT Wildlife Society has been reporting alarming statistics regarding wildlife trapped within wired-fenced private properties, leading to starvation, thirst, and increased vulnerability to poaching. Between 2022 and 2024, over 30 giraffes and hundreds of other animals were reported to have become trapped within privately fenced spaces. In the same period, 24 giraffes were killed by these fences. Without immediate intervention, the spread of fencing could lead to a catastrophic loss of biodiversity, severely threatening the survival of the conservancies.

With support from [Save the Giraffe Now](#), a rapid field assessment was conducted to evaluate fenced properties within the conservancies in Matapato North and South Wards. This initiative was reinforced by the invaluable collaboration of the [Kenya Wildlife Service - Kajiado](#), which provided critical logistical support and dedicated officers in the navigation, and access to the private properties.

This initiative marks an important first step in protecting Central Kajiado's unique biodiversity and preserving its ecological and cultural heritage. With timely support, the immediate threats posed by fencing can be mitigated, restoring essential wildlife migratory routes, and fostering peaceful coexistence between wildlife and local communities.



Pic 1: Elands trapped within a fenced property inside Kikesen River Conservancy. Photo: Moses Kisimir.



Objectives of the Rapid Assessment

1. Conduct a rapid assessment of all fenced spaces to determine the number of entrapped wildlife.
2. Evaluate the health of entrapped wildlife, pasture availability, water, and general conditions within the fence properties.
3. Assess security challenges, including the risks of poaching in fenced areas.
4. Make recommendations that will address the crisis.

Geographical Areas Covered by The Assessment

The three-day rapid assessment by RAMAT Wildlife Society and the Kenya Wildlife Service investigated fenced properties across 11 conservancies (in Emotoroki, Mailua, Oldoinyio Orok, and Oloirimirimi locations), focusing on their potential threat to wildlife safety, effect on wildlife movement, safety, and access to critical habitats. Armed with GPS tools and data collection forms, the team collaborated with conservancy leaders, government administrators (chiefs), and community stakeholders on mapping and identifying fenced properties in the region. The exercise also examined the disruption of habitat connectivity, the restriction of traditional wildlife migration routes, and the broader implications for regional conservation initiatives. By understanding these issues, the assessment sought to inform sustainable land management practices and promote coexistence between human activities and wildlife conservation.

Day One (17/12/2024): Matapato North (Emotoroki Location)

Olchorro Oibor Conservancy: Located in Matapato North, this 3,776-hectare conservancy was founded in April 2024 by 89 landowners committed to environmental conservation. However, widespread poverty in the area over the years has become a major driver of significant land sales by locals to external investors. The new landowners have introduced wire fencing, some with solar-powered electric components that pose risks to wildlife, livestock, and unaware locals. Giraffes were the main wildlife sighted inside the fenced spaces with one giraffe reportedly electrocuted.

A local worker in one of the properties reported to the team that 10 giraffes had died through electrocution. Despite the presence of dams and boreholes, water remains inaccessible to wildlife during drought periods. The primary activity on the property is livestock rearing. The property exhibited farming activities, but no water resources were available for wildlife.

Fenced property details:

#	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	Fence status	Acreage (Ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Wambugu Kariuki	-2.26875°S 36.92924°E	2	electric	404	Giraffes – 10

Table 1: showing fenced property in Olchorro Oibor Conservancy.

Oltepesi Conservancy: Situated in Emotoroki, Matapato North, this 2,911-hectare conservancy was established in March 2024 by 55 landowners. The conservancy has a growing fencing problem with 103 hectares of fenced private properties inside it. Farming activities were observed, and minimal wildlife sighting occurred. The property exhibited crop farming activities, but no water resources are available for wildlife.

Fenced property details

#	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	Fence status	Acreage (ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Wambogo Kariuki	-2.26875°S 36.929224°E	2	electric	83	Giraffes – 1
2	Favent Kimani	-2.24609°S 36.02775°E	2	Not electric	20	No wildlife
				Total	103	

Table 2: showing fenced properties in Oltepesi Conservancy.

Osewan Conservancy: This 7,773-hectare conservancy is community-owned and was established by 49 landowners to promote environmental conservation and modern pastoralism. A total of 221 hectares within the conservancy is fenced. No wildlife was sighted within the fenced properties - a sign of habitat restrictions for wildlife in the fenced spaces.

