

CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA

KENYA



AREA 580,367 sq km
POPULATION 41,071,000
MONEY Kenyan shilling

ETHIOPIA



AREA 1,104,300 sq km
POPULATION 90,874,000
MONEY Birr

CONGO (DEM. REP.)



AREA 2,344,858 sq km
POPULATION 71,713,000
MONEY Congolese franc

CENTRAL Africa is mostly lowland, with magnificent trees in the equatorial rainforest near the River Congo. Some timber is used for buildings and canoes (see photograph right); some is exported. The cleared land can grow many tropical crops.

East Africa is mostly high savanna land with long grass, and scattered trees. Some parts are reserved for wild animals; in other parts, there are large farms for export crops such as coffee and tea. But in most of East Africa, the people keep cattle and grow crops for their own needs.

The **Somali Republic, Djibouti and Eritrea** are desert areas, but the mountain areas of **Ethiopia** get plenty of rain. If the rains fail, the crops fail and people go hungry. This part is sometimes called 'the Horn of Africa' because of its shape. Wars here have made the famines even worse.

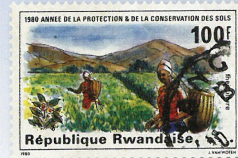
In 1994 and 1995, a civil war in **Rwanda** led to a million deaths and more than a million refugees travelling to **Congo** and **Tanzania**. Wars like this damage people, the animals and the environment.



▲ **The River Congo at Mbandaka.** Children who live near the river learn to paddle a dug-out canoe from an early age. The boats are hollowed out of a single tree with an axe. The River Congo is an important transport route. Mbandaka is a river port about four days by steamer from Kinshasa.

FARMING IN EAST AFRICA

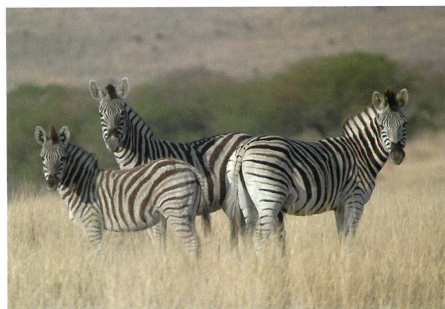
Sisal is a useful crop – you can see the fibre drying in the sun. It will be used to make string, rope and sacks.



Tea will grow in the cooler mountains. The leaves are picked by hand. It is hard work in hot sunshine.



▲ **Nairobi in Kenya** started to be built in the 1890s as a railway depot and became the capital in 1901 – yet 120 years ago there was no town here.



▲ **In a game reserve in Kenya,** a group of zebra graze the savanna grassland. In the dry season, the grass is brown, but in the rainy season it is tall and green. The game reserves are carefully managed and people come from all over the world to see the wildlife.



▲ **Gorillas in Rwanda.** These gorillas live high up in the forested mountains. They are at risk as the trees are being cut down.

In all these countries, there are many signs of development: new farm projects, new ports, new clinics and schools. But there is much poverty, too, and people are moving to the cities in the hope of finding work.

The population of these countries is growing fast. It has doubled in less than 25 years. Some of the countries have the world's highest population growth rates, and more than half the population is young.

