

REFLECTING ON THE PAST, BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

AFRICAN PARKS



2023

ANNUAL REPORT



Over 1,500 gorilla habituation field days were carried out in Odzala-Kokoua National Park, Congo, helping to support gorilla monitoring and conservation efforts © Irene Galera
Cover: Galan mountain in Boma National Park, South Sudan, creates a significant focal point in the landscape and is also home to a variety of species © Marcus Westberg

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Despite its arid landscape, Iona National Park, Angola, is home to unique biodiversity, with many mammal, bird and reptile species occurring only in this ecoregion © Marcus Westberg



THE AFRICAN PARKS MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP PORTFOLIO

African Parks was founded in 2000 as an African solution to conserve Africa’s biodiversity for the benefit of people and wildlife. We take on responsibility for the long-term management of protected areas, in partnership with governments and local communities. Our goal is to restore and effectively manage these landscapes, making them ecologically, socially and financially sustainable so they can deliver a multitude of benefits for people and wildlife in perpetuity. By the close of 2023, African Parks was sustainably managing 22 protected areas in partnership with governments and communities in 12 countries.

A TIME FOR ACTION



Vasant (Vas) Narasimhan

CHAIRPERSON
OF THE BOARD
OF AFRICAN PARKS
NETWORK

In December 2022, I took on the role of Chairperson of African Parks, an organisation founded to help prevent the loss of biodiversity in Africa by providing a management solution that ensures critical landscapes are protected, providing essential resources for the wellbeing of both people and wildlife.

Protected areas and intact natural systems are the most effective way to ensure healthy ecosystems and safeguard biodiversity, and therefore are crucial to the future of all life on Earth. Today, the work of African Parks and its government and community partners is more important than ever. Experts agree we are in the midst of a sixth mass extinction, primarily driven by climate change and habitat loss. The warmest year on record by a substantial margin, 2023 was ripe with documented reports of warming ocean waters, melting polar ice, and shifting and extreme weather patterns. These phenomena threaten not only the natural resources that humanity needs to survive, but also economic, social, and political dynamics. This is especially prevalent in Africa, where many communities are dependent on well-functioning ecosystems for their livelihoods, and are the most vulnerable to climate change.

At the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) the global community agreed to the 30x30 goal of conserving at least 30% of land, inland waters and oceans by 2030 – a bold commitment that needs bold solutions. African Parks is playing its part by partnering with communities and governments to sustainably manage 22 protected areas in Africa which comprise diverse biomes and critical ecosystems supporting millions of people. But we believe that we must and can do more, thus our goal is to conserve 30 protected areas by 2030.

Over the course of 2023, African Parks took on some of the most ambitious work in its history. In September, we purchased the world's largest captive rhino breeding operation, becoming the custodians of 2,000 southern white rhino, with the aim to rewild them over the next ten years to safe protected areas. 2023 was our first full year of managing Boma and Badingilo national parks with the South Sudanese government, with significant investments into community engagement and biodiversity research to better understand this remarkable system, harbouring what is likely the largest assemblage of land mammals on Earth. With the Verifiable Nature Unit (VNU), we focused on developing alternative nature-based funding solutions, in partnership with The Landbanking Group, an outcomes-based financing mechanism to support transactions between funders and land stewards committed to conservation and restoration projects.

During the year, I had the pleasure of travelling with my family to Chad. Experiencing the extraordinary Ennedi Natural and Cultural Reserve in the Sahara Desert, and the work that African Parks is doing with local leaders and communities was a privilege. In Zakouma National Park, I witnessed its remarkable conservation success: Through significant efforts with our partners, and major investments made into community development and tourism, wildlife numbers including elephant, buffalo and Kordofan giraffe are on the rise. The progress of both areas is a testament to the power of conserving nature through partnerships and with local communities.

I want to sincerely thank the governments and communities for being committed to the sustainable management of their natural assets and for embracing such partnerships to do so. I am also deeply grateful to our funders, whose generosity makes this work possible. We have ambitious objectives and are resolute in the work that we do to help protect and restore healthy ecosystems at this critical time of our planet's history. Now is the time for action. Over the course of the coming years, I hope that we can continue to rely on you for your ongoing support in helping us raise the vital funds needed to help expand our impact.

I look forward to the year ahead – both the challenges and the opportunities.

Sincerely,
Vas Narasimhan, Chairperson



Using collar data, conservation teams monitor elephant movement across the Greater Zakouma Ecosystem, Chad, helping maintain zero poaching levels for seven consecutive years © Michael Viljoen

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE



Peter Fearnhead

CEO'S LETTER &
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is always a pleasure to compile our annual report, as this is one of the few moments in a year when we have the opportunity to celebrate the totality of accomplishments across the organisation, to reflect on the challenges we face, and to share some insights on what lies ahead. While this past year has had some significant challenges, we have also embarked on some of our boldest initiatives yet. Adding to the significance of the year, we celebrated 20 years of management in both Majete Wildlife Reserve in Malawi and Liuwa Plain National Park in Zambia – where has the time gone?

The theme of this annual report “Reflecting on the Past; Building for the Future” has its origins in our institutional strategy. Over the last 20 years, we have built up the organisation in a largely organic and reactive manner. In late 2022, we took a critical look at what we refer to as the “Institutional Platform” of African Parks – the structure that supports the conclusion of new management partnerships (mandates), securing the necessary funding (money), and overseeing and supporting the park teams on the ground (management). We found some gaps. By addressing these in 2023 and 2024, we are ensuring the organisation can sustain the current portfolio, while we prepare for the next phase of scaling our impact.

Good progress was made in executing this strategy, including the addition of an internal legal counsel; the establishment of a new integrated technology department; a business intelligence unit to support our monitoring and evaluation; a safeguards and compliance unit that was formalised to support risk management, compliance and operational audits; and finally the first steps were taken in rolling out a regional structure to support geographic clusters of parks. All of this will require consolidation and further refinement in 2024, but the core elements are now in place.

We also focused on refining our community development strategy to ensure that communities are active constituents in the management of these areas, and that the core protected areas serve as anchors in their broader conservation landscapes.

Our law enforcement Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were subject to review by an external human rights expert, and we made pleasing progress with institutionalising our internal operational audit programme, which is already proving invaluable in identifying areas where we are non-compliant with our own requirements. Finally, our grievance mechanisms were improved so that accessible communication channels are available for all staff and community members, should any incidents of abuse go undetected.

Mid-year, we received a letter from Survival International accusing rangers under our management of numerous human rights abuses against the Baka people living in Odzala-Kokoua National Park in Republic of Congo. African Parks takes any such accusations extremely seriously and we appointed an external legal firm to investigate their veracity, the results of which will be shared when they become available. We also expect that the serious efforts made into our own SOPs, grievance mechanisms, and safeguards over the years will reduce the likelihood of abuses from occurring in the future.

This year we were delighted to welcome Rob Walton as the new Chair of the Board of the African Parks Foundation of America (APFA). Rob has been involved with African Parks since its inception, both as a friend and as a strategic partner, playing a significant role in enabling our growth over the past two decades. Rob succeeded Ron Ulrich, who, after serving as Chair of the APFA board for eleven years, had to step down for health reasons. Ron played an invaluable role in building African Parks' presence in the USA and we are deeply grateful for his dedication and support over the years.

In this report, you will read about the work we have done, and the multiple partnerships that have made it happen. We are especially grateful to our Government partners that have entrusted their national assets to our management, our funding partners that make it all possible on behalf of global society, and our community and technical partners with whom we work in the field. Equally, it all happens because of the dedication and deep commitment of our people on the ground, who often work in very trying circumstances.

With the unfolding climate and biodiversity crises, coupled with increasing militant insurgencies across much of north west and central Africa, the continent's growing population, political instability and escalating poverty, the need to scale conservation efforts both as a climate and a biodiversity solution, and equally as a mechanism for sustainable socio-economic development, could not be more urgent. Protected areas are the most effective way to safeguard biodiversity, and healthy ecosystems are nature's in-built climate regulator and critical for humanity's wellbeing. It is therefore imperative for African Parks to scale, and to do so in a manner that minimises risks of mistakes being made.

Some critics maintain that conservation disenfranchises local communities from accessing natural resources, but the exact opposite should apply. Good conservation ensures that legitimate use-rights are enshrined and upheld, and that illegitimate users are precluded. Handled correctly, the global

commitment to conserve 30% of terrestrial, inland water, coastal and marine areas by 2030, should be the greatest opportunity for communities to have their use-rights formally recognised and protected. Access to natural resources inherently requires appropriate laws and policies that distinguishes between legitimate users and illegitimate users, and to determine sustainable exploitation levels. When rights are enshrined, inclusive governance mechanisms are established and local laws upheld, sustainability is possible.

Building for our future requires solid, dependable partnerships, ongoing funding, relentless accountability, constant assessment of our operational systems and a dedication to tangible results. With only 2,400 days remaining until the end of 2030, doing more will take both courage and commitment from everyone.

Sincerely,
Peter Fearnhead, CEO

Below: Kafue National Park, Zambia, covers an expansive 22,400 km² and stands to become a globally significant tourism destination with its exceptional landscape and diverse wildlife © Lucien Beaumont





Above: In Majete Wildlife Reserve, local communities, government and African Parks celebrated 20 years of partnership in managing the reserve © Thoko Chikondi

2023 marked a significant milestone for African Parks as we celebrated the 20-year anniversary of our management partnership for Majete Wildlife Reserve in Malawi. On the 28th of March in 2003, Dr Anthony Hall Martin, one of the co-founders of African Parks, signed the management agreement for Majete with the Malawian Government. Since then, thanks to the continued partnership and support of the Government, the neighbouring communities and donors, we've seen Majete once again thriving, playing a critical role not only for wildlife conservation in the country, but also as a driver of local socio-economic development.

GROWTH AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS – With the signature of our management partnership for Boma and Badingilo national parks in South Sudan in 2022, our discussions with the Ethiopian Government for a long-term management partnership for neighbouring Gambella National Park have progressed well. This landscape supports possibly the largest antelope migration in the world, which moves across an immense landscape that includes all three parks. A draft agreement was finalised with the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), and following the official Board due diligence visit to Gambella in July, the Board approved the project. We hope to conclude the partnership with the regional government and EWCA in early 2024. Unfortunately, despite our best

efforts, no further progress was made with the Angolan Government on Luengue-Luiana and Mavinga national parks. This year, we also welcomed the Forgotten Parks Foundation, which manages Upemba National Park in the south east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, into our Incubation Programme. This programme aims to support other organisations in managing protected areas through long-term partnerships, and we look forward to this journey with them. (Read more about this programme on page 86.)

As possibly one of our biggest undertakings to date, in September we purchased the world's largest captive rhino breeding operation in South Africa, becoming the custodians of 2,000 southern white rhino. The decision to buy the farm and its rhino came with one clear intention: to rewild the animals over the next ten years to safe protected areas across the continent, contributing to efforts to de-risk the future of the species. Still in the start-up phase, most of our efforts have been dedicated to incorporating the staff into African Parks, putting improved management systems in place and focusing on much-needed maintenance and upkeep of infrastructure and vehicles. The responsibility and scale of this undertaking is sobering. Yet we are confident that with input and guidance from numerous stakeholders, robust planning and critical donor support, we can deliver on the project objectives. We have years of hard work ahead of us: maintaining

the highest level of security for the operation, carrying out translocations at unprecedented scale, and undoubtedly facing numerous challenges – both known and unknown. (Read more about this project on page 18.)

Over the year we focused on developing alternative nature-based funding solutions with an exciting new project, the Verifiable Nature Unit (VNU) in partnership with The Landbanking Group. This is an outcomes-based financing mechanism to support transactions between funders and land stewards committed to nature conservation and restoration projects to help accelerate nature-based funding. Pilot projects are already being rolled out in Odzala-Kokoua, Garamba and Zakouma national parks. While the VNU is in development, the first carbon credits were issued for Pendjari and W national parks in Benin, and Chinko's carbon project in CAR was approved by Verra in November. Not only does this bring much-needed revenue for the park, government and local communities, but it is a significant step in nature-based solutions as a sustainable revenue stream helping the parks to support conservation and community development efforts.

With the global objective of conserving 30% of the planet by 2030, it is imperative that Africa has a pipeline of managers who possess the skills needed

to manage protected areas and natural resources, and particularly who are capable of handling increasingly complex situations. While a number of excellent courses exist, few cover the full suite of elements that managers need, from stakeholder engagement and strategic planning to human rights and technology. Many existing comprehensive courses require extensive time, which can be a barrier for people who are needed on the ground; the intent is for these courses to be no longer than six months on site. African Parks has thus taken the first steps towards developing a training academy for such managers in Akagera National Park in Rwanda. To assist with the implementation of the academy, we will be partnering with the Rwanda-based African Leadership University's School of Wildlife Conservation, which has the necessary knowledge and tools to support the set up and running of such a school. While there is an enormous amount to do and learn, we are extremely excited about this initiative.

OUR CHALLENGES – In June, we received notification from Survival International of allegations relating to human rights abuses allegedly committed by eco-guards against the Baka people living adjacent to Odzala-Kokoua National Park. We took several immediate actions to address these serious allegations, including commissioning an independent legal investigation of all claims, which is currently

Below: Garamba National Park, DRC, is home to a variety of primate species including red-tailed monkey (Cercopithecus ascanius) © Marcus Westberg



still underway. We also engaged a specialist Baka anthropologist to help gain better understanding of the social context of indigenous people around Odzala, and to develop an improved Baka engagement strategy. African Parks has a zero-tolerance policy for any human rights abuses, and part of our mandate ensures that established use-rights by local communities are protected, as is the case in Odzala. We have multiple safeguards in place to prevent potential abuses, and to detect and address them if they occur. These include externally verified standard operating procedures, regular human rights training, stringent reporting requirements, grievance mechanisms, law enforcement audits and the ability to dismiss staff who violate our codes of conduct or national laws, either through disciplinary procedures or legal process.

In Benin, we faced three more militant attacks this year in the areas that we manage in partnership with the Beninese government. One incident in September lead to the tragic death of a ranger and two soldiers from the Beninese army. The continued commitment of the Government of Benin to strengthening the security capability of the country, and the ongoing support of donors and other stakeholders, has contributed vastly to park management efforts during this unstable period. With a focus on continuous and specialised training and equipping rangers, as well as

close engagement with local communities who play a vital role in contributing to stability within the region, we have managed to stay the course. Every day brings challenges, and we constantly need to re-evaluate and monitor the risks and the implications of staying. Yet we are committed to overcoming and working through those challenges in a responsible and proactive manner, because withdrawing from this commitment would have devastating consequences for people and for biodiversity.

In South Sudan, cattle-raiding incidents led to frequent skirmishes between different ethnic communities. As a result of this widespread conflict, in February, a park vehicle was attacked on the border of Badingilo National Park, sadly leading to the death of a Ministry of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism (MWCT) ranger and injuring another ranger and three African Parks contractors. While the ethnic tensions are complex in South Sudan, the park teams are prioritising community engagement and working closely with communities to understand the dynamics.

In September, we tragically lost another ranger in Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve, Malawi, when Ranger Limbani Chidakwa drowned, having fallen into the Bua River while in pursuit of illegal gold miners. As a consequence, all ranger teams that may be required to

***Below:** Regular community communication and awareness meetings in and around W National Park, Benin, improve understanding of the needs of local people © Marcus Westberg*



***Above:** In Odzala-Kokoua National Park, Congo, a 20 km solar-powered elephant-proof fence has proven highly effective in safeguarding crops of local farmers © Irene Galera*

swim, even if rarely, are undergoing swimming training. On a more encouraging note, a suspect in the murder of Ranger Bendius Amasi, who was killed in an altercation with poachers in 2022 in Majete Wildlife Reserve, Malawi, was arrested in February.

LEARNINGS – African Parks operates across multiple countries, often in remote and challenging environments. The responsibilities that we are given are significant, and daily we face complexities that arise from the multifaceted nature of our work. Learning and growing as an organisation is critical – either through learning from our mistakes and improving, or through proactive initiatives that help us improve our understanding.