Fenced property details

#	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	Fence status	Acreage (ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Patrick Githuka	2.31285°S, 37.03056°E	2	electric	49	No wildlife
2	Semera	2.30036°S, 37.04070°E	2	electric	28	No wildlife

3	Unknown. Previously owned by Mulolo Lemokor	2.30544°S, 37.05015°E	2	Electric	12	No wildlife
4	Charles	-2.30007°S 37.07331°E	2	electric	6	No wildlife
5	Evans Ombui	-2.32147°S 37.06294°E	2	electric	57	No wildlife
6	Joseph Ole Lenku	-2.326150°S 37.03276°E	2	electric	61	No wildlife
7	Nelson Munene	-2.34269,°S 37.05138°N	2	electric	8	No wildlife
				Total	221	

Table 3: showing fenced properties in Osewan Conservancy.

Ilesai Conservancy: Located in Matapato South, this 6,370-hectare conservancy was formed by 37 Maasai landowners dedicated to conservation. 118 hectares are fenced, primarily for future farming activities. No wildlife sightings within the fenced spaces.

Fenced property details

#	Property owner	GPS Coordinate s	Height (meters)	Fence status	Acreage (ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Unknown. Sold by Nkonere Leshoko	-2.25229°S 37.09732°E	2	Not electric	61	No wildlife
2	Alex Kiminta (manager)	-2.24382°S 37.06651°E	2	Power not installed	57	No wildlife
				Total	118	

Table 4: Showing fenced properties in Ilesai Conservancy.

Day Two (23/12/2024): Matapato South (Mailua and Oloirimirimi Locations)

Lumbwa Conservancy: Located in Matapato South, this conservancy spans approximately 4,327 hectares of which 412 hectares are fenced. It was formed from the now-defunct Mailua group ranches. The assessment revealed that two properties host wildlife, with notable species including giraffes, elands, zebras, and impalas.

Fenced property details

#	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	Status	Acreage (ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Joshua Mutua (Manager)	-2.360819°S, 36.913715°E	2	Not electric	283	Giraffes (2) and Elands
2	Patricia Mwangi	-2.355512°, 36.941904°	2	Not electric	28	No wildlife
3	Robert Mungare	-2.357146°S, 36.942187°E	2	Not electric	20	No wildlife
4	Evans Osano	-2.378951°S, 36.940357°E	2	Not electric	81	Zebras impalas
				Total	412	

Table 5: Showing fenced properties in Lumbwa Conservancy.

Murtuna Conservancy: This 6,735-hectare conservancy, located in Matapato South, was established in April 2024. A total of 664 hectares are fenced, with minimal wildlife sightings inside fenced spaces except for a few impalas in one property.

Fenced property details

#	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	Status	Acreage (ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Ole Kuntus (closest boma)	-2.422048°S, 37.029492°E	2	Electric fence (no power)	113	No wildlife
2	Sold by Ole Kidoki (owner unknown)	-2.422048°S, 37.029492°E	2	electric	57	No wildlife

3	Paul Ruso (KCB CEO)	-2.361117°S, 37.043152°E	2	Electric	283	No wildlife
4	Robert	-2.362458°S, 37.051411°E	2	Electric	57	Impalas
5	Martha Koome	-2.362459°S, 37.051951°E	2	Electric	57	No wildlife
6	Joseph Ole Lenku	-2.421958°S, 37.029519°E	2	Electric	97	No wildlife
				Total	664	

Table 6: Showing fenced properties in Murtuna Conservancy

Olgirra Conservancy: Olgirra Conservancy spans approximately 4,781 hectares and emerged from the defunct Mailua group ranches in Matapato South. Only 10 hectares are fenced in the area. No wildlife sightings were reported within the fenced property.

Fenced property details

No	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	Status	Acreage (ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Kamau Wachira	-2.358686°S, 36.956207°E	1.5	Not electric	10	No wildlife

Table 7: Showing fenced property in Olgirra Conservancy.

Kaparasi Conservancy: Bordering Oltepesi and Olchorro Oibor Conservancies in Mailua location, Kaparasi Conservancy covers approximately 4,254 hectares. 162 hectares are fenced, with zebras and impalas observed in one property.

Fenced property details

No	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	Status	Acreage (ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Wambogo Kariuki	-2.27595°S, 36.90654°E	2	electric	162	Zebras Impalas

Table 8: Showing fenced property in Kaparasi Conservancy.

Day Three (24/12/2024): Matapato South (Mailua and Oloirimirimi Locations)

Noosikitok Conservancy: This conservancy is situated in Mailua location and borders the Namanga–Athi River Highway. Formed from the defunct Mailua group ranches, it was established in March 2021, spanning approximately 8,067 hectares. Intense fencing is threatening the existence of conservation space in this area with a total of 1228 hectares fenced off. The wildlife in the fenced spaces face serious water shortages as well as pasture. A total of 7 giraffes have died in this area since 2023 due to fence entrapment.

