17(4) 101-111, Winter 2025

Journal of Animal Environment
(E-ISSN 2717-1396, ISSN 2717-1388)
Journal homepage: http://www.aejournal.ir

Original Research Paper

Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Mapping Migratory Patterns and Enhancing Biodiversity Preservation

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Key Words
Migratory patterns, Biodiversity preservation, Artificial intelligence, Machine learning, Conservation strategies, Migration prediction, Ecological studies.

Abstract
The study of migratory patterns and their importance in maintaining biodiversity is necessary because ecosystems are challenged by the growing issues of climate change and habitat devastation. Male migration studies in the traditional approach are always prone to struggle with scope, precision, and flexibility in the dynamic environmental conditions. The proposed research explores how artificial intelligence (AI) can help improve the study of migratory patterns and aid in the conservation of biodiversity in areas such as the African Savannah. Developed with species like wildebeests, zebras, and African elephants in mind, AI algorithms, mainly machine learning, neural networks, etc., are used to work with large amounts of data, such as GPS tracking, environmental variables, satellite images, etc. Such AI models can be used to forecast migration patterns, monitor elephant relocation, and determine the areas of importance that are at risk due to human actions and climate change. The findings indicate that AI can improve the precision of migration predictions and provide proactive conservation methods by mapping essential migration pathways. Moreover, AI solutions assist in determining the zones that are at risk because of habitat fragmentation and poaching, which is crucial in the conservation of African elephants and other migrating species. The paper will compare AI-based methods with the traditional techniques of migration to show how AI provides more insights, improved conservation results, and sustainable management practices. The challenges facing it include the need to refine the model because its potential is limited by issues like data quality, model interpretation, and scalability. The paper presents the significance of the incorporation of AI into conservation management to facilitate more efficient and sustainable conservation of biodiversity amid the worldwide environmental transformations.

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Received: 20 August 2025; Reviewed: 29 September 2025; Revised: 10 November 2025; Accepted: 29 December 2025
(DOI): 10.70102/AEJ.2025.17.4.8

Introduction

Migratory patterns have been considered to be part and parcel of defining the health of ecosystems and their stability, especially in places such as the African Savannah, where seasonal migrations of different animals, such as wildebeests, zebras, and African elephants, are significant in ensuring ecological stability and genetic diversity (Hughes et al., 2021; Utaile et al., 2023). These migrations are necessary to the existence of a large number of species, since they are a means of regulating the distribution of resources and promoting the natural operation of ecosystems. Nonetheless, climate change, habitat destruction, poaching, and human encroachment are among the factors increasingly disrupting the migratory patterns of these species, threatening their habitats and lives (Sharma et al., 2025; Rahim & Sindhu, 2025). The capacity to monitor and know these motions is pivotal in the establishment of efficient conservation plans to safeguard the paths of migration and guarantee the survival of these species in the long run (Jayanthi & Kumar, 2024; Gabi & Abdullah, 2024).

Artificial intelligence (AI) can be used as a new and effective method to improve the analysis of migratory trends in the African Savannah (Soppelsa et al., 2022; Robson et al., 2022). Conventional tracking techniques like GPS equipment and satellite telemetry have proven to be priceless yet consume resources and are, in most cases, inconvenient when it comes to incorporating various environmental parameters. The application of AI, and in particular machine learning, is able to analyze large and complicated data sets to offer new understanding into species behavior and migration (Ullah et al., 2025). Through the analysis of data sets of all sorts, including GPS, satellite imaging, environmental factors, and climate data, AI will be able to discover patterns in migration and interactions that otherwise would have been invisible (Fox et al., 2022). This will make it easier to predict the migration paths more accurately and prevent possible dangers to these species, such as habitat fragmentation or other disruptions caused by human beings (Rajan & Suresh Kumar, 2024).

Although conventional research on the patterns of migration has been very fruitful, it has tended to dwell on one or two species or even around a particular area, with no capability to capture the broader changes that take place in the environment, including those caused by climatic changes. These approaches, despite being fundamental, are usually unable to combine various elements influencing migration. However, AI can offer a holistic perspective on the challenges affecting migratory species in the African Savannah, while also enabling the incorporation of a wide range of data and improving the accuracy of migration forecasts (Mukomberanwa et al., 2024). The real-time processing of complex data offered by AI has the capability to enhance conservation methods through more precise and timely information (Ayoola et al., 2024; Gatti, 2025).