To assess the attitude of communities towards the parks and biodiversity conservation, we continued with our Constituency for Conservation Index (CCI) surveys across all protected areas. Based on 11,700 interviews the overall results are encouraging, with a 61% average score for all parks surveyed. This result reflects positive sentiment towards the protected areas' presence and the importance of conserving natural resources (75% score on Rationale for the protected area), as well as good relations between the communities and park management (66% score on Engagement). Attitudes, in terms of how local people

feel about the level of representation and inclusion they receive, scored 56%. Lower scores of 52% for Benefits and 51% for Costs reflected dissatisfaction with benefits derived from the park (jobs, tourism revenue and park-supported socio-economic projects), and concerns around livestock and crop losses due to human-wildlife conflict. With these insights, we can continue to refine our community development plans, learning better ways of communicating, building trust and understanding needs in all areas of engagement between park management staff, rangers, and community members.

Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) is an ongoing challenge in the protected areas where communities live alongside wildlife, and we are continuously striving to improve methods of mitigating this. In addition to fencing, ranger patrols and wildlife monitoring to reduce negative impacts of wildlife on communities, alternative projects and awareness raising are a constant priority. For example, in Odzala-Kokoua National Park, in the Republic of Congo, a 20 km solar-powered fence has been erected to prevent elephants from entering community crop areas; it has proven highly effective and community farmers in the area have reported positively. A Mitigation Fund was launched in Liuwa Plain National Park, Zambia, where farmers contribute to the fund and can then claim for



Above: One of five black rhino released in Zakouma National Park, Chad, after being translocated from South Africa in December © Marcus Westberg

reimbursement of loss of livestock. HWC has also led to loss of life across many parks. In May, a ranger from Liwonde National Park was killed by a buffalo that had escaped the park through a gap in the fence due to fence vandalism, and in July an elephant breakout in Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve led to the death of a child and injury of a woman. Management teams at both parks continue to prioritise maintenance of the boundary fences to prevent wildlife escaping, but are also raising awareness through regular community meetings of the devastating impact of vandalised fences. This is a learning journey, and we constantly strive to improve and adapt – both with the methods used but also by ensuring ongoing education and awareness raising, which is crucial to reducing conflict incidents.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Our largest wildlife collaring operation was conducted in Boma and Badingilo national parks in South Sudan in March and April. A total of 126 animals from various species were collared, including antelope species, predators and elephant. This was an enormous undertaking with massive conservation value in helping to gain a better understanding of species movement in the vast landscape through live tracking. Following the collaring exercise, a systematic reconnaissance flight of the area was undertaken to clarify wildlife numbers. This revealed far more wildlife than originally expected. The data has suggested that approximately six million

antelope move across the landscape each year, possibly the largest migration of its kind on Earth. Once this data has been verified, the official numbers will be announced at a stakeholder event to be held in Juba in 2024.

In June, sixteen southern white rhino were successfully moved from Phinda Private Game Reserve in South Africa to Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). These southern white rhino serve as a viable alternative to the functionally extinct northern white rhino, performing a vital role in the ecosystem. Other wildlife translocations included moving 14 Angolan giraffe, from Namibia to Iona National Park in Angola. Sadly, three giraffe died of natural causes; however, the survival of the remaining animals highlights their resilience to adapt to conditions in Iona, and is the start of establishing a viable giraffe population in the park. In November, ten addax antelope were reintroduced to Chad’s Ennedi Natural and Cultural Reserve from Abu Dhabi.

In December, five black rhino were translocated from South Africa to Zakouma National Park, Chad, boosting the population to seven animals. To ensure greater success, the timing of and approach to this translocation was adjusted, incorporating the lessons learned from the deaths of four of the six rhino previously translocated to the park in 2018. The animals were moved earlier in the dry season, allowing

a longer pre-flooding period to adjust to different browse species, and better access to supplementary feeding during the settling process was ensured.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – We relooked at and revised our Community Development strategy to build an active constituency for conservation. This framework not only brings more clarity and structure for park-led community initiatives, but also looks at how the broader landscapes will be managed, with community governance and integrated land-use planning enabling sustainable utilisation beyond the protected area. This strategy is centred on ensuring that established use rights are respected and upheld, with local communities being the primary beneficiaries of park-led initiatives.

Across the portfolio nearly 300 schools are being supported, with 1,132 scholars benefitting from scholarships. By the end of 2023, there were a total of 91 school blocks built by African Parks. Over 30,000 local people were brought to visit the parks to improve knowledge and awareness of biodiversity conservation, of which more than 24,000 were children.

Community work across the parks continued to impact the lives of thousands of people, with over

5,700 community meetings held, reaching 175,500 people to keep stakeholder communication channels open and engage on socio-economic initiatives, education and human-wildlife conflict challenges. More than 22,000 people benefitted from sustainable livelihood initiatives supported by the parks this year, including beekeeping, fisheries, agroforestry, guiding cooperatives, and sustainable farming practices; while over 70,000 people were treated by African Parks-supported hospitals and clinics.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Park revenue generation across our portfolio made significant gains, with over US\$12 million in gross revenue generated – a 50% increase from 2022. Earning US\$4,8 million from tourism and socio-economic projects, Akagera National Park in Rwanda is on target to become the first park in the portfolio to reach 100% financial sustainability, where income is equal to or exceeds operating costs, by 2025. To support this trajectory of growth across the protected areas that we manage, the focus is on improved destination marketing dedicated to the tourism offering in each park. Stronger revenue collection and reporting systems are also being created to improve revenue generation management, while local empowerment and professional training have played a positive role overall.

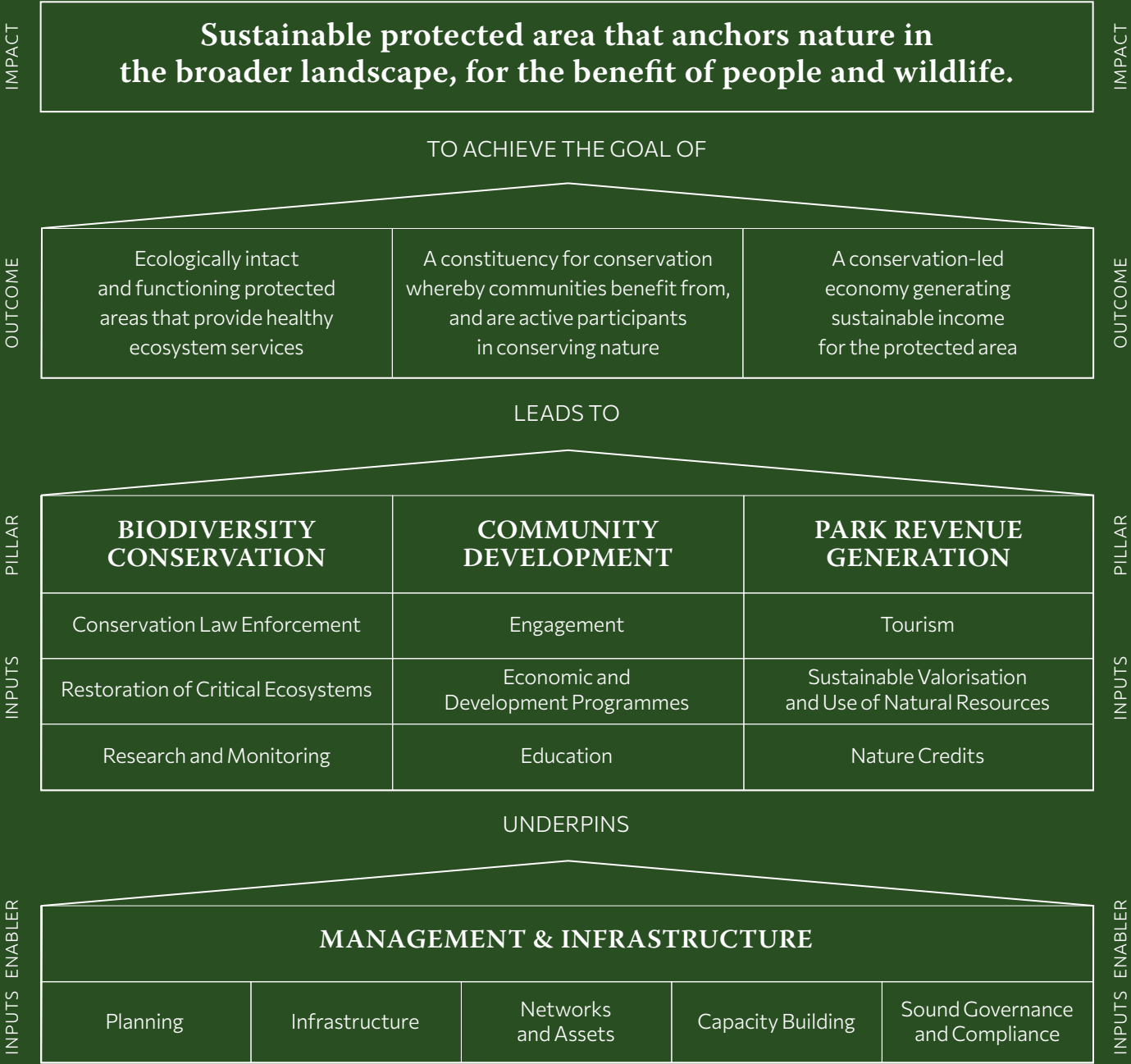
Below: Akagera National Park, Rwanda, moved closer to achieving complete financial sustainability, covering 92% of park costs through revenue generation including tourism © Scott Ramsay



OUR MODEL

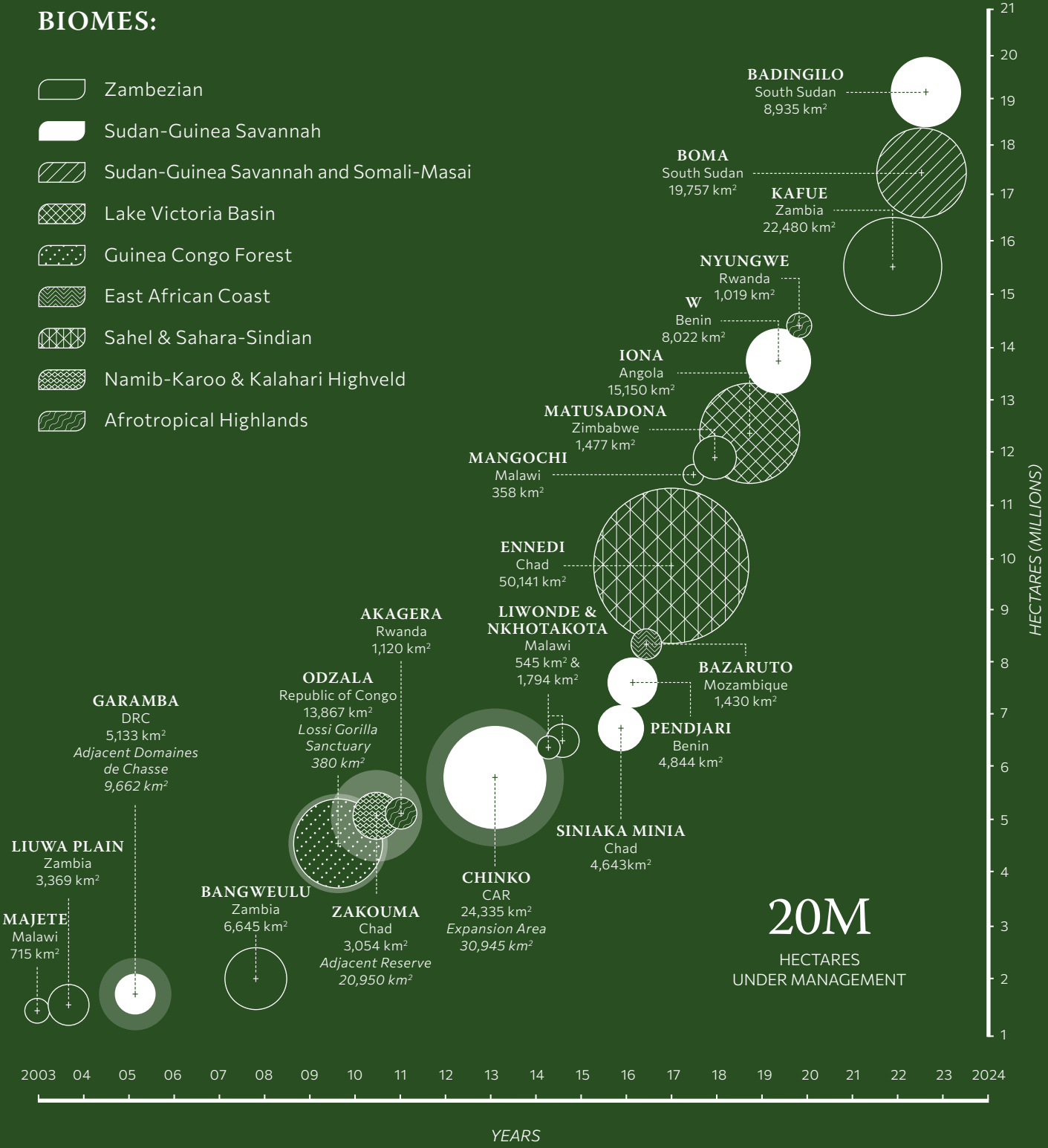
Protected areas that are restored and managed sustainably benefit both people and wildlife. African Parks pioneered the ‘Public-Private Partnership’ model as a protected area management solution over 20 years ago. Through this partnership model, we are responsible for all park management functions and are 100% accountable to our government partners, who remain the owners and policy-makers of the landscapes. This is achieved through long-term management partnership agreements (mandates), putting in place funding solutions (money), and establishing park management on the ground (management). Each project has its own legal entity with its own local governing board that represents key local stakeholders. In each park we implement three integrated pillars, underpinned by management and infrastructure (below), with the objective of ensuring that each area becomes ecologically, socio-politically and financially sustainable.

3 PILLARS: ACTIONS & OUTPUTS



BIOMES:

- Zambezian
- Sudan-Guinea Savannah
- Sudan-Guinea Savannah and Somali-Masai
- Lake Victoria Basin
- Guinea Congo Forest
- East African Coast
- Sahel & Sahara-Sindian
- Namib-Karoo & Kalahari Highveld
- Afrotropical Highlands



WHERE WE WORK

African Parks manages 22 protected areas in partnership with governments and communities in 12 countries, ensuring that 20 million hectares are effectively managed. This diverse portfolio encompasses 11 of the 13 ecological biomes on

mainland Africa. Our goal is to sustainably manage 30 parks covering 30 million hectares by 2030, thus contributing to the broader vision of having 30% of Africa’s ecosystems, and the unique biodiversity they contain, secured and valued in perpetuity.

RHINO REWILD

PROJECT MANAGER Donovan Jooste

African Parks purchased the world's largest captive rhino breeding operation in a bid to rewild the rhino to safe and well-managed protected areas across Africa.

As a result of financial stress, the private captive rhino breeding operation (previously known as "Platinum Rhino") in South Africa's North West Province, was put up for auction in April. After failing to receive any bids the 2,000 rhino were at risk of poaching and fragmentation. Given African Parks' experience in managing protected areas and carrying out wildlife translocations at scale, including bringing rhino back to Rwanda, Malawi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, it was approached by numerous concerned individuals from the conservation sector to provide a solution to help secure the future of the animals. After conducting a thorough due diligence and with the support of the South African Government, as well as having secured emergency funding to make

the transaction possible, African Parks agreed to purchase the farm and all 2,000 rhino.

African Parks took over the operational control of the farm in September, which included management of the rhino, all infrastructure and the staff associated with the project. The final purchase was concluded in early December when African Parks became the legal owner of the entire operation, with one clear objective: to rewild the rhino over the next ten years to well-managed and secure areas in Africa. We hope that through the establishment of new, and supplementation of existing, strategic populations, the future of the species will be secured.