Fenced properties details

#	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	Status	Acreage (ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Wambogo Kariuki	-2.368473°S, 36.904904°E	2	electric	202	Impalas
2	Titus Naikuni	-2.405542°S, 36.870575°E	2	Electric	283	Giraffes - 3 Impalas
3	Mr. Osano	-2.394800°S, 36.893143°E	2	Electric	53	No wildlife
4	Bosire Naftali	-2.357221°S, 36.848592°E	1.5	Not electric	4	No wildlife
5	John	-2.357221°S, 36.848592°E	1.5	Not electric	13	No wildlife
6	Ntasikoi Nonkanas	-2.354363°S, 36.842503°E	2	Not electric	62	Zebras Giraffes - 2
7	Ole Narok	-2.350519°S, 36.840945°E	2	Not electric	97	Impalas
8	PJ DAVE	-2.360233°S, 36.843635°E	2	Not electric	57	Small Mammals
9	PJ DAVE	-2.365785°S, 36.844391°E	1.5	Not electric	97	Impalas
10	Sabaya Parmet	-2.393000°S, 36.852069°E	2	Not electric	61	Giraffes - 3
11	Partapipi Paul	-2.392720°S, 36.852097°E	2	Not electric	299	Giraffes - 5
				Total	1228	

Table 9: Showing fenced properties in Noosikitok Conservancy.

Lolbetera Conservancy: Lolbetera is the largest conservancy in the region with a total of 15,579 hectares - 113 hectares are fenced. The conservancy was established in 2021 and there are reports of 23 giraffes killed by electric fences in 2023/24.

Fenced properties details

#	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	status	Acreage(ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	George Gachara	-2.498308°S, 36.942611°E	2	Electric	32	Reports of 23 giraffes killed by the fence over the last few years.
2	Joseph Mutente	-2.440568°S, 36.925957°E	2	Not electric	81	Giraffes- 7 Killed- 1
				Total	113	

Table 10: showing fenced properties in Lolbetera Conservancy

Oldoinyio Orok Conservancy: Established on 2nd April 2024, Oldoinyio Orok Conservancy spans approximately 12,553 hectares. This conservancy plays a significant role in biodiversity conservation, acting as a habitat for various wildlife species while coexisting with community-led land-use practices.

Fenced properties details

#	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	status	Acreage (ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Unknown: Sold by Ntasikoi Nonkanas	-2.348627°S, 36.839555°E	2	Not electric	334	Giraffes (3), Elands, and zebras
2	Ole Narok	-2.305574°S, 36.821430°E	2	Not electric	81	Impalas
3	Wangare	-2.366002°S, 36.844363°E	2	Not electric	28	No wildlife
4	Nazeel Agha	-2.392618°S, 36.850335°E	2	Not electric	24	Wildlife is managed in the property
				Total	467	

Table 11: Fenced properties in Ol Doinyio Orok Conservancy.

Kikesen River Conservancy: Kikesen River Conservancy lies between hills near the Kenya-Tanzania border, approximately 30 km north of Namanga Town and 34 km west of Bisil Town. Established in August 2020, this community wildlife protection area spans 11,224 hectares, initiated by 100 Maasai landowners. Of 11,224 hectares, the conservancy has one 121 hectares fenced property that has entrapped giraffes, impalas, female ostriches, and elands.

Several months prior to the assessment, community scouts reported the presence of a solitary giraffe within the confines of this property. During the subsequent assessment, the team identified additional species that had entered the fenced area but were unable to exit.

Fenced property details:

#	Property owner	GPS Coordinates	Height (meters)	status	Acreage(ha)	Sighted Wildlife
1	Ntasikoi Nonkanas	-2.276943°S 36.583419°E	2	Not electric	121	Giraffe - 1 Impalas - 7 Ostrich - 3 Elands - 2