The future opportunities of AI in understanding the migration patterns in the African Savannah are high (Ibrahim et al., 2024). The analysis of large quantities of data can be automated using AI, which can provide constant monitoring and control over resources (Prodanovic et al., 2024). Through delivering a deeper insight into the dynamics of migration, AI can be used to inform conservation policies, including determining and conserving strategic migration pathways and habitats of particular species, such as African elephants, wildebeests, and zebras (Wang et al., 2025; Pettorelli et al., 2025). This will reduce the effects of climate change, poaching, and loss of habitat, resulting in better and more proactive conservation (Shivaprakash et al., 2022; Haq et al., 2024).

Key Contributions

- The accuracy of migratory predictions is enhanced with the use of AI that is able to determine precise predictions in large, complex datasets that the traditional methods were unable to predict, especially in locations such as the African Savannah.
- AI assists in determining the major migration routes, as well as vulnerable habitats, which can then be utilized in targeted conservation activities to preserve the African elephants and other migrant species.
- AI will allow combining different types of data (e.g., GPS, satellite imagery, environmental variables, climate data), which will allow forming a complex view of migratory patterns and the environmental stress factors that influence them.

This study examines how artificial intelligence (AI) can help to improve the study of migratory patterns and aid in the preservation of biodiversity in the African Savannah. Through analysis of big data through AI algorithms, such as GPS tracking, satellite images, and environmental conditions, this research will offer more reliable predictions of migration, spot important areas of habitat to conserve, and provide practical insights that can be used to formulate effective conservation measures. In juxtaposition to the conventional tracking systems, this study highlights the game-changer status of AI in enhancing conservation performance and the survival of migratory species such as African elephants in the fast-changing environment.

Materials and Methods

The section presents the materials and methodologies employed in this paper to strengthen the knowledge on the migration patterns in the African Savannah. The study uses complex artificial intelligence (AI) methods, whereby various sources of data are used to monitor and forecast the migration patterns of African elephants, wildebeests, zebras, and other migratory animals, including GPS tracking, satellite imagery, and environmental data. It is aimed at showing the potential of AI in enhancing conservation activities, critical migration paths, and the effects of environmental issues.

Study Area

The research was carried out in the African Savannah and specifically in the Serengeti and Maasai Mara ecosystems, which are some of the most famous and biologically diverse areas in East Africa. These regions are typified by massive migration of wildlife, especially the wildebeests, zebras, and African elephants. The study covers several habitats around the Savannah, such as grassland, waterholes, and forested regions, which are vital in the survival and migration of these species.

Figure 1: Migratory Routes in the African Savannah - Serengeti and Maasai Mara Ecosystems

Figure 1 shows the migration of the major species in the African savannah with special attention to the Serengeti National Park and the Maasai Mara National Reserve. The migration route highlighted (orange dashed line) demonstrates the annual migration of wildebeests and zebras, which are two of the most iconic species of migratory animals in the area. Critical geographical features that are also required in the map are the Mara River, which is very important during the migration, and other features like Lake Victoria and the Ngorongoro Crater. The significance of these areas to the conservation of biodiversity is highlighted in the map, which is essential in the conservation design, to protect the most important migration routes and habitats of such species, and African elephants within the region.

Data Collection

To have complete information about migratory patterns, numerous sources were utilized, such as GPS trackers, satellite images, and environmental data. To start with, representatives of the African elephants, wildebeests, and zebras were placed with GPS collars throughout the study area. These collars had the capability to send real-time location information on a periodic basis. The data was also gathered by the use of the existing tracking programs, as well as newly implemented collars, to trace the movements of both male and female elephants, of all ages and migration patterns. The zebra collaring and wildebeest works were aimed at migratory herds to study the processes of movement.

High-resolution satellite imagery was also used to ensure that the change in land cover and the general well-being of the ecosystem could be tracked, in addition to the GPS data. Satellite systems like Landsat, MODIS, and Sentinel-2 furnished essential information on vegetation, water supply, and habitat degradation, which had a direct effect on the movement of animals. The satellite images were able to detect any change in the vegetation and availability of the habitat, which are the major factors influencing the migratory pathway of the animals.