To phase out the breeding programme, and rewild the rhino, an average of 300 animals per year need to be translocated. The animals will be moved within and outside South Africa, with the first moves earmarked for mid-2024.

Rhino are a keystone species and, once returned to protected areas, contribute to healthy ecosystems. Through grazing they shape grasslands, which improves nutrient cycling, reduces the rate at which fires spread and helps positively promote

habitats for other species. They also contribute to storing carbon by maintaining ecosystems.

A PHASE-BY-PHASE PROJECT

The Rhino Rewild project has three main phases:

- **Rescue Phase** – the purchase and ongoing management of the farm, until such time as the rewilding process is complete
- **Rewild Phase** – translocating rhino to safe and appropriate locations in Africa
- **Renew Phase** – ensuring the recipient locations remain viable through effective management by African Parks and other partner organisations.

The initial focus of the project has been on the wellbeing of the rhino and necessary improvements to the infrastructure, including housing, fencing and farm roads, to ensure the operations are run efficiently. Management teams are working with experts to investigate numerous feeding options to provide the best feed for the rhino. Upgrades include the installation of improved security systems, data

management processes and spatial awareness systems. A total of 103 staff run the project, with an estimated increase to 120 staff members during 2024.

By year-end, the final phases of the draft Rewilding Framework, which will be reviewed by rhino specialists for their input, were near completion. The framework will act as a guide for African Parks to rewild all 2,000 animals, including the considerations for selecting recipient areas, decision-making processes, and governance structures. An Advisory Committee will also be set up to help guide the project and provide input on key matters.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

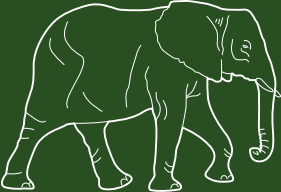
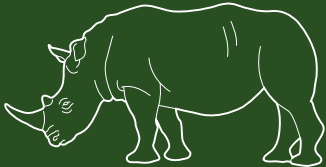




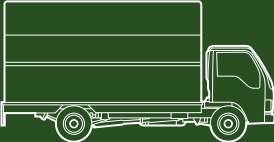

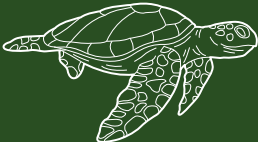
- Establish an Advisory Committee
- Rewild 250 rhino in accordance with the Rewilding Framework
- Engage with potential recipient areas for 2025
- Complete all infrastructure maintenance and site improvements
- Continue to ensure wellbeing of rhino

Southern white rhino at the largest captive rhino breeding operation in South Africa await relocation to safe, well-managed protected areas across Africa as part of a continent-wide conservation strategy © Brent Stirton

IMPACT BY NUMBERS









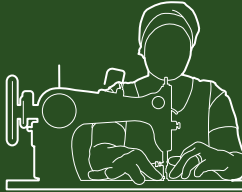

African Parks provides effective park management to ensure lasting positive impacts through long-term management partnerships that help protect ecosystem services, improve socio-economic benefits, and establish security and governance. Here we look at our impact and where we have increased our ability over the long term to safeguard biodiversity for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY Functioning wild ecosystems are imperative for human survival. Our numbers show how we are building ecological resilience across the parks under our management.

 82% DROP IN ELEPHANT POACHING over the past 5 years	 2,000+ RHINO TO BE REWILDED over the next 10 years	 2,119 FIELD RANGERS protecting 20M HECTARES of biodiversity CONFISCATED  284 firearms  7,128 rounds of ammunition  23,443 snares IN 2023
 31 REINTRODUCTIONS OF SPECIES TO AREAS where previously extinct over the past 20 years	1.1M TREES PLANTED over past 5 years 	
 *84% OF KEY INDICATOR SPECIES have stabilised or increased	14.6M TONNES OF CO ₂ absorbed by forests in areas managed by African Parks	

*based on parks with 3 or more comparable surveys, assessing the 3 most indicative species. 12% species declined, but stabilised or increased over the last 3 surveys; 4% species declined.

SOCIO-POLITICAL SUSTAINABILITY Well-managed parks that support healthy ecosystem services to sustain community livelihoods, health and education, improve the lives of thousands of individuals, and help build a strong constituency for conservation amongst local people.

 500K + PEOPLE LIVE WITHIN AREAS managed by African Parks	 95% of AP-managed areas support sustainable NATURAL RESOURCE HARVESTING inside the parks	 104K CHILDREN REACHED through environmental education – over all time
11,700 COMMUNITY MEMBERS interviewed in Community Constituency Index survey. Questions were answered on a 0% (disagree) – 100% (agree) rating scale.		
 61% Average score for all parks surveyed	 75% Overall response : Rationale for the park – positive sentiment towards the parks’ presence and conservation of natural resources	 52% Overall response : Benefits – derived from parks, eg: jobs, tourism revenue, and socio-economic projects
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY Well-managed parks generate revenue from job creation, tourism and other sustainable development projects, stimulating a conservation-led economy.		
	576K TOURIST VISITORS over the past 5 years 67% ARE LOCAL	 73% OF TOTAL EXPENDITURE INVESTED in host countries
	US \$34.3M IN TOURISM REVENUE flowing back into parks over the past 5 years	 US \$1.9M EARNED BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS from socio-economic projects
	More than US \$210K EARNED BY LOCAL FREELANCE GUIDES in 2023	 5,217 FULL TIME EMPLOYEES 97% are nationals



THE PARKS

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Shoebill in Bangweulu Wetlands, Zambia, are protected through the park's Shoebill Nest Protection Programme which ensures the birds' nests are protected by locally employed nest guards © Mana Meadows



ANGOLA

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

National Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (INBC)



African Parks signed a long-term management agreement for Iona National Park with the Angolan Ministry of Environment (MINAMB) and the National Institute of Biodiversity and Conservation (INBC) in 2019. MINAMB is responsible for the formulation, execution, and control of policy regarding environmental protection, including environmental quality, pollution control, terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity, conservation areas, and enhancement of Angola's natural heritage, as well as the use of renewable natural resources. The INBC ensures implementation of the Biodiversity Conservation Policy and management of the National System of Conservation Areas. Ms Ana Paula Chantre Luna de Carvalho is the current Minister of the MINAMB, and Mr Miguel Xavier is the current Director General of the INBC.

IONA NATIONAL PARK

15,150 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2019

PARK MANAGER : PEDRO MONTERROSO

MAJOR FUNDERS Legacy Landscapes Fund,
The Rob Walton Foundation, Wyss Foundation

KEY PARTNER International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF)



A STEP TOWARDS TRANSFORMATION – Located along the remote Iona-Skeleton Coast Transfrontier Conservation Area in Angola, Iona National Park boasts a region of high endemism, with many species of flora and fauna occurring only here. Since 2019, Iona’s management team has been working towards conserving and restoring this iconic landscape. As part of this restoration plan, a founder population of Angolan giraffe (*Giraffa giraffa angolensis*) was translocated back into its historical range this year.

Partnering with Giraffe Conservation Foundation, a feasibility study was undertaken, as well as a community survey in and around the park to ascertain local opinion regarding the reintroduction. The research revealed a favourable environment with the majority of local inhabitants highly receptive to the presence of giraffe and their tourism potential.

In July, 14 Angolan giraffe between three and five years old were translocated from a private game farm in Namibia to Iona. Initially placed in a specially constructed enclosure, where their condition and stress levels were checked, they were released into the park close to a riverbed lined with abundant forage. In the crucial adaptation period (approximately two months) after their release three mortalities were sadly recorded. Although the causes of death were unidentifiable, they were determined to be natural and not human induced. Since then, close monitoring of the remaining 11 giraffe continued by 21 trained wildlife monitors – members of the local communities who possess a deep understanding of Iona’s flora and fauna – and no further fatalities were recorded. The survival of the remaining animals, and the resilience and adaptability of each individual, highlights the successful establishment of a viable giraffe population. This gives hope for the long-term success of the translocation and the overall restoration of the park’s ecological processes and ecosystems. Further giraffe translocations are planned for 2024 and subsequent years may even include the reintroduction of black rhino, to ultimately restore this desert park to its historic glory.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – The first aerial survey since 2019 was completed in June with 11

wildlife species counted. This survey was a crucial step to understanding how park management impacts population numbers over time. The first wildlife collars were deployed in September with 16 springbok, eight zebra and eight oryx collared. The resulting GPS data provided important insights into wildlife movement, grazing areas, preferred corridors and response to human-induced disturbance. Sixty camera traps were also placed in strategic areas, a crucial source of data for elusive species.

Research initiated this year is providing valuable knowledge as well as strengthening ties with conservation partners. This included a waterbird survey in partnership with Wetlands International (counting over 55,000 Cape cormorants), a thesis on predator feeding ecology, and participation in the MENA (Molecular Ecological Network Analysis) eDNA project, with the first results detecting 21 species in the water samples.

Basic Field Ranger training for all rangers was followed by a restructuring of the conservation law enforcement team and implementation of improved strategies. The 21 wildlife monitors who joined the team in January helped revise and improve monitoring processes in the park thanks to lessons learned over the year. A joint operation with the Multisectoral Maritime Surveillance and Safety Group of Tômbwa Municipality was undertaken to stop illegal fishing off Iona’s coast. In one operation around Ilha dos Tigres (Tigres Island), 52 arrests were made, six boats confiscated, as well as over 20 tonnes of shark, manta ray, fish, turtles, seals and various seabirds. The operation was a major step forward in raising awareness and stopping illegal fishing off the southern coast of Angola.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – The focus for 2023 was primarily on collecting information and feedback to establish a Land Use Plan. This included consultations with ten community groups where over 900 members took part in mapping and discussions around seasonal cattle migration routes, water points, sacred areas and other information. Engagement with traditional authorities, communities, provincial governments, NGOs and private sector entities also

took place. A pastoralism study to understand livestock migration and park resources use was completed, as was a report following the 2022 community census which showed that just over 6,500 people live within, and on the immediate periphery of, the park.

Twenty scholarships were awarded and support for two primary schools continued, with over 31,000 individual meals provided. Fifteen teachers from three localities were trained in environmental education with the use of a newly produced manual. A Community Art and Craft Association was established where artisans will produce and sell their handicrafts.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – With the addition of 12 gate officers for the three park entrance gates, Iona has seen a marked improvement in receiving visitors, oversight of vehicle movements and entrance/exit control of tourists, management and reporting of revenue and other data, and knowledge of and adherence to park regulations. Iona received a total of 2,620 visitors, 1,641 (63%) of whom were Angolan nationals, and approximately US\$18,361 was earned in revenue, almost tripling that of 2022.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – The new park headquarters at Pediva progressed well. Six VHF radio/LoRa towers were erected, but full installation of the system was delayed to early 2024. A comprehensive road improvement and maintenance study was completed. Maintenance on key arterial roads within the park has begun, already reducing the travel time from the provincial capital, Moçâmedes, to the temporary operation base in Espinheira in the centre of the park by over an hour.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Implement the Land Use Plan
- Complete and move into Pediva HQ
- Reinforce the giraffe population and prepare for rhino reintroduction
- Start implementing the Tourism Development Plan
- Strengthen relationships with Namibian officials for cross-border conservation efforts



In July, 14 Angolan giraffe were reintroduced to Iona, restoring the species back to its historical range area © Casey Crafford

 US\$2.5 million invested into the local economy (incl. salaries)	 1,641 local visitors to the park	 14 Angolan giraffe reintroduced
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Pendjari National Park — W National Park



BENIN

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

Government of Benin



The Government of Benin signed an agreement with African Parks in 2017 to rehabilitate and develop Pendjari National Park, followed by W-Benin National Park in 2020. The parks' restoration forms part of the Government's "Revealing Benin" national investment programme. José Tonato, Minister of the Living Environment and Transport in charge of Sustainable Development (Ministère du Cadre de Vie et des Transports, Chargé du Développement Durable), Abdel Aziz Baba-Moussa, Director General of the National Centre for the Management of Wildlife Reserves (CENAGREF), and Achille Houssou, Managing Director of the National Agency for the Promotion of Tourism Heritage have all been instrumental in this partnership.

PENDJARI NATIONAL PARK

4,844 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2017

PARK MANAGER : HABTEYESUS M. TADESSE

MAJOR FUNDERS Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF), Fondation des Savanes Ouest-Africaines (FSOA), Government of Benin, The Wildcat Foundation, US DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Wildlife Conservation Network's Lion Recovery Fund (LRF), Wyss Foundation

W NATIONAL PARK

8,022 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2020

PARK MANAGER : ABDEL-AZIZ BELLO

MAJOR FUNDERS Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF), Fondation des Savanes Ouest-Africaines (FSOA), Government of Benin, The Wildcat Foundation, US DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Wildlife Conservation Network's Lion Recovery Fund (LRF), Wyss Foundation



STAYING THE COURSE IN THE WAP COMPLEX – Pendjari National Park forms part of the W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) Complex, an essential stronghold, not only for biodiversity in one of the last wildlife refuges of scale in West Africa, but also for thousands of people. Over the past decade, militant activity in the Sahel has spread into Benin and the WAP Complex. As a result, eight African Parks staff members tragically lost their lives between 2022 and 2023, as well as a number of Government officials and Beninese soldiers. This increasing threat has presented a challenging decision for African Parks whether to continue long-term operations in the WAP.

With the risk of further loss of life, combined with the escalating costs of management in this context, the decision to stay or leave was not an easy one to make. However, it is also essential to recognise the ecological importance of the protected areas, and the role that

effective park management plays in local governance and improving regional stability. As a result, considered discussions were held with the government regarding the management mandate, with funders and their willingness to continue supporting the project, and with the teams on the ground regarding their readiness to continue working in such extreme circumstances. While all acknowledged the severity of the challenges, there was unanimous support to continue operations. African Parks has been met with criticism for staying in Pendjari and W; however, the social, economic, and environmental costs of leaving would be significant. Good governance and ensuring national conservation laws are upheld contributes towards stability and security which enables sustainable natural resource management and socio-economic development.

Today, approximately 650 permanent and thousands of temporary jobs have been created for local people in Pendjari and W. Thousands of community members are able to access natural resources legally and sustainably, including fishing, hunting, and grazing. The parks support schools in the periphery, provide veterinary services to livestock owners and conduct extensive engagement activities. Every day brings new challenges, and the risks need to be constantly re-evaluated and monitored. However, we are committed to overcoming those challenges in a responsible and

proactive manner, because withdrawing from this commitment could have devastating consequences for local people, for biodiversity, and for Benin.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – As part of human-elephant and livestock monitoring an aerial survey was completed along Pendjari’s south-east boundary. Significant agricultural and livestock encroachment was noted in the Séri and Mékrou areas while over 300 elephant were counted inside these sectors of Pendjari. Three elephant were collared, bringing the total number of collared elephant to 25. Two elephant were poached along with three other animals (roan, bushbuck and baboon). Twenty-three human-wildlife conflict (HWC) incidents were recorded, of which 20 involved elephant, with 37 individuals compensated. The HWC management and mitigation programmes were coordinated with W National Park, improving community support.

Specialised training, including a tactical advanced course, tracking, night vision, IED detection, advanced medical training and swimming, increased the park rangers’ ability to operate safely in high security threat areas. All rangers received training in human rights.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – Pendjari’s 12 community facilitators organised 116 awareness-raising sessions attended by 4,712 people. Three additional wildlife clubs were set up, bringing the total to 13 with 400 active members. At Batia Health Centre an ablution block was constructed and 150 mosquito nets donated. A sustainable grazing pilot project is under development in the hunting zones and 12,834 seedlings were planted around the community areas on the outskirts of the Complex.