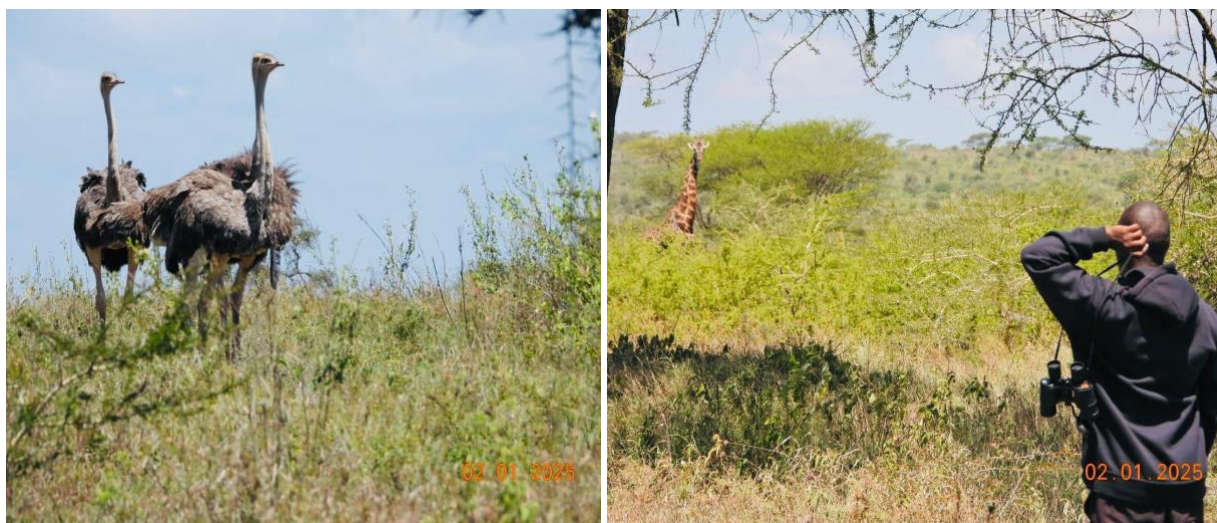
Table 11: Showing fenced property in Kikesen River Conservancy.



Pic 3: Data collection at Oltepesi and Olchorro Oibor conservancies

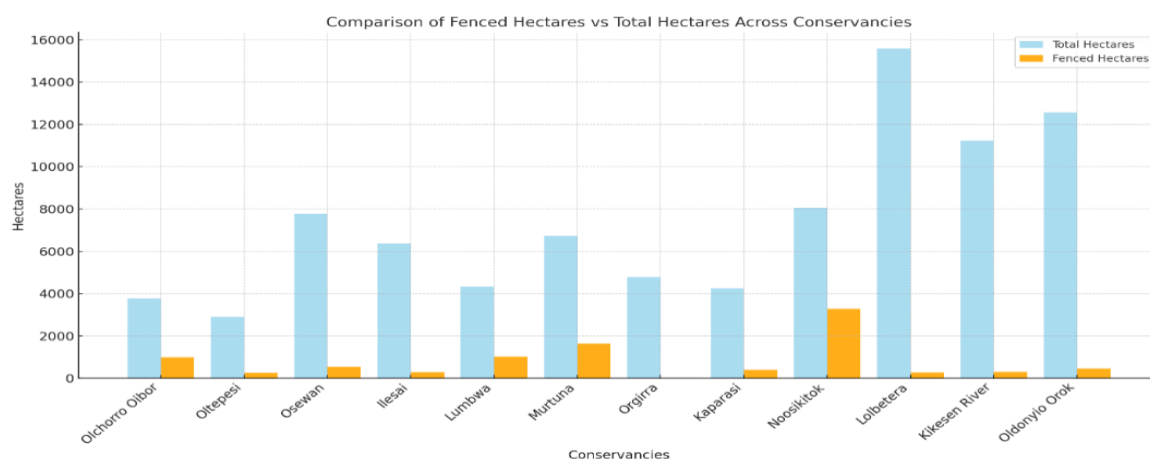


Pic 3/4: Assessment of fenced properties in Kaparasi Conservancy.



Pic 5/6: Wildlife sighted in a fenced property at Kikesen River Conservancy

This bar graph compares the fenced spaces and total acreage of across all the assessed conservancies. It illustrates the proportion of land within each conservancy that is fenced versus the total land area.



