

# From Reduction to Management: New Approaches to Regulate Wild Meat in Tanzania

USAID TUHIFADHI MALIASILI

Photo: Ben Preater/Unsplash

## Activity Summary

Tanzania has lost at least one third of its essential ecosystems over the past few decades—and in the most recent decade, the number of threatened species has more than doubled, according to the [National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan](#). As wildlife tourism accounts for roughly 25 percent of foreign exchange earnings in Tanzania, the loss of key species will have significant economic consequences. In addition to this history of biodiversity loss, the policy and regulatory environment shifted considerably when the Government of Tanzania legalized wild meat markets through the [2020 Wildlife Conservation \(Game Meat Selling\) Regulations](#). Under these regulations, game meat selling facilities, or “butcheries,” can legally sell wild meat with licenses issued by the Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority. The legal wild meat trade presents a challenging regulatory environment and increases the risk of zoonotic disease transmission.

This case study describes how the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Tuhifadhi Maliasili (Preserve Nature Resources) activity, implemented by RTI International, aims to secure, protect, and sustain wildlife connectivity. The project focuses on strengthening the institutional capacity of private and public stakeholders to sustainably manage natural resources, including wild meat. The activity focuses on seven priority wildlife corridors throughout Tanzania: Kwakuchinja, Kigosi Moyowosi-Burigi Chato, Mahale-Katavi, Ruaha Rungwa-Inyonga, Ruaha Rungwa-Katavi, Nyerere Selous-Udzungwa, and Amani-Nilo.

Tuhifadhi Maliasili is one of three USAID activities that address wild meat issues in Tanzania, which collectively tackle various aspects of the system. Tuhifadhi Maliasili focuses on demand reduction through behavior change campaigns and regulation of wild meat and its trade. For more information on USAID’s work in Tanzania, reference the Wildlife TRAPS Tanzania and CONNECT case studies on the Wild Meat Learning Group page on [www.biodiversitylinks.org](http://www.biodiversitylinks.org).