A total of 768 ha of cotton and soybean fields in the Controlled Occupation Zones (ZOC) – buffer areas in the south west of Pendjari – were converted into organic and sustainable agricultural systems. Four local cooperatives (vegetable oil processors and beekeepers) were formalised, creating micro-enterprises around the park. An additional 49 beehives were colonised with 203 productive hives now managed by 82 beekeepers. The annual cattle vaccination campaign

resulted in 15,203 cattle belonging to 232 herders being vaccinated, strengthening community engagement and reducing the risk of disease transmission from domestic animals to wildlife.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Due to the security situation tourism and hunting activities remained suspended in 2023. In the meantime, infrastructure was maintained at the lodge and other tourism infrastructure sites to ensure that operations can begin as soon as tourism resumes. Meetings are held regularly between park, lodge management teams and local tour guides. The REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries) carbon audit was completed and approved: formalisation of the project, and development of the mechanisms for managing the community share of the carbon revenue in Benin, is underway.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – The main office, 26 rangers’ accommodation and the training camp were upgraded. The VHF network, currently covering 80% of the Pendjari complex and playing a major role in all ground operations, was fully operational throughout the year. The LoRa network was extended with the construction of a fifth LoRa site. Pendjari maintained its 96 km electric fence along the ZOC area as well as a 14 km boma electric fence line. Some 50 km of roads were upgraded with laterite, and 18 drifts and culverts built, to improve all-season access to the park’s operational base. Six water points were upgraded increasing the availability of permanent water for wildlife.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Improve conservation law enforcement capacity and communication to ensure safe conservation activities
- Strengthen conservation of cheetah and korrigum to reduce extinction risk
- Implement Land Use Plan in ZOC areas for improved community development
- Support income generating activities to strengthen local relations



Materials donated to school children living around Pendjari provides additional support for their education © Marcus Westberg

 23 local schools supported	 US\$5.2 million of park expenditure invested in local economy (incl. salaries)	 138 camera traps supporting large carnivore survey
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A STRATEGY FOR RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT – W National Park (WNP) forms an anchoring component of the W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) Complex, one of West Africa’s largest intact ecosystems. However, militant activity has continued to expand into the region over recent years, culminating in 2022 with the tragic death of seven African Parks staff members and a Beninese soldier due to an attack involving improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Further incidents have occurred since, leading to the death of a ranger in 2023, and several Government officials and Beninese soldiers. After considered discussions, and with the support of government, funders and park staff, we decided to continue operations in the region. The park teams thus began 2023 with a determination to overcome the challenges in a proactive and responsible manner.

In the wake of the devastating attacks, WNP’s management approach was re-evaluated. To ensure the safety of personnel, all non-essential staff were relocated, and operations pulled back from the areas under threat. Road use was reduced, and rangers received additional training in identifying IEDs, as well as special training to improve safety, confidence

and overall morale. Most importantly, close, positive engagement was prioritised and maintained with local communities who play a vital role in supporting security within their regions. In addition to these efforts, the government deployed the national army along the borders with Burkina Faso and Niger to reduce further militant action infiltrating the parks. For these solutions to work, coordination and clarity on roles and responsibilities between African Parks and the government is vital. Park management’s focus is on biodiversity conservation, safeguarding natural resources, reducing illegal activities that threaten wildlife and continuing with community development initiatives. The Benin security forces are responsible for ensuring national security and working towards de-escalating socio-political tensions.

Today, the local communities continue to play a fundamental role in contributing to the region’s security, showing their commitment to the values of both the government and the park. Despite the security situation, mitigated by the efforts of the national army, park management activities increased from 30% in January to 80% coverage of the park by June, with no further serious incidents involving personnel, park infrastructure or wildlife thus far.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Fifteen elephant, one lion and two hartebeest equipped with satellite collars were monitored to better understand their movements. An elephant wandering in the Sinende area (approximately 130 km south of the park) was equipped with a GPS collar. A few months later the

elephant returned to the WAP Complex in Benin. Fourteen animals from six species were poached, including two elephant. The number of human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) increased this year to 140 cases recorded. Together with Pendjari National Park, HWC management and mitigation programmes were implemented, with 147 victims compensated. Thirty-three new rangers completed Basic Field Ranger training, reaching the target of 178 field patrol rangers. Other specialised and human rights training also took place. In accordance with the Environmental Management Plan 16,035 seedlings were planted on the park’s boundaries and in schools adjoining them.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – A community workshop was organised with stakeholders to share results from the implementation of the annual community development plan; recommendations have been incorporated into the 2024 plan. Sixteen community facilitators organised 2,168 communication and awareness meetings reaching 45,201 people, including local leaders, customary authorities and leaders of socio-professional groups, and improving communication and understanding of people’s needs. A 5 ha panicum grass fodder plot was extended to support the restoration of grazing areas around the park. Thirteen community boreholes across the park were rehabilitated. Over 16,000 seedlings were planted on the park’s perimeter and adjacent primary schools. 25,000 cattle belonging to 653 herders were vaccinated, reducing the risk of disease transmission from cattle to wildlife.

The school canteen programme was launched this year, providing food to 5,976 schoolchildren in 25 schools. Nine community teachers joined the park’s peripheral education support programme, bringing the number of teachers to 25 across 22 schools. A total of 872 schoolchildren received educational materials while 3,160 students and 174 teachers in 77 schools took part in the environmental education programme. There are currently 18 wildlife clubs with 402 active members. Income generating associations were formalised into cooperatives, including vegetable oils processing, beekeepers, baobab fruits, and fishermen. Eighty-one beekeepers operating 50

hives produced 97 litres of organic honey, while 45 fishermen and 20 fishmongers benefitted from fishing permits, harvesting 16 tonnes of fish. A total of 130 people reaped five tonnes of baobab fruit.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Given the suspension of tourism in the WAP Complex, efforts concentrated on alternative income-generating activities. The four primary sources of income comprised beekeeping, shea, fishing and baobab products with the bulk of the income going to the communities and the remainder to the park. Balanites and neem oils also generated income for communities.

The brand “Pur” for local WNP manufactured products, with a joint specification of “Pendjari” products, was updated and submitted to the national authority. To promote the brand the park participated in three fairs: Porto Nomad in Porto Novo (July), Benin Barbecue festival in Cotonou (July) and the yam festival in Abomey-Calavi (August).




PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – Infrastructure development focused on the Alfakoara operational base, including the construction of 12 rooms for staff, 15 for law enforcement staff and six watchtowers. A helicopter hangar was completed, augmenting in-house aerial operations management capacity. Two VHF repeaters were rebuilt, increasing coverage of the park to 80%. This is vital to support safe, efficient and well-coordinated efforts in the field. Aerial support took place daily by helicopter, an ultralight fixed wing and a Cessna 182, critical tools for conservation, providing continual surveillance and safe team positioning in the field.

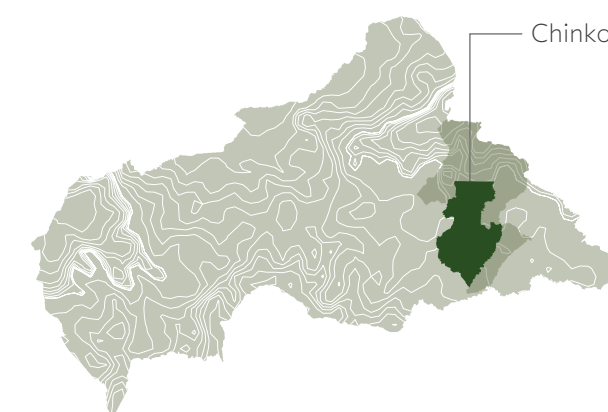
OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Reinforce air and ground fleet, and communication and tracking system
- Restore full management of WNP in synergy with government
- Strengthen reforestation management
- Undertake wildlife aerial survey
- Prioritise engagement with marginalised communities and youth



Fishermen in W National Park wear yellow vests to show they have the necessary qualifications and permits to access natural resources in the protected area © Marcus Westberg

 64 local schools supported	 2,168 community meetings attended by 45,201 people	 178 rangers protecting 6,959km ²
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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

Ministry of Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing



In 2014, African Parks received the mandate to manage Chinko in partnership with the Ministry of Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing, which holds primary responsibility for sustainable management of forest resources, commercial forestry operations, and governance of national parks in the CAR. An updated and revitalised mandate for Chinko was further signed in April 2020. The Ministry of Water, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing is represented by Minister Gervais Mbata.

CHINKO

24,335 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2014

Broader Landscape: 30,945 km²

PARK MANAGER : JEAN BAPTISE MAMANG-KANGA

MAJOR FUNDERS Bel Group, Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF), European Union, Rainforest Trust, The Rob Walton Foundation, USAID, Wildlife Conservation Network's Lion Recovery Fund (LRF)



CREATING A SOLUTION FOR COEXISTENCE –

Chinko is a vast tract of intact savannah and tropical forest spanning over 64,000 km² in the Central African Republic (CAR). When African Parks partnered with the Government of CAR to manage Chinko in 2014, climate change effects and unsustainable natural resource use had heavily degraded the ecosystem. During the dry season, nomadic cattle herders migrated south through Chinko from an increasingly conflict-ridden and depleted Sahel in search of fresh grazing opportunities, burning the vegetation and killing predators that threatened their livestock. A 2017 survey estimated that big cat populations as well as most large wildlife in Chinko had declined by more than 80% over a five-year period, with fewer than 100 elephant remaining. In addition,

tension between local sedentary communities and transhumant herders was mounting.

To create a mutually beneficial solution to this unsustainable situation, the park initiated participatory land use planning, and recruited Transhumance Engagement Officers (TANGO agents) from the local herding communities to work with the transhumant herders. Understanding the needs of the herders, the TANGOs work with pastoralists to encourage and promote sustainable grazing practices and respect of the protected area boundaries and corridors.

Through this programme, the corridors and park boundaries have been adhered to and both herders and sedentary communities report improved safety for their families and livestock. The area free of cattle and habitat degradation has now expanded from roughly 5,000 km² to nearly 25,000 km² and wildlife numbers are steadily on the rise. Given its success in Chinko, this model is now being replicated by African Parks in Benin and in Chad, as well as by other conservation organisations in CAR.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Camera-trap data from the central Chinko Conservation Area

(CCA) confirmed the presence of elephant and hippo in that region and a steadily increasing population of herbivores, including giant eland, west central African buffalo, and defassa waterbuck. Chinko is the ideal habitat for transition species such as the lowland bongo, giant forest hog and yellow-backed duiker, and the numbers indicate that it is home to the largest protected population of these species in the world. Increasing numbers and range expansion of northern lion have been observed, after the lion population shrank massively and became locally extinct in some areas due to uncontrolled pastoralism. Today a 15,000 km² area has been established as a lion protection zone in Chinko. About 250 African wild dog have also been recorded. Chinko’s vast expanse is providing one of the last places in Africa to offer the space that wild dog need to thrive.

Over the course of the year the conservation law enforcement team received training in river navigation, capacity building, tracking, community outreach, human rights and complaint mechanisms, communication and first aid.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – 2023 saw more agreements being signed with communities on the periphery of Chinko which support the proposed Land Use Plan, including the creation of Chinko National Park. Three more Local Development Consultation Groups were created, bringing the total to 18. These village-based structures stimulate local development and serve as an anchor for land use planning. Regular awareness raising events and quarterly meetings strengthened the link between Chinko and the communities.

Training included responsible mining practices for 75 artisanal miners. Four new farming groups received training in sustainable practices for cassava, groundnut and maize farming, and 380 people were trained in market gardening techniques. A total of 118 beekeepers were trained in the production of honey. Two hundred fishermen received training in sustainable fish farming using the ‘acadja’ method, with Chinko providing financial support to cover the setting up and running costs. Four community fishery reserves were established along the major rivers of eastern CAR to increase local yield. The Community Development

team drafted an environmental education guide, “Mon Chinko,” on nature conservation, which was distributed to and used in 30 primary schools. Six environmental education clubs were set up with a total of 126 young people participating. The Community Development team also trained members of 60 village savings and loans associations in management of income-generating activities.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Following the successful completion of the REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) certification audit, Chinko was issued carbon credits by Verra. The credit sale generated US\$1.5 million to be allocated to the sustainable management of the CCA, with US\$270,000 earmarked for the Chinko Community Fund and US\$400,000 for the CAR government. A focus on local procurement at Chinko, with food such as cassava meal, rice, dry cassava leaves, local coffee beans, local peanut butter and meat, is boosting the local economy and strengthening the link between the communities and Chinko. Completing its third season, Camp Chinko employed 10 staff recruited from communities around the CCA.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – A total of 842 km of roads inside the CCA, and 346 km outside, as well as seven airstrips, were either maintained or newly constructed. The construction of the community centre in Rafai was completed. Four boats were received so that Chinko’s first river patrols could begin. New construction for Chinko headquarters included a kitchen and new staff houses and ablutions.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Chinko to be classified as a National Park
- Continue working towards expanding the core area by actively managing 35,000 km²
- Implementation of Land Use Plan through pilot projects
- Sign lease for fishing and hunting concessions with long-term partners
- Purchase a minimum of 50% of Chinko’s food through communities



Thousands of transhumance herders and their families move south towards Chinko every year for grazing and safety, where they engage with transhumance (TANGO) agents who provide support and awareness © Marcus Westberg



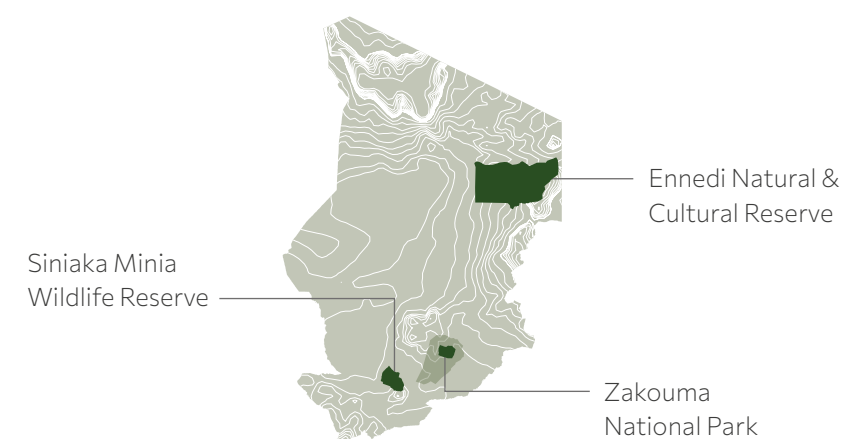
20% increase
in overall wildlife
numbers per year



**80 transhumance (TANGO)
agents covered 29,220 km²**
reaching 17,951 pastoralists



24,600 km²
free from
illegal activity



CHAD

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

The Republic of Chad



The Ministry of Environment, Fisheries and Sustainable Development (MEPDD) is the Governance authority of protected areas in Chad with whom African Parks has signed management agreements for the Greater Zakouma Ecosystem (including Zakouma National Park and Siniaka-Minia Wildlife Reserve), Ennedi Natural and Cultural Reserve and the Aouk Project. In 2010, the Ministry and African Parks signed a public-private management agreement for Zakouma, followed in 2017 with a 10-year agreement for the development of the Functional Ecosystem of Zakouma, and a 15-year agreement for the creation, funding and management of the Ennedi Reserve. MEPDD is represented by its minister M. Mahamat Abdelkerim Hanno.

ENNEDI NATURAL & CULTURAL RESERVE

50,141 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2017

PARK MANAGER : ISSAKHA GONNEY GUIRKI

MAJOR FUNDERS European Union, Fondation Segré, Stichting Natura Africae, The Rob Walton Foundation

ZAKOUMA NATIONAL PARK

3,054 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2010

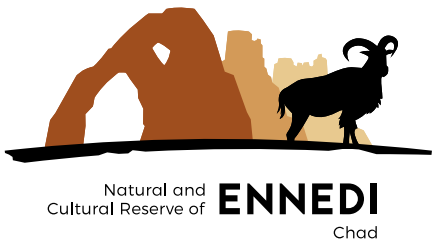
SINIAKA MINIA WILDLIFE RESERVE

4,643 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2017

Bahr Salamat Faunal Reserve : 20,950 km²

PARK MANAGER : CYRIL PÉLISSIER

MAJOR FUNDERS Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF), Dhanam Foundation, US DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), Wildlife Conservation Network's Lion Recovery Fund (LRF), Stichting Nieuwgeluk Philosophy



RESTORING A DESERT ECOSYSTEM – In caves, and on eroded rocks scattered across the Ennedi Plateau, paintings created thousands of years ago by the ancient inhabitants of what is now Ennedi Natural and Cultural Reserve (ENCR) depict an array of humans and animals. Among them are images of the red-necked ostrich – the largest living bird – and the beautiful addax antelope. While this prehistoric rock art reflects a time when the region was wet and lush, Ennedi’s perennial springs can still sustain an astonishing number and diversity of wildlife. In the mid-20th century, poaching and regional conflict eradicated many of the region’s species including, giraffe, the addax and oryx antelope as well as the red-necked ostrich.

