

## Stevenson Fund Report - Sarah Gluszek

### Michigan State University, Department of Natural Resources

*Thanks to the generosity of the Stevenson Fund and the ambition of Dr Greta Stevenson to assist women in science, I was given the incredible opportunity to collaborate with a leading female scientist of Conservation Criminology.*

*During this 3 month placement, I designed a research project on the urban bushmeat trade in Dr Meredith Gore's lab in MSU, carried out fieldwork with WCS Congo and finally presented some of our findings at the Pathways Africa Conference 2018.*



Michigan State University (MSU)

MSU is a top research university in East Lansing, Michigan (also known as the mitten-shaped state). It was pleasantly shocking to arrive in the big college town to find wide open spaces and tree-lined streets, a stark contrast to the heavy development of London.

Dr Meredith Gore is a well-established interdisciplinary and applied social scientist in her field of Conservation Criminology ([www.conservationcriminology.com](http://www.conservationcriminology.com)). Her research explores human relationships with the environment and she has developed projects on this in the US, Brazil, India, Vietnam, Madagascar, Namibia, Indonesia, Australia and Congo.

Working in Dr Gore's lab, I reviewed crime science approaches to crime prevention and built these into a research plan for her collaboration with WCS Congo on their Urban Bushmeat Trade project. Together with the help of other researchers and graduates in the Department of Natural Resources, School of Criminal Justice and Business School, I adapted my mixed methods to be inclusive of feedback and advice from these disciplines.

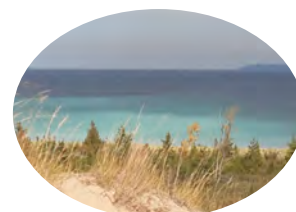
Besides this, I also immersed myself in the many activities MSU has to offer by joining the Graduate Student Organisation and exploring the natural areas of Michigan. During my time, I attended a photography workshop, supported the Michigan State Spartans football and ice hockey teams, started re-learning French and took part in a GIS conference. I also found time to visit some of the big cities a short drive away such as Detroit and Chicago.



The Great Lakes of Michigan



Red maple, oak and beech trees, Sanford Natural Area



Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore



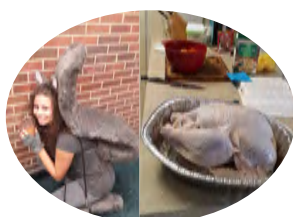
Apple picking, Uncle John's Cider Mill



Archery training facility, Demmer Center



Indoor firearm range, Demmer Center



Celebrating Halloween and Thanksgiving



Spartans football game, Spartan Stadium



WCS Congo

My fieldwork was based in the twin cities of Kinshasa and Brazzaville, the capitals of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo respectively. Although only a 10 minute boat ride across the Congo River, there are many differences between them as a result of their colonial histories. WCS Congo, working in both these field sites, runs programmes on wildlife protection, community based natural resource management, ecological monitoring, scientific research and environmental education.



Congo River

I had the privilege to collaborate with another leading female practitioner, Michelle Wieland, who has several years of experience in the development and evaluation of livelihood projects, particularly in the context of bushmeat in Central Africa. Working with Michelle, I organised and conducted one workshop in each city with law enforcement agencies, protected area managers, customs and border control officers, lawyers and academics. I additionally carried out a total of six focus groups in a previously unexplored sector; the restaurant and catering industry. Each focus group targeted restaurateurs at three different tiers, from 5\* hotels down to street vendors.



Market, Kinshasa DRC

As part of my work there, I also went round different markets looking for bushmeat products. For a change of scenery, and to see some of the species we were working to protect, I visited the Bonobo Sanctuary in Kinshasa to learn more about the parallels of the illegal pet trade with that of bushmeat.



Manioc smoked in banana leaves



Workshop activities with law enforcement agencies



Live bushmeat found at the market



Focus group activities with restaurateurs



Lola ya Bonobo Sanctuary, Kinshasa DRC



Pathways Africa Conference, Namibia

I presented my research at the Pathways Africa Conference, focusing on my findings of the 'hot' bushmeat species groups used in the catering industry, a suggestion of the more vulnerable species in the urban trade. My presentation received good feedback and the conference in general was a great opportunity to network and learn about other research occurring in the industry.



Many thanks also go to the wonderful researchers and staff that I worked with at MSU and in WCS Congo and for all their support in this project.

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