

I. Introduction

Ethiopia is endowed with several valuable and endemic wildlife. These have a great potential in enhancing the country's development efforts. However, the country has not realized the potential economic benefits from the sector.

The main threats to the country's wildlife result from improper land use, which includes habitat destruction due to illegal agricultural encroachment, rapid population growth, illegal settlement and poaching.

The government has attached due attention to formulate a wildlife development and protection strategy in tune with the objective reality of the country, and the existing international natural resources development and protection principles. The objective is to arrest the decline of wild animal populations and to enable the country to realize the maximum benefit from the sub-sector (in the form of tourism, live animals and products trade, sport hunting and etc.).

Accordingly, it has become essential to produce viable policies and strategies to protect and develop properly the country's wildlife resources, conserve the endemic wildlife and the natural resources for posterity, support the country's economy through the revenue generated from wildlife resource development, avert the looming danger on the nation's wildlife resources, establish a participatory and sustainable wildlife development, and put into effect the international wildlife conventions and agreements.

The policy and strategy has five major sections dealing with wildlife development and protection, utilization of wildlife resources, participation of the community and investors in the sector, conservation education and information network.

II. Objectives of the policy

The major objective of the policy is to create a conducive environment whereby the country's wildlife and their habitats are protected and developed in a sustainable manner,

and to enable the sector to play an important role in the economic development of the country.

The specific objectives of the policy include the following:

1. Properly developing and administering the country's wildlife resources, and enabling the sector to contribute fully to the nation building process;
2. Protecting the wildlife resources and their habitats, maintaining the balance of nature for posterity in accordance with international wildlife conventions and agreements to which the country is a signatory.

III. Policies and Strategies

1. Wildlife resources development and protection

Administering wildlife protected areas

Policy

Efforts will be made to gazette national parks and other wildlife protected areas according to international standards and principles and administer them by the federal government, regions, private investors and through community participation.

Strategies

- A. Identifying national parks and other wildlife protected areas (such as wildlife reserves, sanctuaries controlled hunting areas) and giving them legal basis or foundations;
- B. Amending existing, formulating new and implementing participatory wildlife management plans based on relevant international principles;
- C. Limiting unsustainable practices planned or being carried out in wildlife protected areas and wildlife corridors that affect the survival of the wild animals;
- D. Issuing proclamations, rules and regulations to implement and enforce the administration and management plans.

Policy

Efforts will be made to manage properly wildlife resources outside protected areas by conducting a research on the number and distribution of selected species.

Strategies

- A. Surveying wildlife habitats outside protected areas and upgrading them to reserves whenever necessary;
- B. Issuing and enforcing rules and regulations to manage wildlife populations outside protected areas.
- C. Enabling the community to own, develop and be beneficiaries of wildlife habitats outside protected areas.

Policy

Efforts will be made to strengthen protected areas already established, being established and/or to be established along the boundaries with neighboring countries according to international wildlife conservation conventions.

Strategies

- A. Strengthening protected areas established along the boundaries with neighboring countries;
- B. Uniting with neighboring countries to establish new transboundary protected areas, where such protected areas do not currently exist;
- C. Establishing transboundary protected areas along migratory routes with a view to reducing the migration of wildlife to neighboring countries.

Conserving endemic and threatened wildlife

Policy

Special attention will be given to the protection and conservation of threatened and endemic species.

Strategies

- A. Insitu conservation of threatened and endemic species will be undertaken by conducting relevant studies on the taxonomy, biology, population status and distribution of wildlife species.
- B. Studies will also be made to identify the root causes of population decline of the country's endemic wildlife and appropriate measures will be taken to address the problems.
- C. Facilitating favorable conditions to translocate threatened wildlife to protected areas or to facilities where ex-situ conservation may take place.

Protecting wildlife from disasters

Policy

Conservation mechanisms will be established to protect wildlife from disasters.

Strategies

- A. An early-warning system would be established to inform when wildlife is threatened by natural and man-made disasters;
- B. An early warning system will be implemented through the participation of all concerned bodies in order to reduce or avoid the effect of natural and man-made disasters on wildlife.
- C. An early warning information network will be established with neighboring countries to protect wildlife around border areas from natural and man-made disasters;
- D. A trust fund will be established to protect wildlife from disasters, and all concerned international organizations will be informed of the problem if it is beyond local capacity.

Promoting wildlife health services

Policy

An integrated system to prevent and control diseases that affect wildlife will be established.

Strategies

- A. Wildlife health research will be conducted in protected areas to determine which diseases may threaten wildlife populations;
- B. Controlling disease transmitting wild animals, building capacity in order to identify the etiology of the disease, launching prevention and control mechanism;
- C. Veterinary units will be established in protected areas of the country, the units will be suitably equipped with the necessary materials, manpower, and finance.

Controlling traffic in wildlife and wildlife products

Policy

A system that enables proper control over the trafficking of wildlife and wildlife products will be established.

Strategies

- A. Illegal internal and illegal external trafficking of wildlife and wildlife products, will be controlled by establishing check-points at ports ;
- B. Capture, handling, and movement of wildlife will satisfy relevant international wildlife safety standards;
- C. National and international trade on threatened wild animals will be conducted according to national laws and international conventions;
- D. The necessary quarantine procedure will be put in place to enable trade in wildlife and wildlife products both locally and internationally.

Controlling “Problem” animals

Policy

Necessary measures on ‘problem’ animals will be taken in defense of human life, and to reduce or prevent damage to domestic animals and crops.