In an effort to re-establish species previously lost to the landscape, a pilot group of ten addax were reintroduced to Ennedi from Abu Dhabi in partnership with the Chadian Government, Sahara Conservation and the Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi. Once found in large numbers, the critically endangered addax is slowly being brought back to Chad and, for the first time since the 1970s, addax are roaming the desert landscape of Ennedi. The project will continue into 2024 with further reintroductions. The ultimate goal is to establish a healthy, viable population exceeding 500 individuals of both addax and oryx, a vital step in securing the long-term survival of the species and restoring Ennedi’s ecosystem.

The reintroduction of addax follows the return of the red-necked ostrich to Ennedi, brought from Zakouma National Park in 2021. In November this year, a batch of 20 red-necked chicks were seen running behind their parents, bringing the population to over 50 birds – more than doubling numbers since December 2022, while five nests discovered at the end of the year. The reserve is now home to 33 adults and 27 chicks, with

nine at Sougounaw Ostrich Farm in Fada. Specialised teams of eco-monitors track both the addax and ostriches on a daily basis, providing important metrics to further analyse their wellbeing and plan future reintroduction projects in the reserve. With these two successful reintroductions, the team in Fada has laid a solid foundation for the continued rewilding of the ENCR.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – To better understand Ennedi’s flora and fauna, a biodiversity inventory is being compiled using the results of an aerial survey for wildlife and domestic fauna, camera traps and other surveys. An agreement between Ennedi and the Chief of Canton of Archida was signed to ensure the protection of biodiversity around the Guelta d’Archei, home to the last population of West African crocodile in Ennedi.

The conservation law enforcement team covered over 50,000 km on motorised, camel and foot patrols, resulting in decreased illegal activities with only two arrests throughout the year. Team training included exchange and capacity-building courses with colleagues from the Greater Zakouma Ecosystem. The control room in Fada began operating 24/7, enabling the team to closely monitor all patrols and teams on the ground. An information analysis department is being developed to enhance efficiency of all ranger missions.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – One of the major challenges is promoting education for children and engaging the local communities in topics such as conservation and biodiversity. To tackle this, an innovative project was initiated: The “Les Petits Mouflons” educational truck, which travels across Ennedi raising awareness about environmental protection, particularly reaching areas where formal schooling is scarce. Since it began in summer, the truck has successfully completed six missions reaching over a thousand people, with positive feedback. Primary school teachers were trained in environmental education, aiming to integrate the team’s Environmental Education Guide into the national primary education curriculum, covering

topics such as biodiversity, archaeology, waste management and natural resources. The gardening project in Fada continued, with local women cultivating crops including watermelon, lettuce, tomato, onion, garlic, chilli, and sorrel.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Central to the Tourism Development Plan is Ennedi’s exceptional archaeological heritage. In 2023, 14 archaeological survey missions led to the classification of 421 new archaeological sites, including 68 of major importance. The discovery of ancient rock art brings responsibility with it, and plans are being made with UNESCO to put an effective protection strategy in place. The construction of Oundoubah Camp, scheduled for completion in 2024, aims to elevate the overall visitor experience. The tourism department successfully ran a remote “Mouflon Camp” on multiple occasions for partners visiting the reserve. To raise the reserve’s visibility in the region, informative brochures and booklets were designed, detailing the fauna, flora, and archaeological heritage sites of Ennedi.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – Several significant infrastructure projects were completed in 2023 including the successful renovation of Sougounaw Ostrich Farm in Fada, directly benefitting the ostrich reintroduction programme. Renovations were also undertaken at the ranger camp and six staff houses were completed.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Establishment of the Land Use and Management Plan
- Zero ostrich and addax lost to poaching; further reintroductions in 2024
- Completion of feasibility study for giraffe translocation
- Ensure the Tourism Development Plan with Oundoubah fully operational
- Continue investing in staff capacity building through workshops and inter-park exchange programmes



Ten addax were reintroduced to Ennedi to take the first step in re-establishing the species lost to the region since the 1970s © Marcus Westberg

 <div>10 addax reintroduced</div>	 <div>2,400 people reached with “Les Petits Mouflons” educational truck</div>	 <div>1,135 archaeological sites recorded</div>
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REINTRODUCING SPECIES ONCE LOST –

Zakouma National Park, the adjoining Siniaka Minia Wildlife Reserve (SMWR) and Bahr Salamat Faunal Reserve together form the Greater Zakouma Ecosystem (GZE). Since 2010, when the Chadian Government invited African Parks to manage Zakouma, wildlife numbers have increased thanks to improved conservation law enforcement strategies and positive community engagement. Tourism has seen a resurgence and the GZE has become the largest employer in the region. All of this has contributed to a favourable environment for the reintroduction of key species.

In December, five black rhino were moved from South Africa to Zakouma. Learnings from the loss of four of the six rhino translocated in 2018 informed the timing and approach of this year’s exercise, which were adjusted to mitigate future losses. These changes included reintroducing the animals earlier in the dry season, allowing a longer pre-flooding period to adjust to different browsing species and ensuring better access to supplementary feeding during the settling process. Crucial veterinary attention during critical seasonal changes has also been ensured.

Ahead of the reintroduction, the GZE’s community development team focused on raising community awareness of the ecological importance of rhino and their associated risks. Five days after their arrival the first rhino were released from their temporary enclosure into the park, with the rest following at regular intervals. As daily monitoring is essential to the security and acclimatisation of the rhino, radio and satellite transmitters were attached to each animal prior to its release, allowing the 11 dedicated rhino trackers to follow their movements daily. The reintroduction has thus far been a success, with the

rhino habituating well to their new surroundings and bringing the total to seven black rhino in Zakouma. As a result, future reintroductions are planned, with the hope that a thriving black rhino population will exist in the GZE once again.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – A variety of species were collared in GZE including nine elephant, five lion, four tiang, nine giraffe, one roan and one hartebeest. Crocodile genetic samples were collected on the Salamat River for a study on habitat connectivity and the genetic diversity of these reptiles. No rhino or elephant were poached in the GZE during the year. In Zakouma, 63 camera traps were active at the end of 2023 with 21 in Siniaka Minia.

The relatively dry wet season led to a drought later in the year, compounded by bush fires which were controlled through the fire management plan. Four rhino trackers received extensive tracking training in Rwanda’s Akagera National Park, while the rhino translocation and research/monitoring managers travelled to Zimbabwe for wildlife capture training. A pilot from Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe visited Zakouma for a week to train pilots in aerial rhino tracking using VHF telemetry.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – Four effective transhumance sensitising teams (PeriFerrick teams) held 533 awareness-raising sessions attended by 30,746 people. The goal of the PeriFerrick teams is to engage with pastoralist communities, offering information on safe passage and access to food, water, basic supplies and medicine. The teams also function as unarmed negotiators in the event of illegal activities and support the mitigation of human-wildlife conflict (HWC).

A total of 6,820 people visited Camp Dari, a free environmental education camp for local communities and Chadian students. Two schools were constructed, one in Ibir on the periphery of Zakouma and the other in Koubi on the outskirts of Siniaka Minia. As part of African Parks’ GZE education support, two teachers’ associations receive direct contributions towards the salaries of 26 teachers and school materials.

To encourage girls’ education and literacy, 443 scholarships were provided, 300 and 143 respectively in the peripheries of Zakouma and Siniaka Minia. Through all these interventions, 2,480 pupils attended school in 2023 with the support of African Parks.

Two unions and 39 agricultural cooperatives with 914 members actively support the value chain development of local products. The villages around Siniaka Minia produced 462 litres of balanites (desert date) oil and 176 kg of shea butter, and harvested 584 kg of vegetables and 1,192 kg of honey.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – A total of 402 bed nights in Camp Nomade, and 1,242 in Camp Tinga were sold. The local economic impact of the GZE for 2023 included the full-time employment of 292 Chadian nationals, earning a total of US\$1.4 million in salary payments and annual bonuses, while the use of local service providers and procurement of local goods added another US\$1.4 million.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – The law classifying Siniaka Minia as a national park was passed by the National Transition Council on the 26th of December 2023, redesignating Siniaka Minia Wildlife Reserve, referenced above, to Siniaka Minia National Park (SMNP), elevating its protection status. In 2023 construction began on the new SMNP HQ in the park. Two new rapid medical emergency plans are now in place in both Zakouma and SMNP. A new building to house 18 staff members at Zakouma’s HQ was constructed. Almost 900 km of roads were constructed or maintained in Zakouma.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Develop a functional HQ in SMNP for effective day-to-day operations
- Maintain zero elephant and rhino poached
- Obtain government approval of the Tourism Development Plan
- Ensure grievance mechanisms are functioning effectively



Zakouma’s perennial water sources are a sanctuary for a variety of wildlife species, and are valuable breeding grounds for migrating birds
© Marcus Westberg

 US\$5.9 million park expenditure invested in local economy (incl. salaries)	 6,820 local people visited environmental Camp Dari	 0 elephant poached since 2016
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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN)



DRC's Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) is a public entity housed under the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development tasked with the sustainable management of biodiversity in protected areas in the DRC, in cooperation with local communities and other partners. The ICCN oversees a natural and cultural heritage comprising nine national parks and a network of 80 reserves, covering over 13% of the country's area. African Parks' collaboration with the Institut began in Garamba National Park in 2005. The ICCN is currently led by Director General Milan Ngangay Yves.

GARAMBA NATIONAL PARK

5,133 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2005

Adjacent Domaine de Chasses 9,662 km²

PARK MANAGER : PHILIPPE DECOOP

MAJOR FUNDERS Barrick Gold Corporation, European Union, People's Postcode Lottery, The Wildcat Foundation, USAID, US DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)



MOVING RHINO FOR HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS –

In an important step towards restoring the ecological balance and biodiversity of Garamba National Park, 16 southern white rhino were successfully translocated from South Africa in June, in the hope that they will adapt and fulfil the same role as the now extinct northern white rhino.

Once home to over 20,000 elephant and thousands of other species, Garamba endured many years of poaching by rebels and ivory poachers, leading to plummeting wildlife numbers by the turn of the century. After the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) invited African Parks to help manage Garamba in 2005, new systems to overhaul conservation law enforcement were implemented and stability slowly began returning to the park and

its surrounds. It was only by 2018, however, that there was a notable reduction in elephant poaching and by 2020 that numbers finally began increasing. With the development of socio-economic initiatives in and around Garamba, making alternative sources of income available to local people, alongside effective conservation law enforcement, illegal activity has decreased and the benefits of stability are being realised for both wildlife and people.

Today, with effective park protection in place, rhino reintroductions have become a reality. With the northern white rhino becoming functionally extinct and disappearing from the region, Garamba’s habitat changed, with the loss of “grazing lawns” originally maintained by rhino. These lawns, a vital source of sustenance and habitat for many other grazers, are also instrumental in fire management as natural firebreaks. Following thorough feasibility assessments, the introduction of the southern white rhino, the closest genetic substitute, will fulfil the vital role once played by its northern cousin in promoting healthy ecosystems, establishing another safe breeding node for rhino and, ultimately, contributing to rhino conservation on the continent.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Permanent monitoring, using camera traps to document forest-

dwelling wildlife and estimate the populations of key species such as chimpanzees, has been carried out since 2021 in the three Domaines de Chasse surrounding Garamba National Park. A total of 21 cameras are currently deployed at three priority chimpanzee monitoring sites. Other species observed include bongo, tree pangolin, giant pangolin, giant forest hog, aardvark and duiker. The growth rate of the critically endangered Kordofan giraffe population again exceeded the projected rate with 82 individuals recorded at the end of 2023, compared to 65 at the end of 2021. The 2023 Elephant Demographic Survey indicated a stable population. Twenty-two elephant were collared bringing the total to 35; collar data analysis helped identify areas of importance for Garamba’s elephant population. The historical database is extensive, comprising 1.6 million data points from 183 elephant collars and tracking 143 individuals from 2009 to the present, making it one of the largest existing continuous datasets on elephant.

Basic Field Ranger training was completed with 39 new rangers assigned, primarily, to monitor and protect the southern white rhino. Five chimpanzee confiscated from illegal wildlife traffickers (two in 2022 and three in 2023) have been successfully relocated to a Primate Rehabilitation Centre.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – The 238 farmers trained in the Farmer Field School (FFS) programme established their own farmer networks, disseminating the agroecological practices they learned. Another 764 farmers began their first year of training through FFS in sustainable agriculture, market gardening and food crops. In addition, 685 students from 29 primary schools were trained through Junior FFS programmes. This year the environmental education Camp Dungu hosted 823 visitors. Over 350 environmental awareness sessions for 13,116 community members were conducted. Several key leadership engagement meetings were facilitated to address the influx of pastoralists into the buffer zone. In further awareness-raising, 360 broadcasts on community radio stations were aired on topics such as slash-and-burn practices and agroecology alternatives, reforestation and rhino reintroduction.

The African Parks-supported hospital in Nagero and the Gangala health post provided health care to 10,564 people, while the mobile clinic visited 31 remote villages within the Garamba Complex, reaching 8,662 community members. Educational sessions were organised for 4,610 patients on a variety of topics including health and sexually transmitted diseases.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – This year, Garamba generated its highest revenue under African Parks management. Focusing mainly on tourism, the Commercial Development Plan was revised and completed, aiming to guide infrastructure development and marketing to increase tourism to Garamba. A new Commercial Manager was appointed and the Deputy Lodge Manager of Garamba Lodge attended two months of training at Akagera National Park.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – Nature+ signed a MoU with Garamba National Park to develop three pilot reforestation projects in areas most affected by deforestation. Garamba represented African Parks and the ICCN at the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) Second International Conference of Ministers on transhumance in Yaounde. Government representatives, technical experts and donors from seven countries discussed investment plans to sustainably manage transhumance movement between the Sahel and the northern part of the Congo Basin. After seven years as General Director, Garamba said farewell to John Barrett who led the park through some very challenging periods while helping to improve stability in the region.

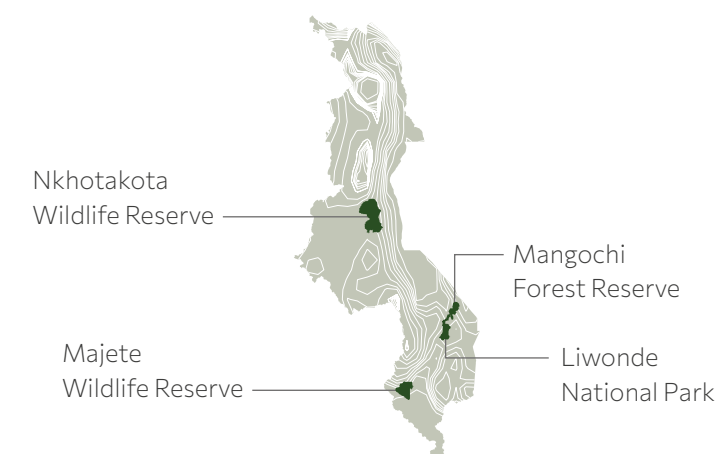
OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Continue electrifying Dungu and Nagero with solar mini-grids
- Implement Phase II of the southern white rhino reintroduction project
- Improve national capacity building through diverse training offerings
- Establish between two and four designated mining zones outside the park to enable illegal miners to mine legally
- Develop and implement a Land Use Plan



In June, 16 southern white rhino were translocated into Garamba to introduce the species back into the region after the disappearance of the northern white rhino © Frank Weitzer

 16 southern white rhino introduced	 19,226 people treated through AP-supported health facilities in 2023	 399 customers , of which 45% are small enterprises, connected to mini solar grid
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MALAWI

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

Malawi Department of National Parks & Wildlife (DNPW)



African Parks' longest-running partnership is with Malawi's Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW), since the agreement for Majete Wildlife Reserve in 2003. DNPW manages and conserves wildlife resources and administers the Wildlife Policy and National Parks and Wildlife Act. In 2015, African Parks and the DNPW signed an agreement for Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve and Liwonde National Park, and in 2018 for Mangochi Forest Reserve. African Parks partnered with the Department of Forestry; all agreements were facilitated by the Public-Private Partnership Commission. Mr Brighton Kumchedwa is the current Director of the DNPW.