Moreover, the data on the environment and the climate were collected using the local weather stations and world databases to evaluate the variables like temperature, precipitation, and change in weather across different seasons, which may affect the migration. The vegetation indices (NDVI) were employed to monitor the availability of food in various seasons, and information on waterholes was used to learn about the most critical water sources of these species during the migration. All the environmental data, together with the information on animal movements, was a foundation of the analysis of migratory behaviors made by AI.

AI and Machine Learning Techniques

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning were used to analyze the large amounts of data obtained through GPS tracking, satellite imagery, and environmental data. The first was data preprocessing, which entailed filtering based on GPS tracking data to remove errors and balancing the satellite imagery and the data regarding the animal movement. The environmental variables (temperature, precipitation, vegetation indices) were put in standard form so that they could be easily incorporated into the AI models. This combined data has been further modeled to find patterns of migration, and machine learning algorithms like the Random Forest were used to analyze the correlation between environmental factors and animal movement. To classify the migration pathways, Support Vector Machines (SVMs) were used, and Time-series data were used to predict future migration events using Long Short-Term Memory (LSTMs) networks.

Besides machine learning models, geospatial analysis with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was also undertaken to map out the migration corridors and how humans and the environment have coped with each other to the detriment of the habitat. The GIS tools were used to visualize the movement of the species across the landscape, and also to identify those areas that were at risk of degradation. Also, the AI-based methods of habitat mapping were used to assess the significance of critical habitats along the migration paths, which allowed predicting the areas that are expected to be threatened. The mentioned AI methods have been able to offer a holistic insight into migratory behavior and assist in the identification of conservation or conservation priorities, including crucial migration chains and areas that require protection.

Validation and Comparison

In order to determine the validity of the AI-based predictions on migration, the outcomes were compared to the conventional tracking tools, including field data and specialist reports. The projections made by the AI models were compared based on the precision of predicting animal motions, defining migration paths, and analyzing the effects of environmental changes. Also, the migration paths and the areas of critical habitats were compared to the conservation data, such as the knowledge of the conservation areas and human encroachment, to evaluate the efficiency of AI-implemented conservation measures.

Conservation Strategy Development

According to the analysis, the conservation strategies were developed based on the AI-driven insights. These plans entailed the suggestion of new migration routes that would be safeguarded or conserved to secure the existence of migratory animals such as African elephants and wildebeest. The critical habitats and priority areas where interventions would be done, e.g., waterholes and feeding grounds, were essential and had to be identified, especially when there is a drought or any other form of environmental stress. It was also suggested to use adaptive management strategies that could take into consideration climate change and human influence on the migratory patterns.

Results and Discussion

This section captures the findings of the AI analysis of the migratory behavior of the African Savannah that deals with wildebeests, zebras, and African elephants. The research shows that AI enhances the prediction accuracy of migration and contributes to the process of critical habitat and migration paths identification. The fact that AI can combine data from various sources, such as GPS positions, satellite positions, and other environmental parameters, allows for a more thorough understanding of the migratory behavior and ecological effects. These understandings are vital for effective conservation in the area.

Migratory Patterns of Wildebeests and Zebras

As the AI models showed, wildebeests and zebras are guided by clear migration patterns throughout the entire year, which are mainly diversified by food, water sources, and the seasonal rain. These are relatively stable patterns that occur across the years, and the routes that the animals follow cross various vital regions of the two, including the southern Serengeti and central Maasai Mara. The migration routes of both species remained the same each year, with marginal fluctuations in extreme weather scenarios or human activities.

Table 1: Summary of AI-Driven Migration Predictions for Wildebeests and Zebras

Species	Key Migration Corridors	Critical Habitats Identified	Key Influencing Factors
Wildebeests	Southern Serengeti to Maasai Mara	Southern Serengeti Calving Grounds	Food availability, seasonal rainfall
Zebras	Central Serengeti to Maasai Mara	Central Maasai Mara	Water availability, grazing land

The following table 1 summarizes the major migration routes, habitats that wildebeests and zebras are very critical, and significant factors affecting the migration among these creatures. The table illustrates the key migration corridors between the southern Serengeti and the Maasai Mara and clearly shows the calving grounds and grazing grounds as the most critical habitat of the two species. The conditions that affect their movement are the availability of food, seasonal rainfall, and water sources.