## Activity Highlights



**IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS**  
RTI International



**LOCATION**  
Tanzania



**FUNDING AMOUNT**  
\$30.5 million

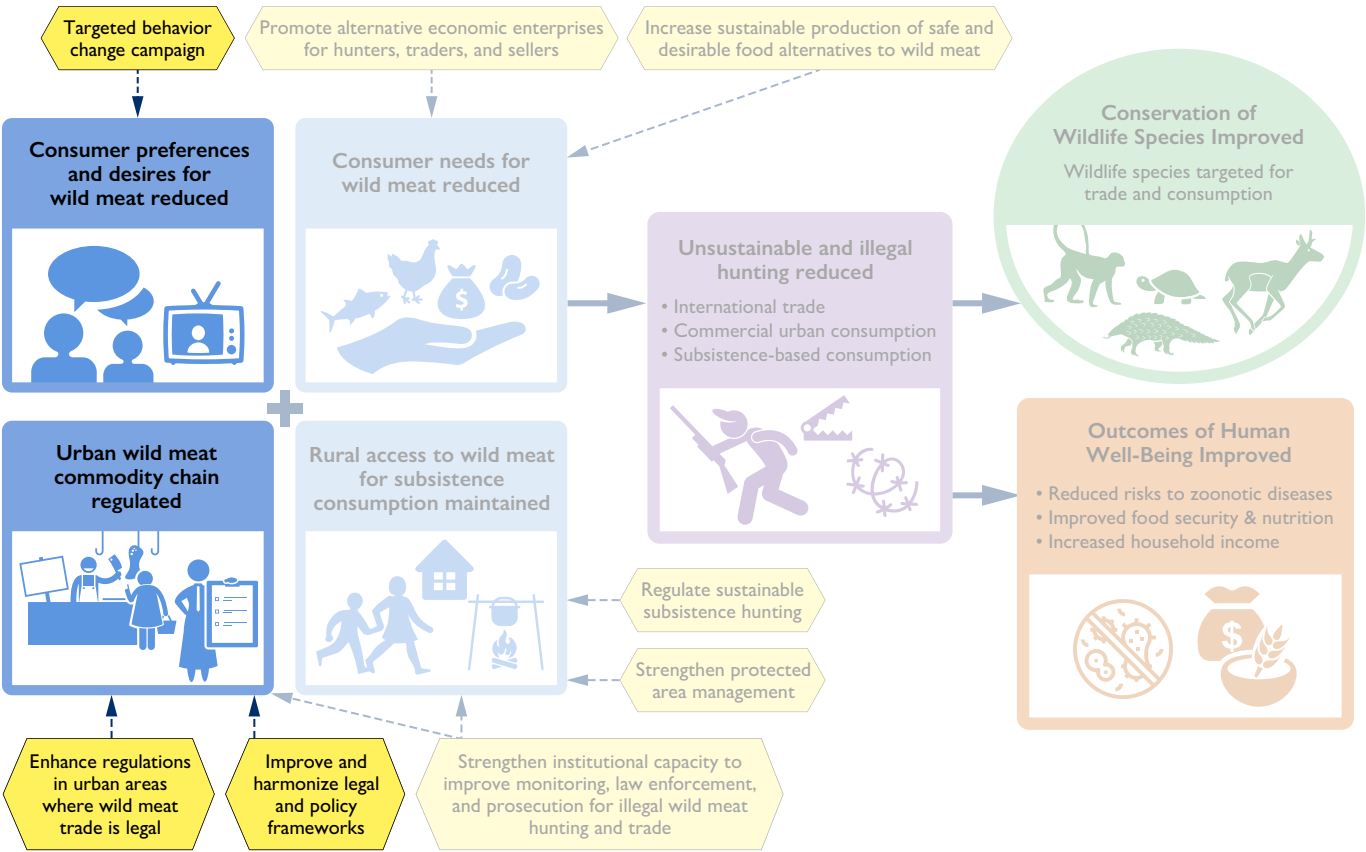


**PERFORMANCE PERIOD**  
June 2021–  
June 2026



**STRATEGIC APPROACHES**  
Social and Behavior Change Communications, Enhance Regulations for Legal Wild Meat Trade, Improve Legal and Policy Frameworks

FIGURE 1: Tuhifadhi Maliasili approaches highlighted on the Wild Meat Learning Group Theory of Change



Approach and Implementation

As part of its overall approach to protecting wildlife corridors, Tuhifadhi Maliasili addresses bushmeat demand in Tanzania through two strategies: behavior change campaigns to manage demand and engagement with relevant government stakeholders, including the Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority and local authorities, to regulate legal wild meat and its trade.

Demand Management

The establishment of legal butcheries prompted Tuhifadhi Maliasili to work with the Government of Tanzania to reduce and prevent anticipated threats to the country’s wildlife conservation and human health. In 2022, Tuhifadhi Maliasili designed and deployed a social and behavior change campaign in the Kwakuchinja wildlife corridor, an area in northern Tanzania with butcheries and significant bushmeat consumption and poaching. This campaign focuses on changing behavior related to wild meat consumption and trade through a demand management, rather than a demand reduction, approach. A demand management approach aims to transition, or divert, behavior from the consumption and trade of illegal wild meat to that of legal, safe,

and sustainably sourced wild meat. Throughout 2023, Tuhifadhi Maliasili conducted several community awareness campaigns to promote the benefits of legally obtained wild meat and teach people how to obtain wild meat legally. These campaigns work with local communities, faith-based organizations and leaders, and village savings loans associations. Messaging raises awareness about the risks of buying or selling illegal wild meat, as well as butcheries selling wild meat.

Regulating Legal Wild Meat

In 2022, alongside the design of the behavior change strategy, Tuhifadhi Maliasili carried out consultation forums to inform and educate stakeholders involved in the legal game meat supply chain, including game officers, veterinary officers, public health officers, community development officers, game meat butchery owners, and wildlife farmers. In addition to fostering learning among stakeholders, these forums established a foundation for the importance of improving the legal framework—which could create a sustainable and supportive environment to establish and grow Tanzania’s game farming and ranching industry. Table 1 summarizes two workshops Tuhifadhi Maliasili supported.



TABLE 1: Tuhifadhi Maliasili Consultation Forums

<p><b>Learning Exchange Workshop:</b> In September 2022, representatives from South Africa and Tanzania met in Arusha to share their experience legalizing the sale of wild meat, including the perspective of a South African game farming expert. Discussion ensued between government officials, wild meat traders, and farmers on the best ways to regulate the wild meat trade.</p>
<p><b>Awareness Workshop:</b> This three-day workshop in April 2022 aimed to sensitize traders, including game meat selling facility operators and butchery owners, on the importance of complying with Tanzania’s Game Meat Selling Regulation and the associated risks of supplying illegally obtained meat. The workshop encouraged operators and owners to obtain and supply game meat that is safe, sustainable, and legally sourced. This workshop included a visit to game meat facilities in Babati township to provide practical experience to participants.</p>



## Objectives and Indicators

Table 2 shares select indicators the activity uses to monitor the policy, regulatory, and enabling environment for biodiversity and conservation.