LIWONDE NATIONAL PARK & MANGOCHI FOREST RESERVE

903 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2015

PARK MANAGER : DAVE ROBERTSON

MAJOR FUNDERS People's Postcode Lottery, The Rob Walton Foundation, US DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), WWF Belgium, Wyss Foundation

MAJETE WILDLIFE RESERVE

715 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2003

PARK MANAGER : JOHN ADENDORFF

MAJOR FUNDERS People's Postcode Lottery, WWF Belgium, Wyss Foundation

NKHOTAKOTA WILDLIFE RESERVE

1,794 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2015

PARK MANAGER : DAVID NANGOMA

MAJOR FUNDER People's Postcode Lottery, The Rob Walton Foundation, UBS Optimus Foundation, US DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), WWF Belgium, Wyss Foundation

Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve is Malawi's oldest and largest reserve consisting of dense woodland intersected by three major rivers leading to Lake Malawi © Naude Heunis



WILD DOG CONSERVATION IN LIWONDE – As part of the Wild Dog Range Expansion Project, Liwonde National Park received eight of the 14 dogs translocated from South Africa in July 2021; six went to Majete Wildlife Reserve. In its first two years, Liwonde’s pack experienced a few losses due to natural causes, at a rate to be expected, but also successfully raised two litters of pups. By 2022, the pack stood at 18 individuals. However, in November that year, the GPS collars on the adults went silent and after searching for the dogs, the monitoring team found the entire pack dead. Victims of crude poaching methods, the wild dogs had been indiscriminately poisoned.

Park management took immediate steps to prevent a recurrence of such incidents, including poisoning awareness refresher training for rangers and engagement with communities (where illegal resource harvesting and poaching were discussed), the police and judiciary. General conservation messages were shared to build better community understanding of conservation efforts in the park. Attended by representatives of the police and judiciary, the quarterly Joint Liaison Committee meetings also played a vital role in creating awareness among stakeholders of the work African Parks does and the importance of biodiversity conservation.

One year after the wild dog pack was lost, a poacher suspected of being involved in the incident was arrested inside Liwonde, close to where the poisoning occurred, and in possession of the same toxin that killed the dogs. With revised awareness campaigns in place, support from government and the communities, as well as funding secured from the German Postcode Lottery, it is hoped that another pack of wild dog will be reintroduced in 2024.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Monitoring of reintroduced species continued, with lion and cheetah cubs, as well as several black rhino calves, born during 2023. Two female cheetah from different reserves in South Africa were introduced into Liwonde and a coalition of three males was translocated to South Africa to help maintain genetic diversity. To improve species monitoring, five elephant, three cheetah and a lion were collared and three black rhino were fitted with Ceres satellite tags, their data aiding decisions regarding key species population management.

Poaching levels in Liwonde and illegal tree felling in Mangochi Forest Reserve remained relatively high. However, intensive protection measures and community engagement have helped to ensure no net population decrease of any species took place.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – A fish farming project was piloted where two fishponds were constructed and handed over to the communities to manage, benefitting 40 farmers and their families. This helps in diversifying livelihoods and in encouraging communities to adopt alternative and legal sources of protein. Start-up assistance included training and the initial provision of fingerlings and fish feed. The Spicy Farmers project was again negatively impacted by a cyclone in March, but over two tonnes of chillies were harvested by the end of 2023. In partnership with Nando’s, many farmers have started growing the brand’s proprietary cultivar of chilli and this is expected to bring in very good yields from 2024. Honey with Heart has signed contracts to supply several supermarket chains in Malawi, greatly helping to reduce a bottleneck that the park experienced in reselling honey bought from the beekeepers. Over five tonnes of honey was harvested this year. Education continued to be prioritised with 94 schools supported and 100 scholarships awarded. The target number of environmental education visits to the park by school children was exceeded by 62% with 4,865 children and 983 adult visitors. The Environmental Education Centre was rebuilt and will open in 2024 for overnight environmental education

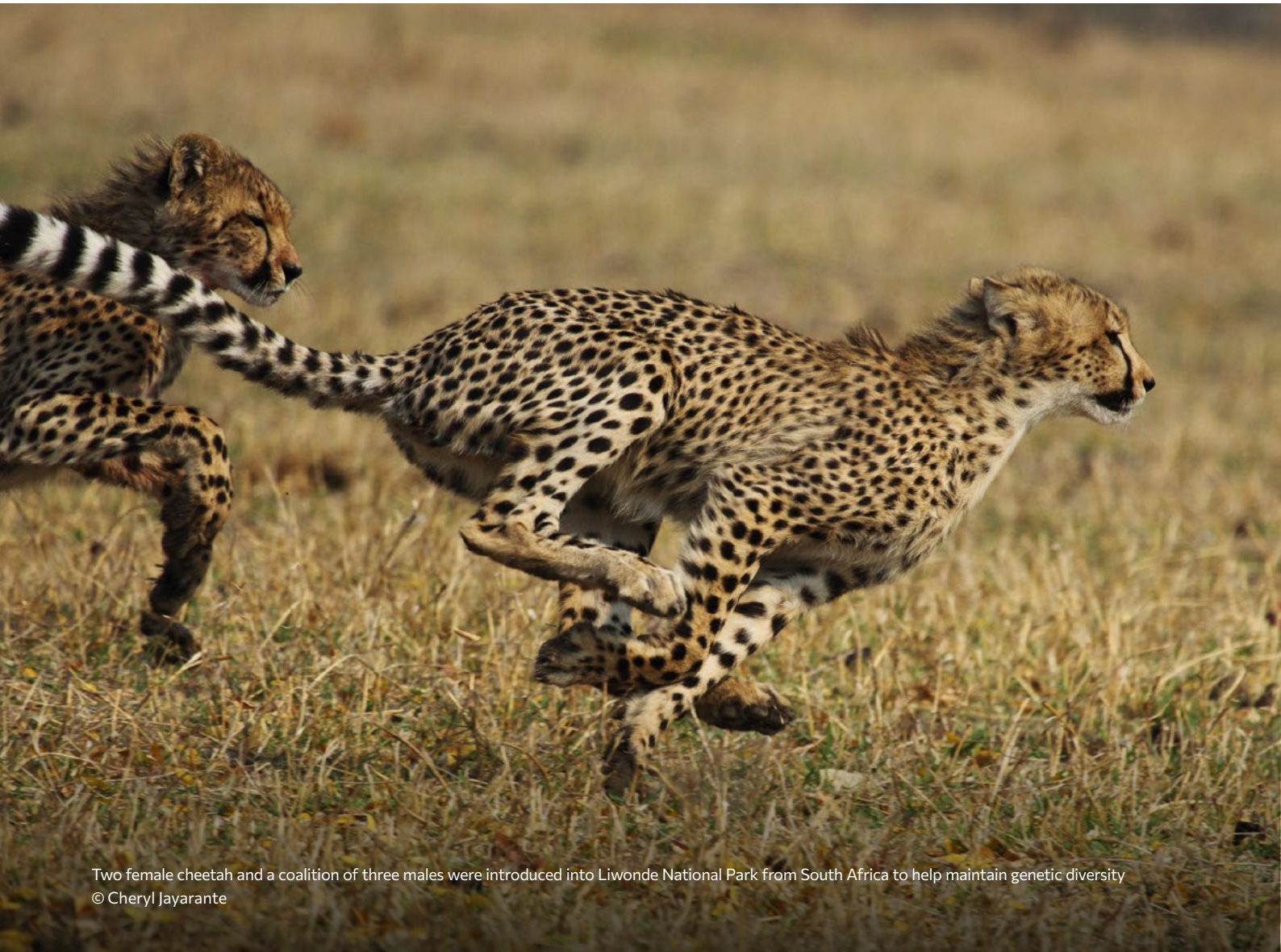
visits, giving children a real experience of being in the park. The Happy Readers Programme was rolled out to six more schools in the Mangochi District.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Liwonde visitor numbers surpassed those of 2022 by 10.8% indicating a steady increase, which contributed to an overall increase in the park’s gross revenue collection. A campsite, picnic site, viewing site and game viewing hide were opened during the year. In Mangochi Forest Reserve, a 4x4 track was developed leading to the historic Fort Mangochi. This will hopefully become a major tourist attraction for the area when tourist access to the reserve is formalised.



PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – Road maintenance and development continued in 2023, including the construction of drifts and culverts, to enable the use of more roads during the wet season. Three new ranger duplexes were built at Masanje Camp. The new Masuku ranger camp in Mangochi Forest Reserve, delayed in 2022 due to heavy rains, was completed. In March 2023, Cyclone Freddy caused significant damage to infrastructure, including roads and fences, and destroyed Koche Bridge, the main access to Mangochi. Once the waters receded, the bridge was rebuilt to a higher specification. In an effort to further reduce elephant breakouts and prevent crop damage, 30 km of ‘Kenya fence’ was constructed, within and parallel to the main boundary fence, in areas where breakouts had been occurring.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Basic Field Ranger training for 12 new rangers
- Conduct biennial aerial census
- Expand Chimwala Camp to accommodate more visitors
- Support community farmers’ first harvest of chilli cultivar for Nando’s
- Support over 100,000 children with Happy Readers and Reading Around the Reserve projects



Two female cheetah and a coalition of three males were introduced into Liwonde National Park from South Africa to help maintain genetic diversity
© Cheryl Jayarante

 1,634 community members involved in socio-economic initiatives	 320,382 kg of firewood sustainably harvested by communities in the park	 11,317 (43%) local tourist visitors
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CREATING A FUTURE FOR MAJETE – This year, we celebrated 20 years of operation in Majete Wildlife Reserve. This milestone gave us an opportunity to reflect on the successes and challenges encountered over two decades of reviving the reserve. While progress has been made, enhancing the resilience of local communities is an ongoing commitment, and managing wildlife within park boundaries to maintain species populations is a constant focus.

With over 12,000 large mammals now in the reserve, Majete’s success extends beyond its borders, supplying over 1,100 animals to help restore other Malawian parks since 2016. Today, Majete has emerged as a pioneer for large-scale wildlife reintroductions and is home to nearly 3,000 relocated animals from 17 species, including black rhino, elephant, lion, giraffe, cheetah and wild dog. To safeguard the park and gather crucial wildlife data, over 40 rangers and wildlife monitors have

been employed, 350 km of road network developed and a long-range communication network for wildlife and security tracking implemented. As a result, no rhino or elephant have been poached since their reintroduction, while a 144 km predator-proof fence, maintained by full-time fence technicians, has drastically minimised human-wildlife conflict.

Including local people in decision-making regarding Majete’s management has been vital to the park’s success, with 21 Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) serving as links between the park and local communities. To promote biodiversity awareness, 37 Wildlife Clubs have been created and around 2,500 children visit the reserve annually. Economic opportunities have improved, benefitting thousands of people, who have also been supported by education, healthcare facilities and a profit-sharing scheme in the growing tourism sector. Restoring Majete to what it is today is just the beginning. We are resolute in maintaining Majete as a haven for biodiversity and socio-economic development, through commitment to our government and community partners over the long term, for the benefit of Malawi’s people and wildlife.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Three new giraffe calves were born, bringing the total population

to 30, the largest population in Malawi. The black rhino population also grew, with four healthy calves born – Majete’s third generation of rhino. Twelve wild dog pups were born in May, bringing the population to 23 and prompting a decision to donate five to the Wild Dog Range Expansion Programme. Majete’s lion population is flourishing, with over 70 individuals. To ensure the population doesn’t outgrow the available resources, a decision was made, through consultation with the Malawi Government and species experts, to start a contraception programme to minimise the population growth rate – 11 females have received temporary contraception so far.

After the 2022 aerial survey was unable to produce an accurate number of elephant, a ground-based elephant monitoring programme was rolled out, using sighting reports and camera trap images to build a database. To date, approximately 250 elephant have been identified. Sixteen pangolins, either rescued from poachers or handed over by community members, were released into Majete. In the last two years, Majete has rescued about 50 pangolins, of which more than half were handed in by community members. To extend the park’s conservation influence beyond its borders, a community project to create awareness of protecting pangolins outside the park, where some have established territories, is planned for 2024.

Thanks to the introduction of the Specialist Investigations Unit in 2022, a notable decrease in illegal activity has been detected, with only nine animals poached. The focus of this team is on evidence collection, data analysis and reporting, as well as increased ranger presence and ongoing stakeholder engagement with communities.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – Human-wildlife incidents dropped to the lowest level in several years. Farmers experiencing challenges from bushpigs and baboons are being supported to find solutions that they can implement themselves.

The C-Quest stove project was rolled out, providing 23,000 fuel-efficient cookstoves to households

to reduce the reliance on charcoal in the region. Over 70,000 indigenous trees were planted in communities as part of a reforestation programme. Overall, 643 people benefitted from enterprise development initiatives, more than double those in 2022. Community beekeepers produced almost four tonnes of honey, up from three tonnes in 2022. Community freelance guides earned US\$ 5,805 overall for their guiding services. A total of 117 scholarships were awarded, 102 to secondary school students and 15 to university students. Majete provided seven workplace internships for Malawian students.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Tourism revenue increased by 49% since pre-Covid-19, generating US\$ 759,087 for the park and making Majete the most economically successful protected area in Malawi, an achievement recognised by the Malawi Tourism Council. Of the total visitors, over 8,000 were local. To keep up with this visitor demand, two new safari tents were built at Thawale, as well as a new day visitor site in the park.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – The 144 km predator-proof steel fence was completed after five years, replacing the wooden fence and greatly minimising human-wildlife conflict. Other construction included a dormitory at the Education Campsite for schoolchildren taking part in environmental education programmes, a new kitchen at Thawale, and renovation of several ranger and fence attendant outposts. Some 26 km of new roads were built, to facilitate fire management wildlife monitoring, and 403 km of existing roads were maintained.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- 10% increase in tourism revenue
- Build a bush camp at Pende/Pwadzi
- Produce seven tonnes of wild honey from community beekeepers
- Trial a community-led conservation initiative outside the park



Majete Wildlife Reserve is an important employer in the region, currently providing 176 Malawian nationals with permanent employment
© Matt Moon



20 years of African Parks-DNPW partnership



37,278 people benefitted from healthcare in 2023



US\$759,087 tourism revenue generated, 49% increase before Covid-19



ENSURING RESILIENCE THROUGH RESTORATION –

Since 2015, significant work has been done to restore Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve’s biodiversity – almost 500 elephant and 2,000 other animals were reintroduced between 2016 and 2017 with a further 800 animals of nine species in 2022. Today, the benefits of these efforts are being felt by both wildlife and people. In 2023, Nkhotakota continued its commitment to biodiversity conservation, community development and revenue generation,

marking a year of consolidation with both successes and challenges.

Substantial strides were made in conservation law enforcement resulting in no known key species being poached in 2023. However, the confiscation of 293 kg of poached bushmeat highlights the persistent threat of small-scale poaching. Sustainable enterprise initiatives in and around the reserve continued to support community livelihoods, with the implementation of five new enterprise portfolios, including beekeeping and chilli farming. Education development continued with US\$28,614 spent on additional scholarships and US\$8,984 on teachers’ salaries. Unfortunately, due to the country’s fuel scarcity, fewer school children visited the reserve for environmental education this year. Park revenue generation through tourism and local enterprise saw significant improvement, more than doubling the 2022 proceeds. Increased park entry



Nkhotakota is home to over 320 bird species including malachite kingfisher (*Corythornis cristatus*) © Tomasz Szpila

and concession fees contributed to this success alongside contributions from Livezi Bush Camp and the Youth Hostel.