Strategy

- A. Prevention mechanisms will be devised and implemented in order to control ‘problem’ animals that present a threat to human life, domestic animals or crops.
- B. Appropriate measures will be formulated and implemented against damage-causing wildlife once the type and extent of the damage caused by wildlife is known through appropriate studies.

2. Wildlife Resource Utilization

2.1 Identifying the benefits of wildlife

Policy

The wildlife resources of the country will be properly utilized for sustainable tourism, hunting, trade, ranching and food.

Strategies

- A. Conducting censuses to determine the wildlife potential of the country, and designing and implementing a feasible and sustainable utilization strategy;
- B. Maintaining sustainable utilization of wildlife in open & controlled hunting areas in a manner that would not affect their distribution through sport hunting and other means.
- C. Produce, disseminate and enforce up-to-date wildlife regulations and information to beneficiaries in order to enhance the economic advantages of wildlife resources;

2.2 Promoting eco-tourism

Policy

Eco-tourism activities will be carried out in protected areas without causing damage to the environment.

Strategies

- A. Creating a conducive and enabling environment to promote sustainable eco-tourism activities in our country in line with internationally accepted standards;
- B. Developing infrastructure to enhance the promotion and establishment of eco-tourism in collaboration with other appropriate government bodies.
- C. Issuing and enforcing laws, rules and regulations to prevent the adverse effects of eco-tourism on wildlife and their habitats

2.3 Promoting the market for wildlife and wildlife products

Policy

Efforts will be made to encourage to produce quality wildlife products to increase demand in local and foreign markets, and increase the revenue generated from such trade.

Strategies

- A. Preparing and enforcing a package of experience and knowledge helpful in producing quality wildlife products supplied to local and foreign markets;
- B. Making efforts to promote local markets to increase demand for wildlife products and the revenue generate thereof;
- C. Issuing regulations to supply high quality wildlife and wildlife products to markets in accordance with international standards.

Policy

International laws and conventions issued and to be issued concerning wildlife trade will be implemented.

Strategies

- A. International laws and conventions concerning wildlife trade will be implemented while taking into account the interest of the country;

- B. Useful experiences from successful countries in the wildlife products trade will be drawn from and implemented to the best advantage of the country.

2.4 Utilization of Revenue generated from wildlife resources

Policy

The income secured from wildlife resources will be used to benefit local people, wildlife conservation endeavors, as well as for the overall growth of the national economy.

Strategies

- A. Creating a system by which the federal and regional governments share the revenue generated from wildlife utilization;
- B. Creating job opportunities for communities residing around protected areas.

3. Investors Participation

3.1 Encouraging investors to participate in the conservation of wildlife.

Policy

Efforts will be made to encourage and support private investors to engage in protected areas administration and management, and production of export-oriented wildlife products.

Strategies

- A. Enabling investors to manage and operate protected areas through leases and/or concessions
- B. Offering the necessary assistance and information to investors to enable them to produce high quality wildlife products;
- C. Preparing extension packages that help investors to supply high quality wildlife products, and rendering training and technical support on the implementation of the packages.

4. Conducting wildlife Research, Education and Training

4.1 Strengthening research on wildlife

Policy

Relevant research will be carried out to protect, develop and utilize sustain ably wildlife and their habitats.

Strategies

- A. Studying and identifying wildlife inside and outside protected areas ;
- B. Gathering information on the habitats of wild animals;
- C. Improve handling of wildlife in ranches and /or captivity by studying their biology and health.

Policy

Efforts will be made to develop and implement widely indigenous conservation experiences and knowledge.

Strategies

Identifying and implementing effective indigenous wildlife conservation experiences and knowledge.

Policy

Through strengthening exchange of experiences and contacts with relevant bodies due emphasis will be given to the enhancement, adoption and proper utilization of appropriate wildlife conservation Technologies.

Strategies

- A. Importing and implementing appropriate wildlife conservation technologies;
- B. Devising and implementing mechanisms to avert accidents that could be caused in the process of technological exchange.

4.2 Education and Training

Policy

Education and training on the value of wildlife and wildlife management will be given to raise the awareness of local communities about wildlife conservation.

Strategy

- A. Organizing educational programs to raise public awareness on the socio-economic importance of wildlife resources and to enable community contribute to conservation;
- B. Effect pre-control strategy and training to avoid damages from wildlife;

- C. Educating the community about the damage that could be caused by wildlife and the necessary measures to be taken to reduce the problems;
- D. Helping concerned private and government offices to be aware and implement the national and international laws, rules and regulations on wildlife and wildlife products trade.

Policy

Building human resource capacity to guide and administer effectively the conservation of wildlife.

Strategies

- A. Creating adequate capacity in terms of trained manpower in the field of wildlife conservation;
- B. Ensuring the incorporation of wildlife conservation courses in the syllabuses of schools and higher learning institutions in the country.

5. Information on Wildlife Resource

5.1 Creating an information network on wildlife and protected areas

Policy

Establishing network to compile and disseminate wildlife conservation information to the users.

Strategies

- A. Developing an information network on wildlife conservation;
- B. Analyzing the information and disseminating it to the users.

Policy

Wildlife information network and exchange will be based on national and international information network.

Strategies

- A. Beneficiaries will get information and new wildlife conservation technologies from various information sources;
- B. Standard information exchange methods will be designed and implemented to carry out information exchange in an integrated manner.

IV. Policy Implementation

1. Regional states can prepare their own wildlife policies and strategies using this policy and strategy as the basis.
2. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will put in place the necessary infrastructure to ensure implementation of this wildlife conservation policy and strategy, further, it will formulate programs and projects, issue proclamations, rules and regulations and ensure their implementation.
3. This wildlife conservation policy and strategy can be amended whenever necessary.