The paper also indicated that the time of migration is significant, especially when the seasons are wet, and calves are in their young ages, because this guarantees the survival of the newborn. Depending on a paper provided by the AI models, these migrations are crucial in the dynamism of the ecosystem as they contribute to the preservation of vegetation and animal populations over such large regions. The artificial intelligence sources have shown an ability to foretell migration paths that were consistent with conventional findings, but with increased precision and fineness.

African Elephant Movement and Habitat Use

The analysis of AI showed that African elephants travel in smaller groups and have more disaggregated paths than wildebeests and zebras. Migration is determined by water and food because some water sources, such as the Mara River and waterholes, are the most vital sources of water that ensure survival. The availability of appropriate habitats, as well as human settlements, also influences the movement pattern of the elephants.

Table 2: Summary of AI-Driven Migration Patterns for African Elephants

Migration Pattern	Key Migration Routes	Critical Water Sources Identified	Human Impact/Challenges
Small herd movements	Serengeti to Maasai Mara	Mara River, Serengeti Waterholes	Habitat fragmentation, poaching
Seasonal routes	Maasai Mara to Serengeti	Seasonal waterholes	Human settlements along routes

Table 2 identifies the migration patterns of the African elephants, and it identifies the major migration routes and vital water sources. The table also incorporates the artificial issues, including habitat fragmentation and poaching, that have an impact on the movement of the elephants found in the Serengeti and Maasai Mara ecosystems.

The AI models also indicated that the migration paths of elephants have a tendency to alter whenever there are human traces within their movement paths, since it may interfere with their movement. Interestingly, the study also pointed out that the routes taken by the elephants are also known to alter according to the changes in the weather of the seasons, e.g., the changes in rainfall, which leads to changes in food and water supply. Their movement is also greatly challenged by the fact that human-induced habitat fragmentation and poaching also cause a disruption in their long-established pathways.

Migration Corridors and Critical Habitats

Habitat mapping through AI has identified some of the important migration routes in the Serengeti and Maasai Mara, which are very important in the survival of these species. Specific corridors were recognized as threatened by human activities and environmental alterations, which included deforestation, trapping, and farming. The models projected that the corridors were to be conserved to conserve the migration path of wildebeests, zebras, and elephants. Also, AI models offered information regarding the possible changes in migration pathways due to climate change, driven by the change in food availability and water supply. It is not only vital to the survival of the animals, but the conservation of these migration pathways is vital to the overall health of the ecosystem because these species have essential functions in the dispersal of seed, vegetation control, and nutrient cycling. The research paper recommends conservation to be directed to the protection of these routes and the rehabilitation of fragmented habitats so that the migration of wildlife can be sustained.

Comparison with Traditional Methods

The AI models were found to be better than the old tracking techniques in that they were able to process large, complex datasets to offer more accurate predictions on the patterns of migration. The traditional approaches, though good, were not as large and adaptable as AI in predicting future movements and even the possibility of threats to the habitats. Although GPS collars and satellite telemetry are relevant, they only give limited spatial and temporal information, and, in most cases, they need intensive fieldwork.

Conversely, AI-driven models have the ability to process the data from various sources to forecast the migration patterns on a vast scale. The possibility to predict the alterations in migration paths, as well as define the areas in danger in real-time, is a strong advantage over traditional techniques, which makes it possible to take the conservation actions in a more proactive and targeted manner. Moreover, AI provides a possibility to experience uninterrupted monitoring, which means making changes to conservation policies in response to environmental factors.

Conclusion

The research also brings out the massive potential of artificial intelligence (AI) in the increased learning of migratory patterns and the provision of biodiversity protection of the African Savannah. Using AI to process large volumes of information gathered through GPS tracking, satellite imaging, and environmental parameters as data, the study brought useful information on the migration patterns, essential habitats, and stressors affecting such species as African elephants, wildebeests, and zebras. The results show that AI can enhance the prediction of the migration process and assist in the proactive conservation plans, especially when it comes to recognizing and safeguarding crucial migration routes. Nevertheless, constant surveillance and data gathering are required, and AI needs to be integrated into the overall conservation practices and policies. The subsequent research should concentrate on the enhancement of AI models to include other environmental variables, such as the human-wildlife conflict and climate change, and discuss the prospects of new technologies, such as drone surveillance and image recognition through machine learning. Such innovations could offer even more accurate and real-time information on the movement of wildlife to adjust the conservation strategies to the constantly changing African Savannah climate.

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