The ongoing challenge of fence vandalism persisted, leading to increased human-wildlife conflict (HWC) incidents as wildlife was able to escape the reserve. Efforts to mitigate this problem continued with regular fence maintenance and community engagement to raise awareness of the risks of fence vandalism. Despite these constant challenges Nkhotakota’s dedication to its restoration remains steadfast.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Camera trap monitoring suggests that some key species populations, such as leopard and elephant, are on the increase showing that restoration efforts are paying off.

The conservation law enforcement team’s increased coverage of both long and short patrols, covering 56,030 km in the year, resulted in a significant reduction in incursions into the reserve. No key species were poached but the patrols found six elephant carcasses which resulted from natural causes. The number of illegal gold miners entering the reserve has dropped but this activity remains a challenge.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – Implementation of five enterprise portfolios continued, including beekeeping, chilli farming, dried mango processing, irrigation farming (to sustain vegetable crops in the dry season) and goat pass-on, in which 895 individuals were involved. Under the Resource Use Programme, the community has access to the reserve to harvest various natural resources including bamboo, palm fronds, mushrooms, flying termites and fruit. With the focus shifted to natural regeneration initiatives, 69,917 tree seedlings were planted.

A total of 133 students received scholarships, 20 at tertiary level and 113 in secondary schools. Eight teachers in eight schools were paid salaries and

1,277 students from 35 schools visited the reserve this year: the reduced number due to fuel scarcity and price increases. A total of 2,697 community members visited the park on environmental awareness raising visits. Aside from 358 community meetings, four District Council workshops were conducted, raising awareness around the need to collaborate in dealing with issues concerning wildlife protection.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Thanks to park entry fees (particularly from Rafiki Lodge), concession fee payments from Bua and Tongole lodges and general park activities and sales, revenue generation improved. Livezi Bush Camp and the Youth Hostel contributed to revenue generation and it is hoped that Livezi will generate the bulk of revenue in 2024. A guidebook for Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve was developed and printed to assist tourists in navigating the reserve and identify its natural assets.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – Two new roads were opened – a 22 km road to Likoa ranger camp and a 21 km road from Chipala ranger camp to Dwangwa River – to create easier access to remote areas. A total of 445 km of road infrastructure was maintained in the reserve and an additional 55 km within the community areas. Two ranger duplex houses were completed at Likoa, improving patrol efficiency. A new fit-for-purpose conservation law enforcement complex, including the control room and an investigations room, was built at the headquarters. A new entrance gate to the reserve was erected.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Obtain mandate to manage the Lower Bua River section
- Construct Navunde Pass tourist spot
- Ensure Livezi Bush Camp is fully operational
- Ensure zero elephant poaching and prevent fence vandalism
- Harvest and sell seven tonnes of honey

 259 beehives installed	 38 illegal firearms and 210 ammunitions confiscated	 79,050 indigenous trees planted
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MOZAMBIQUE

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

National Administration of Conservation Areas (ANAC)



In December 2017, African Parks signed a 25-year co-management agreement with Mozambique's National Administration of Conservation Areas (ANAC), aiming to restore, develop, and manage Bazaruto Archipelago National Park and revitalise it as one of the leading and most productive marine protected areas in East Africa. Pejul Pedro Sebastião Calenga is the current Director General of ANAC.

BAZARUTO ARCHIPELAGO NATIONAL PARK

1,430 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2017

PARK MANAGER : ARMANDO GUENHA

MAJOR FUNDERS Wyss Foundation



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ENHANCES MARINE CONSERVATION

– As one of the most critical marine sanctuaries in the Indian Ocean, Bazaruto is home to megafauna such as dolphin, shark, whale, manta ray, turtle and the last viable dugong population on the East African coast. As such, vital conservation efforts in protecting this ecologically and culturally important population are ongoing. In 2022, through collaborative research work coordinated by park management, the dugong was relisted from ‘Vulnerable’ on the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List to ‘Critically Endangered’, giving it the highest level of global protection. Regular surveys over the past three years have indicated a stable population of a few hundred dugong, with a healthy composition of adults and juveniles.

Occurring mostly in the tropical coastal waters of the Indian and western Pacific Oceans, dugong rely on

seagrass meadows for their survival and their grazing supports healthy underwater habitats and other species. This in turn supports fishery enterprises, economic opportunities and food security of coastal communities. However, the ongoing threat from marine pollution, unsustainable fishing, the use of gill nets, in which dugong are entangled and drowned, as well as seine nets, which destroy the sea grass fields, is putting significant pressure on the survival of species in Bazaruto. Development and commercial activities along the coast compound these threats by impacting sensitive marine habitats.

By partnering with local communities, park management aims to better understand the needs of locals and support local economies to alleviate pressure from unsustainable fisheries on marine biodiversity. Assisted by effective conservation law enforcement, fishing is being monitored and, through improved boundary control and growing respect for marine park boundaries from positive community engagement, illegal fishing in the park has been significantly reduced in recent years. Developing sustainable tourism initiatives is simultaneously contributing to job creation and local revenue streams are being managed to retain the park’s ecological integrity. These efforts are all contributing to maintaining a healthy marine

biodiversity in Bazaruto and are testament to the significance of inclusive community development to help safeguard key megafauna such as the dugong.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Eight aerial surveys were completed, counting over 100 dugong as well as numerous other key species like whale, dolphin, shark and manta ray. Two dead dugong were found in December outside the park’s boundaries in suspected poaching incidents. A third unconfirmed report of one dugong carcass in a gill net outside the park was also registered in October. This trend is deeply concerning as an increase in anthropogenically induced dugong mortality outside the protected area could be sufficient to tip the population into long-term decline. To expand the dugong protection area, a ranger outpost has been built at Nhamabue in the north west of the park, which will be manned by park rangers, local government police and the navy, who will patrol this area where the highest numbers of dugong have been sighted. In addition, 20 new rangers graduated from the Basic Field Ranger course, augmenting park protection measures and bringing the team to 69 people.

Seven satellite tags were deployed onto three different turtle species with results indicating that all three species remained resident within the park surroundings. Participatory spatial mapping of the park and surrounding seascape was carried out, in consultation with island and mainland communities, to understand areas of importance for fishing and natural resource utilisation. A reef carrying capacity assessment provided management with guidelines on the optimal number of divers or snorkellers on a site at any one time to minimise disturbance.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – In support of key skills development programme for young people, a community training centre was built on Bazaruto Island providing a venue for activities and a bakery where graduates of the hospitality programme run a business to supply bread to the community. The five conservation agriculture groups received training in natural pesticide production, food production and nutrition. A further 18 people were trained in

the production of high-quality handcrafts made of natural material from the islands.

Seventeen schools were supported and 87 scholarships awarded. Two new environmental clubs were created in Inhassoro bringing the number to eight. Some 167 tonnes of refuse were removed from the islands, with 80% recycled via a recycling company and the manufacture of paving blocks at park headquarters. Paving block machines were received and operators trained in their use. To date, 43,000 paving blocks have been produced from collected refuse.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Bazaruto generated a record annual income of \$US579,835 of which 16% went directly to island communities for their own use and development. Rigorous park compliance checks were implemented, ensuring that 100% of new tourism development adheres to park regulations. A comprehensive Tourism Development Plan was completed. Terms of Reference for the selection process of new island tourism operators were prepared.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – The epicentre for park operations, Chizungune Post, was completed, marking a significant milestone in the park’s infrastructure development. Construction of the Mupale Training Centre on Bazaruto Island progressed well. It will become a training hub for conservation rangers not only from the park but also other Mozambican conservation areas as well. Construction of the permanent operational offices in Vilankulo continued.

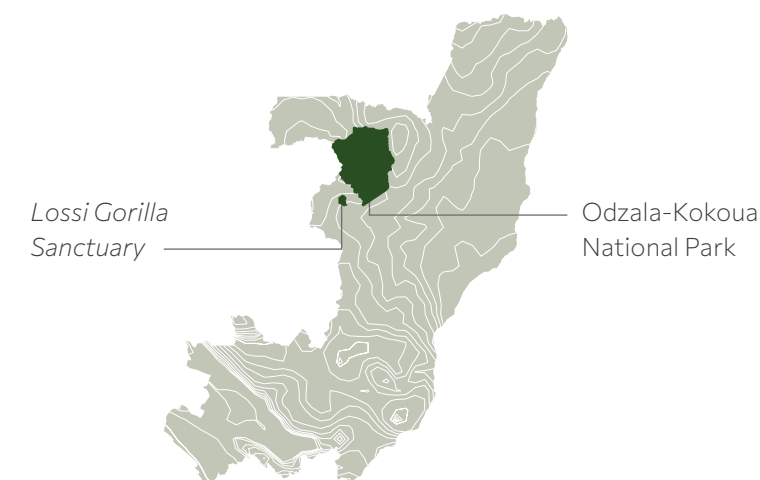
OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Deploy further satellite tags on turtles and dugong
- Conduct survey on the status of western Indian Ocean humpback dolphin
- Begin operating Nhamabue outpost and patrolling the Save River basin
- Focus on improving girls’ education on the islands



East Africa's last viable population of Critically Endangered dugong (*Dugong dugon*) exists in Bazaruto © Mia Stawinski

 90% of East African dugong population under protection	 17 hectares cleared of exotic plants and 766 indigenous trees planted	 224 full-time employees , of which 221 are nationals
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REPUBLIC OF CONGO

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

Ministry of Forest Economy, Sustainable Development and Environment



The Ministry of Forest Economy executes national policy regarding sustainable development, forest economy, and the environment. In 2010, African Parks signed its first public private management agreement with the ministry for Odzala-Kokoua National Park. In 2020, an amendment to the agreement was signed with the minister, Madame Rosalie Matondo, adding the Lossi Gorilla Sanctuary to the mandate with Odzala-Kokoua-Lossi Foundation as the management entity. Under the ministry, African Parks works with the Congolese Agency for Wildlife and Protected Areas (ACFAP in French), which is represented by its Director General, Jean Bosco Nganongo.

ODZALA-KOKOUA NATIONAL PARK

13,867 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2010

Lossi Gorilla Sanctuary: 380 km²

PARK MANAGER : JONAS ERIKSSON

MAJOR FUNDERS DOB Ecology, Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF), European Union, Legacy Landscapes Fund, Stichting Natura Africae, The Rob Walton Foundation, US DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT – In 2010, Odzala implemented a key aspect of its management strategy by establishing governance groups called Associations de Surveillance et de Développement Durable (ASDDs). Four ASDD members, democratically elected from a selection of community members, including a village elder, sage, women’s representative, indigenous representative and youth representative, play a crucial role in the park’s human-wildlife coexistence and community development projects.

Through the ASDD of each village, the park is able to communicate, develop and implement all projects and communities can contribute to the park’s human-wildlife coexistence, participatory mapping, village development planning and projects. With these initiatives, communities define boundaries, agricultural areas, hunting zones, and infrastructural needs, fostering a comprehensive

understanding of community challenges and aspirations. Recognising community needs enables park management to implement targeted livelihood interventions such as installing elephant trenches and fencing in agrarian communities facing wildlife damage. Infrastructure projects, like boreholes, are also designed with ASDD collaboration, empowering communities through the community development fund. In addition, providing access to natural resources through park zoning, with projects such as women’s traditional fishing within the park’s core zone, ensures communities benefit from the natural resource protection offered by the park. ASDDs also play a significant role in park-community engagement. In addition, to help gain a better understanding of the social context of indigenous people around Odzala, reduce the risk of human rights abuses and ensure use-rights are protected, a specialist Baka anthropologist has been contracted to develop and improve engagement with the local Baka community.

ASDDs also play a significant role in park-community engagement, covering topics from education and healthcare, to employment, human rights, and wildlife law. Odzala’s education and healthcare programmes benefit over 6,000 people annually. As a major local employer, the park collaborates with ASDDs and community representatives for recruitment, resulting in 65% of the park’s staff coming from the surrounding

areas and 97% being national. Recognising the importance of wildlife laws and community rights, Odzala partners with the Congolese NGO Cercle des Droits de l’Homme et de Développement (CDHD). The CDHD conducts regular missions across the park periphery engaging communities on national wildlife laws and their rights. This collaboration ensures continuous and open dialogue on human rights between the park and local residents, reinforcing a multifaceted approach to community engagement.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Two habitat plots were established in swamp forest and open marantaceae forest respectively. Habitat plots comprise several 1 km² areas across different habitat types including savannah, forest, marantaceae and bais. These microplots allow for intense levels of research that cannot be conducted at a macro scale; combined, they should reflect the real state of the ecosystem. The triennial forest transect and human impact survey was replicated in the neighbouring forestry concession IFO Ngombé, a key conservation area almost equal in size to the park and host to a significant gorilla population. The survey was done in partnership with IFO Ngombé and Nature+.

In park protection efforts Odzala’s Information Analysis (IA) unit contributed to the confiscation of 174 kg of ivory, 38 kg of pangolin scales and the removal of 11 AK-47s, typically used for elephant poaching.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – Human-wildlife conflict (HWC) mitigation mechanisms have been trialled in Odzala for several years, with mixed success. For example, chilli fences and intervention teams as a crop protection strategy required significant human effort, so a system of heavy barriers for long-term crop protection was adopted; this includes the Mbomo electric fence and a series of 20 ha community agriculture plots surrounded by a two-metre wide trench. While the number of HWC incidents remained the same as in previous years, those involving elephant declined from 91% in 2022 to 77% in 2023. Monitoring and data collection will continue to determine if this trend is a valid observation. In 2022, as part of the goal of sustainable access to natural resources, Odzala signed the Mambili Fishing Protocol, allowing fishing within the eco-development zone of the

park’s largest river. Although a long-accepted practice, a protocol for the cultural practice of women’s pond fishing was also established as a trial project in 2023, formally enabling 57 women to fish for several weeks in the park’s core zone.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Camp Imbalanga completed its first fully operational year, meeting both its annual bed-night and revenue targets. 2023 was the first year in Odzala’s history where notable progress has been made towards the long-term objective of generating 15-20% of the park’s budget via tourism, with US\$167,452 generated this year.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – The plan to open the main access road to Lossi Gorilla Sanctuary was modified, following community consultations, to include a minor extension requested by the communities for easier access to a river for fishing and water. Local labour cut back the forest before machinery was brought in to finalise the roadwork, which is ongoing.


A new Savannah ULM replaced the previous aircraft and will be used in research and conservation law enforcement patrols. A solar system was installed at park HQ significantly reducing generator use and shifting the park away from fossil fuels to renewable and reliable energy. The control room was upgraded to become a fully functional centre of operations, with an increased number of operators collecting real-time data via EarthRanger, which then facilitates more effective coordination of field teams as well as increasing reactivity and operational safety.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Land use development and zoning for 15 villages
- Maintain elephant poaching at less than 0.25% of the estimated population
- Ensure Camp Imbalanga generates over US\$350,000 in revenue
- Build staff capacity to strengthen the complaints mechanism procedures to have no unresolved grievances by year-end
- Execute the MoU with IFO Ngombe



In Odzala, communities have access to natural resources such as traditional fishing within the park’s core zone © Frank Petersens

 14 active elephant collars	 1,124 sponsored children visited the park	 5,173 people treated through park medical care
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Positive growth has been recorded for the Masai giraffe (*Giraffa tippelskirchi*) population in Akagera National Park © Drew Bantlin

Akagera National Park



Nyungwe National Park

RWANDA

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

Rwanda Development Board (RDB)



The Rwanda Development Board (RDB) is the government agency responsible for managing Rwanda's national parks and protected areas. Its mission is to transform and develop Rwanda's economy by enabling its private-sector growth. African Parks began its work with the RDB in Akagera National Park in 2010 and in Nyungwe National Park in 2020. In both agreements, African Parks recognises RDB CEO, Francis Gatare, and senior management for their unwavering support of Akagera and Nyungwe.