Key Findings and Observations

1. **Wildlife Health and Seasonal Impacts:** Wildlife observed within fenced properties appeared to be in relatively good health due to the recent rains that refreshed the landscape with water and pasture. However, this condition is anticipated to deteriorate as the dry season approaches, leading to a scarcity of these resources within confined areas.
2. **Challenges in Property Assessment:** Several fenced properties were expansive, making thorough patrols impractical within limited time limits. Dense vegetation coverage in some properties hindered vehicle navigation, forcing the team to rely on residents for critical information about inaccessible areas.
3. **Restricted Access and Suspicious Activities:** On several occasions, workers within fenced properties denied the team access, raising suspicions of illicit activities, including potential poaching or other environmentally harmful practices.
4. **Hazards of Electric Fences:** Electric fences posed significant threats not only to wildlife but also to livestock and local communities unaware of the fence's electrification status. Instances of unsupervised properties with live electric fences were particularly concerning, as they posed ongoing risks to animals and humans alike.
5. **Emerging Fencing Trends:** Visible signs of new fencing construction were observed in some conservancies, signaling a continuing trend of landscape fragmentation. Many existing fences were excessively high, preventing wildlife from jumping over them and leading to animals being trapped inside. This physical separation disrupted social structures, with the team identifying wildlife groups segregated by gender—males or females only. Such separation could have long-term consequences on breeding and population dynamics, threatening wildlife sustainability in the region.
6. **Migratory Corridor Blockage:** Complaints from locals highlighted that elephants frequently damaged fences in an attempt to navigate traditional migratory routes, underscoring the disruptive impact of fencing on critical wildlife corridors.
7. **Misaligned Fencing Practices:** Most fenced properties were dedicated to livestock keeping, a land-use practice that does not inherently require electric fencing. The deployment of such fences in areas unsuitable for intensive farming or other high-security needs seemed excessive and unnecessarily harmful to the ecosystem.

Recommendations

1. **Facilitate Wildlife Rescue Operations:** Immediate action should be taken to assist entrapped wildlife before the onset of the peak dry season, especially the 36 giraffes in various properties. This can be achieved by strategically dismantling sections of property fences or sedating and safely relocating animals to areas with adequate resources and access to migratory corridors.
2. **Community Engagement and Awareness Programs:** Conduct comprehensive outreach targeting local communities and fenced property owners to educate them on fences' ecological and safety hazards. These programs should emphasize the detrimental effects of habitat fragmentation, risks to wildlife and livestock, and the need for sustainable coexistence practices within the conservancy landscape. This will also encourage property owners to do the least by providing water to the wildlife that they have fenced in.
3. **Enforce County-Level Planning and Fencing Regulations:** Advocate for the Kajiado County government to actively enforce the County Spatial Plan which has designated the region for livestock and ecotourism purposes and introduce stringent fencing regulations in areas inhabited by wildlife. Protection of wildlife migratory routes, preventing excessive fencing, and promoting wildlife-friendly barriers should be made a priority.
4. **Encourage Alternative Land Use Practices:** Promote land-use strategies that minimize the need for high or electrified fencing, such as wildlife-compatible farming practices, and shared community resources.
5. **Height of Fences and barriers:** Private property owners should be encouraged to adopt cattle fences - under 3 feet instead of the current 4-8 feet. The height of the fence can play a role in how wildlife interacts with it.
6. **Legislation:** The County Government is encouraged to legislate on appropriate fences based on the spatial plans thus ensuring the correct fence types are used in the right areas.
7. **Monitoring and Compliance Mechanisms:** Establish regular monitoring programs by the County Government to ensure fenced properties adhere to agreed-upon standards and do not obstruct wildlife movement. This can be complemented by forming partnerships with conservancy committees, local leaders, and conservation agencies for consistent oversight.

Conclusion

The assessment of fenced properties in Matapato North and South Wards has revealed critical challenges that threaten both wildlife and the ecological integrity of the region. The alarming statistics of wildlife entrapment, particularly the significant loss of giraffes and other species, underscore the urgent need for immediate and effective intervention. As we move forward, it is imperative to prioritize the restoration of migratory corridors and the re-establishment of ecological balance within these conservancies.

To achieve this, collaborative efforts between local communities, conservation organizations, and government authorities are essential. By fostering community engagement and awareness regarding the ecological impacts of fencing, we can cultivate a shared responsibility towards wildlife conservation.

Implementing regulatory measures that promote wildlife-friendly land-use practices will not only safeguard biodiversity but also enhance the sustainability of local livelihoods.



*A famous giraffe inside a fenced property in Kikesen River Conservancy.
Photo: Moses Kisimir*

The recommendations outlined in this report serve as a roadmap for addressing these pressing issues. Facilitating wildlife rescue operations, enforcing planning regulations, and encouraging alternative land-use practices are critical steps that must be taken without delay. With timely action and continued collaboration, we can mitigate the adverse effects of fencing and ensure a harmonious coexistence between wildlife and human activities in Central Kajiado. The future of this unique ecosystem depends on our collective commitment to preserving its rich biodiversity for generations to come.

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