TABLE 2: Tuhifadhi Maliasili Goals and Indicators

Relevant Objectives	Relevant Indicators
<p><b>Objective:</b> Improve the policy, regulatory, and enabling environment for biodiversity conservation and natural resource management, such as the new legal wild meat laws.</p>	<p>Number of policy reforms implemented or initiated due to informed use of data and evidence with U.S. government assistance.</p>
	<p>Number of laws, policies, or regulations that address biodiversity conservation and/or other environmental themes officially proposed, adopted, or implemented as a result of U.S. government assistance.</p>



## Lessons Learned

**Learning Question:** What behavior change approaches are effective in overcoming barriers or leveraging incentives for changing bushmeat demand and consumption behavior?

### DEMAND MANAGEMENT

By employing a demand management approach, and not the more commonly used demand reduction approach, Tuhifadhi Maliasili aimed to work in harmony with Tanzania's legal and regulatory environment. In contrast, a demand reduction and alternative protein approach would have worked in opposition to the legalization of butcheries. However, due to loopholes in the regulatory environment and difficulty knowing what meat is legal or illegal after butchering, risks from zoonotic diseases through illegal wild meat persist. This challenge emphasizes the importance of understanding the regulatory environment and tailoring solutions to the context, rather than using a standardized approach. It also underscores the need to address potential loopholes or illegal practices within the legal framework.

### DESIGN A MULTI-PRONGED SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE CAMPAIGN APPROACH

Depending on the diversity of the audience, a single intervention, such as a radio campaign, is unlikely to reach everyone. Extensive scoping with USAID/Tanzania and a pilot campaign informed the multi-pronged design of Tuhifadhi Maliasili's social and behavior change campaign approach. The activity uses various engagement methods, including advocacy meetings with government officials, learning exchanges with butchery owners and game meat traders, learning exchanges with reformed poachers, multimedia communication



Photo: ABC Bros Company Ltd.

A legal and safe bushmeat seller in Babati District.

through multiple channels, and education through cooking demonstrations with community members. This multifaceted and human-centered design approach engages the audience in a way that is most suitable for them.



## Lessons Learned

**Learning Question:** Where wild meat sales are legal, how effectively are regulations being monitored and enforced?

### ILLEGAL TRADE HIDDEN IN LEGAL MARKETS

Based on experiences engaging game meat sellers and consumers, it is evident that the supply of game meat is unstable and expensive. Game meat butcheries may face financial pressure to buy cheaper, illegal meat from poachers to achieve higher profit margins and keep their businesses running. To prevent the supply of illegal meat through formal channels, the Tuhifadhi Maliasili team recommends the use of traceability mechanisms. In general, without effective traceability mechanisms, it can be difficult to detect illegal products—especially when they enter through legal channels. Consequently, it becomes challenging for conservation efforts to promote legal supply chains to consumers when there is uncertainty about the legality of the products within those channels.

### LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHER COUNTRIES

Tuhifadhi Maliasili's learning exchange workshop with South African game farm experts highlighted the importance of a supportive legal environment for game farms. For example, in South Africa, farms account for 85 percent of game wildlife, and wildlife in the protected areas remains safe. South Africa has increased its number of game animals by about eight times since 1991, when the country began implementing laws around wildlife ranches. Private game farms and reserves are better able to manage

and enforce legal game hunting when they have tight controls over access. South African operators underscore that wildlife farming is a viable land use option for agricultural lands with poor production. Strong legal systems that promote private game ranches and farms may ensure access to legal wildlife meat while conserving biodiversity. Studying the experiences of other countries can provide valuable insights when creating new laws and regulations. However, it is important to recognize that each country's unique context will lead to different results. In Tanzania, various factors, such as land management and licensing requirements, must be carefully considered and addressed.



Photo: Aron Marinelli/Unsplash

**About this series:** In 2022, USAID collected case studies addressing the questions posed in the Wild Meat Learning Agenda. The series looks at USAID-funded activities from around the world. For more information and resources on USAID's Wild Meat Collaborative Learning Group, please visit [biodiversitylinks.org/learning-evidence/wild-meat-collaborative-learning-group](https://biodiversitylinks.org/learning-evidence/wild-meat-collaborative-learning-group). This document was produced for review by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared by Environmental Incentives LLC with its partners Foundations of Success, NORC at the University of Chicago, and World Resources Institute for the Improving Design, Evidence, and Learning (IDEAL) contract.