

The High Price of Wild Meat

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Reporting by Roddy Scheer

A new report from the wildlife trade monitoring group Traffic finds that hunting by hungry East African refugees is decimating populations of chimpanzees, buffaloes and zebra in Tanzania. More than half a million refugees from Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo have taken up residence in camps across Tanzania in recent years, pushing that nation's ability to protect its wildlife to the limit.

In a 60-page report, Traffic reports that refugees are resorting to hunting wildlife because agencies supplying food are not providing meat. "The scale of wild meat consumption in East African refugee camps has helped conceal the failure of the international community to meet basic refugee needs," said Dr George Jambiya, the report's principal author. "Relief agencies are turning a blind eye to the real cause of poaching and illegal trade--a lack of meat protein in refugees' rations."

Traffic, a joint operation of two leading international non-profits, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and WWF, recommends that relief agencies and the Tanzanian government increase the supply of meat protein to refugees there to help reduce overhunting of already strained wildlife populations. But with even canned meat costing far more than the beans most agencies now provide as a protein source, wildlife advocates are not optimistic.

Sources: [TRAFFIC](#); [BBC News](#)