



## COMMUNITY MARKETS FOR CONSERVATION (COMACO)

*Supporting rural livelihoods through wildlife management and community forests*

COMACO, Community Markets for Conservation, is a social enterprise that supports wildlife conservation and small-scale farmers in Eastern Zambia. With the USAID-funded Integrated Land and Resource Governance Project, COMACO is strengthening community-based forest and wildlife management within two chiefdoms in Nyimba District. Thanks to USAID support, community forest management groups are registering their rights to natural resources and testing an approach to establish a community-managed game ranch.

### POACHING AND CHARCOAL

High levels of rural poverty in the Luangwa Valley have left villagers and farmers out of the formal economy and pushed people to illegal wildlife poaching and charcoal production to feed their families. As a result, wildlife populations have declined and deforestation has increased.

### MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Establish community forest management groups & management plans
- Analyze ecological and financial outcomes of community game ranching
- Build community governance skills
- Support apiculture and conservation-friendly livelihoods
- Enforce community by-laws around natural resource protection

### APPROACH

COMACO strives to incentivize conservation by promoting sustainable agriculture among rural farmers, poachers, and would-be poachers, and then markets their crops as added value forest and agricultural products under the **It's Wild!** brand. In exchange, every partnering farmer signs a Conservation Pledge, which recognizes their commitment to abide by a set of conservation principles.

### OUR ACHIEVEMENTS WITH ILRG

Hectares under community forest management schemes  
**65,000+**

People with secured rights over community resources  
**2,800+**

Villages engaged in conservation activities  
**11**





## LONG TERM IMPACTS



COMACO supports the drafting and adoption of community forest management regulations allowing communities to register their rights to manage and benefit from their forests while increasing community-led action to combat poaching, deforestation, and habitat conversion.



COMACO is testing the community game ranching approach by leveraging its connections to wildlife, the private sector, and its long-term commitment to Eastern Province. Community game ranching is a conservation-compatible enterprise new in Zambia.



COMACO facilitates dialogue between the government and customary leaders in regards to resource management, resulting in improved monitoring and enforcement of wildlife and forest infractions. Coordination between ministries, traditional leaders, and communities leads to improved management of lands outside of formally protected areas.

Across Eastern Zambia, COMACO works with over 179,000 farmers and has helped increase food security levels, and supported the resurgence of elephant populations in Luangwa Valley.



*"After communities registered their community forest management rights, they have taken a more active role in monitoring poaching and charcoal production across the chiefdom, and are increasingly working with the chief and Department of National Parks on enforcement."*

**Adron Ndhlovu,**  
COMACO Chairperson



*"COMACO has a long history of ensuring that communities benefit from their land. With USAID's support we've been able to test new conservation compatible enterprises, covering both forestry and wildlife."*

**Angel Makungu,**  
COMACO Coordinator



*"We are grateful to be gaining skills in beekeeping so that we can continue to use the forest for our livelihoods."*

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