AKAGERA NATIONAL PARK

1,120 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2010

PARK MANAGER : LADIS NDAHIRIWE

MAJOR FUNDERS Howard G. Buffett Foundation

NYUNGWE NATIONAL PARK

1,019 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2020

PARK MANAGER : PROTAIS NIYIGABA

MAJOR FUNDERS Hempel Foundation, Stichting Natura Africae, Wyss Foundation



CREATING HOLISTIC SUSTAINABILITY – With each year since 2010, when African Parks first signed a management partnership for Akagera National Park, the park has moved closer to achieving complete financial sustainability, becoming a true example of what can be achieved through effective management of protected areas in partnership with government and communities. 2023 saw significant progress in the park’s revenue generation, ending the year 92% self-sustaining.

Akagera’s contribution to the Rwanda Tourism Revenue Sharing (TRS) scheme this year exceeded US\$316,000, directly supporting Rwandan citizens. This scheme is a government financial vehicle that ensures tourism revenue benefits communities around the park by funding infrastructure and micro-businesses. 2023 was Akagera’s best year yet for tourism with over 54,000 park visitors, of which 3,000 were community visitors, while 43% of paying

guests were Rwandan citizens. Akagera continues to play a pivotal role in the selection and management of projects that receive TRS funding and hosted the project selection meeting for 2023/2024 in November. All three districts bordering the park, as well as the Rwanda Development Board, were represented. Twenty-six projects, with a total value of US\$650,000, were selected for TRS support. The projects include infrastructure, such as selling points and utilities connections, as well as funding community cooperatives to start or scale up their own businesses.

Earlier in the year, a World Bank workshop was organised in Akagera, where management representatives from protected areas across Africa learnt about the park as an example of effective co-management of protected areas. The workshop also provided an opportunity to experience first-hand the practical application of African Parks’ model. With the goal of achieving 100% self-sustainability by 2025 Akagera is poised, through local enterprise projects and tourism, which contribute to both biodiversity conservation and community development, to become the first fully self-sufficient park under African Parks’ management.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Akagera’s black and white rhino as well as its lion populations

continued to grow. A survey in collaboration with the Giraffe Conservation Foundation estimated 110 giraffe in the park, indicating positive population growth since the aerial survey in 2013 observed 54. Akagera also worked with a number of global universities and conservation organisations to deepen understanding of the park’s complex ecosystems through surveys and workshops, to which Rwandan and African students were invited for conservation capacity building.

Thirty new rangers were recruited including Akagera’s first five female rangers. Basic and refresher training courses and dog-handling training for the K9 Unit, with Dogs 4 Wildlife, took place. Poaching related statistics for Akagera remain low as effective conservation law enforcement continues.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – Akagera’s relationship with communities continues to strengthen through positive engagement, with 57% of the 172 community meetings, reaching nearly 8,000 people, requested and organised by the communities. Over 2,000 students and 200 teachers from the communities visited the park, an increase over previous years due the expansion of the programme to provide free entry to 510 students from other districts. The 32 Eco-Clubs held 40 events organised by the students with facilitation from the park. These included performances and volunteering such as refuse collection. A new Community Library was opened and stocked with books from Book Aid International.

The park continued to build on the commercial success of fisheries and beekeeping. Gishanda Fish Farm supplied 248,000 fingerlings to restock the lakes of five cooperatives. Training in sustainable harvesting took place and by year-end 11,121 kg of tilapia had been harvested, with one cooperative harvesting 10,033 kg of the total, effectively doubling its pre-restocking off-takes. This co-op operates in an area with a significant hippo population and is an advocate for mitigation measures to avoid human-wildlife conflict and promote coexistence, as it appreciates the contribution hippo make to

the health of the waterway and consequent success in its fish off-takes. Other training included catfish farming at Gishanda and general management and business-related skills aimed at achieving business sustainability and independence from the park. To enhance the income earning potential of honey, and involve additional community members, training took place to equip beekeepers with skills to increase hive colonisation rates and honey production.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Akagera’s total revenue for the year, including fisheries and Gishanda income, was over US\$4.8 million. After commercial expenses, the net revenue made the park 92% self-sufficient against its entire budget for the year. The park enjoyed an increased volume of visitors (international visitors up by 32% and Rwandan citizens by 25%), and continued to improve the guest experience, including building a new road in the popular Nyamwashama area. Training by the Field Guides Association of Southern Africa (FGASA) of the Community Freelance Guides enhanced their ecological knowledge and guest management skills.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – Construction of the Conservation and Research offices and upgrades to Ruzizi Tented Lodge were completed. The generator at Pêcherie, which powers the water supply from the lake to park HQ, was replaced with more eco-friendly mains and solar power, saving the park US\$1,000 a month in fuel costs. The use of e-bikes was trialled for conservation law enforcement and rhino tracking activities, with positive outcomes including a reduction in fuel costs.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Upgrade Karengwe Bush Camp
- Achieve S Mark certification for honey production and processing
- Ensure Gishanda Fish Farm becomes sustainably profitable
- Achieve self-sustainability
- Manage lion population through genome sequencing



92% financial sustainability



29,195 indigenous trees planted at 21 sites covering 22 Ha



2,056 sponsored children visited the park



AN ENDORSEMENT FOR NATURE – Nyungwe National Park covers 1,019 km² of dense Afromontane forests and is the largest expanse of forest in Rwanda. Containing vital natural habitats for species found nowhere else in the world, such as the globally threatened eastern chimpanzee, owl-faced monkey and the Critically Endangered Hill’s horseshoe bat, it is home to over 1,100 recorded plant species, 345 bird species and 85 known mammal species (including 13 of Africa’s primates).

UNESCO declared Nyungwe a World Heritage Site this year, highlighting it as a place of outstanding

universal value with significant biological diversity and vital ecological and biological processes. This designation is a step towards ensuring the long-term conservation of this important rainforest in central Africa. This endorsement reinforces the sense of pride and ownership Rwandans have for their national parks.

Over the past three years park management teams have focused their efforts on the park’s long-term sustainability through sound conservation, sustainable revenue-generating activities and ongoing community engagement to eliminate threats to the park. A programme which is proving successful is the hiring and training, from local communities, of eco-rangers who were formerly illegal park resource users. Ninety-two eco-rangers work with park rangers to help remove poachers’ snares from the forest each year. Furthermore, in efforts to deepen understanding through research and monitoring, ongoing data collection is providing insights to guide the conservation management methods most effective for Nyungwe’s ecosystem functioning.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Eighty new camera traps were set up and 37 monitoring staff trained on data collection methodologies and techniques. The team continued tree phenology with 2,555 trees belonging to 67 species monitored. Behavioural data on habituated primates was collected on three chimpanzee groups and three colobus monkey groups through EarthRanger. In collaboration with Bat Conservation International and the Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association, roosting sites of the Critically Endangered Hill’s horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus hilli*) and the Cameroon leaf-nosed bat (*Doryrhina camerunensis*) were monitored. Road-use impact data along the 55 km Kitabi-Gisakura tarmac road indicated that 225 animals were killed by vehicles and there were 69 vehicle accidents. The data will be used to advocate for further road-use regulation measures, such as speed humps or rumble strips, and the reduction of the speed limit.

The number of removed snares increased by approximately 8%, thanks to improved patrol efforts leading to higher detection rates of snares and carcasses. All rangers attended refresher training, six primate trackers completed one month of training in Tanzania (Gombe National Park) and four law enforcement staff were sent to Malawi (Liwonde National Park) for a one-week learning exchange visit.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – In total, 17,883 people attended 171 community environmental awareness meetings, while the Colobus Cup football competition reached 87,761 participants. Overall, 968 children from school environmental clubs and 389 local leaders visited Nyungwe, while 6,034 students are members of 85 wildlife clubs.

Four new partner cooperatives were created, bringing the total to 14 cooperatives across the five districts surrounding the park, each earning or generating income. Cyamudongo Community Tourism Promotion Cooperative started earning income from the coffee shop and accommodation. The community piggery project produced 14 piglets that will add value as they grow. The remaining two cooperative projects (fish and mushroom farming) are anticipated to begin earning

income in 2024. A total of 268 human-wildlife conflict cases were assessed, with compensation facilitated by the Special Guarantee Fund of Rwanda.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – A total of 22,764 guests (including 968 non-paying educational visitors), comprised of 31% Rwandans and 55% internationals, visited the park, a 5% increase since 2022. Two campsites were completed and are currently operational along the Uwinka-Kamiranzovu-Gisakura three-day walk. Known as the Cyinzobe Trail, it has been ranked as one of the best African destinations to visit in 2024. Nyungwe acquired the non-objection from the Ministry of Environment and Environmental Impact Assessment certificate for the construction of the first park-owned lodge (Munazi Eco-Lodge), planned to open in 2024, but the construction permit is still pending. A team of 21 community freelance guides now operate within the park’s tourism structure.




PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – The park’s operational work, such as infrastructure construction, road and trail maintenance provided employment to more than 1,203 community members (casual labour through cooperatives) and over 286 local staff members in permanent park roles. The construction of the new park headquarters (HQ), now in a better location at Gisakura, closer to most tourism operations and relatively equidistant to all parts of the park, made good progress. Complete relocation is expected by October 2024. There were delays in construction of two main assets – the zipline and Munazi Eco-Lodge – due to slow and complex construction permit acquisition processes (involving multiple stakeholders) and tender processes for the right supplier of the zipline.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Publish results of 2023 biennial park-wide mammal census
- Complete construction and relocate to new HQ
- Open Munazi Eco-Lodge and complete Nyungwe’s first zipline

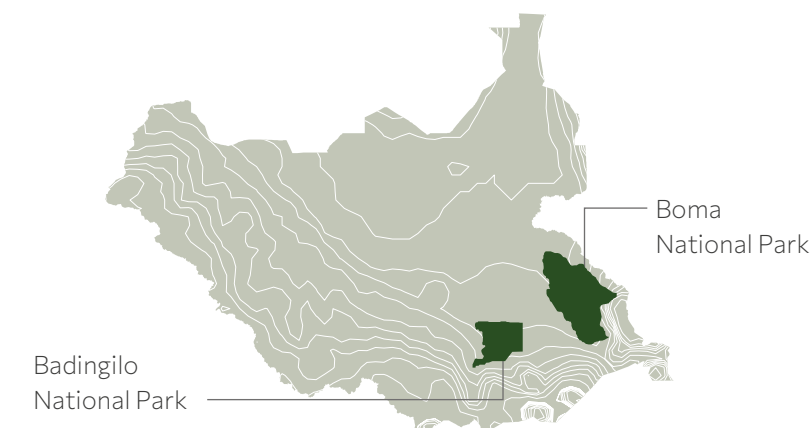


A mushroom farming community project, funded by Nyungwe National Park, produces up to 60 kg of mushroom for retail every day
© Gael Ruboneka Vande Weghe

 11,259 snares removed from the park	 92 previously illegal resource users turned eco-rangers	 968 sponsored children visited the park
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People from ethnic groups in South Sudan's Boma-Badingilo-Jonglei landscape, including the Jie community, rely on the environment and wildlife for their livelihoods and traditions © Marcus Westberg



SOUTH SUDAN

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

Ministry of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism (MWCT)



In August 2022, the Government of South Sudan signed a 10-year renewable management agreement with African Parks for Boma and Badingilo national parks and Jonglei Landscape (the proposed extension zones of the two national parks and wildlife corridors), covering an area of over 12 million hectares. With this commitment, the South Sudanese Government has ensured the long-term protection of these vital ecosystems benefitting both people and wildlife. This partnership is facilitated by the Ministry of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism (MWCT), through the South Sudan Wildlife Service (SSWS), the legal authority under the ministry responsible for wildlife and protected area management in South Sudan. His Excellency Rizik Zakaria Hassan is the Minister of the MWCT.

BADINGILO NATIONAL PARK

8,935 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2022

PARK MANAGER : DAVE SIMPSON

MAJOR FUNDERS Edith McBean, Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF), Fondation Segré, Hempel Foundation, Rainforest Trust, Wildlife Conservation Network's Lion Recovery Fund (LRF), Wyss Foundation

BOMA NATIONAL PARK

19,757 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2022

PARK MANAGER : DAVE SIMPSON

MAJOR FUNDERS Edith McBean, Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF), Fondation Segré, Hempel Foundation, Rainforest Trust, Wildlife Conservation Network's Lion Recovery Fund (LRF), Wyss Foundation



UNDERSTANDING CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH SUDAN – The first full year of operations in the Boma-Badingilo landscape was focused on finding ways of working in a new and complex country, learning how communities use the landscape, understanding its wildlife, and developing key infrastructure. Engaging with communities to develop positive relationships by building positive relationships with 17 different ethnic groups was a priority for the park teams. With longstanding ethnic tensions between certain groups, it is a challenge grasping the nuances of community relationships and how people interact with one another, as well as their relationship with the landscape and its wildlife.

To gain insight into the extent, movement and variety of wildlife across the vast area, a mass collaring operation and aerial survey was undertaken over

the year. In the collaring exercise, 119 animals of 12 species were collared in March-April and constant monitoring continues to generate a greater understanding of their movement and use of the land in response to rainfall and people. The collared species included white-eared kob, tiang, reedbucks, Mongalla gazelle, elephant, lion, cheetah, eland, oryx, Bright’s gazelle, buffalo and giraffe.

The aerial survey, the first systematic aerial assessment of wildlife, livestock and human activity in this landscape since 2010, covered over 120,000 km². The results were based on observer counts as well as over 350,000 photographs taken from the aircraft, a portion of which were analysed by a team of five graduates from the University of Juba who counted the wildlife numbers. The data revealed antelope numbers far greater than previously thought. The total number came to approximately six million antelope (including white-eared kob, tiang, Mongalla gazelle and Bohor reedbucks), indicating that the Boma-Badingilo-Jonglei landscape contains the largest population of migratory antelope on Earth.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – In addition to the estimates above, the systematic reconnaissance flight (SRF) survey covered a historical review of all existing

data from previous aerial surveys and surveillance. Comparison with aerial survey results of 2007 and 2010 indicate that the white-eared kob population has increased, while other species have remained relatively stable or declined. Comparisons with surveys done in the 1980s show that most sedentary species, which need year-round access to water as they are not migratory, have seen catastrophic declines. Camera traps were also set up near Badingilo HQ to inventory animals; species seen include honey badger, serval, genet, and common duiker. African wild dog were observed in the landscape from the air at the end of December. With the last confirmed sighting having been in 2015, it is exciting to confirm their presence again and the group of 14 individuals will be continuously monitored with the aim of collaring one in 2024.

Basic Field Ranger training took place with 14 rangers graduating in Badingilo and 16 in Boma. A further 33 security guards were trained for base security at each park’s headquarters. A landscape control room in Juba was set up and a team of six trained on the use of EarthRanger, Spidertracks and communications devices.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – Through consistent engagement with national government, local authorities, and community leaders, park teams are developing conservation strategies that include continued access for communities to wildlife resources. University of Juba graduates surveyed 74 villages, providing a valuable starting point for land-use planning and further community engagement efforts. Aerial and ground surveys of cattle camps in and around Boma helped create a baseline of the human footprint inside the park and in implementing a transhumance programme across the Boma-Badingilo landscape.

Four TANGO (Transhumance Sensitisation Officers) teams were employed and visited villages in the areas around Lafon and Otallo to increase conservation awareness among communities. To enhance sustainable enterprise development, vegetable gardens have been created in various villages to supply the park camps with local produce.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Although there is a long way to go before commercial tourism takes hold, it is the goal of all partners to develop this offering. During the collaring exercise two groups of visitors, comprising partners and donors, were hosted by the park team. Despite the remote locations and limited infrastructure, which pose many logistical challenges, the visit was a success and showed what is possible for future visits.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT – In Boma, accommodation was improved, and a hangar built, at the existing headquarters and camp at Nyat. Otallo Camp was developed to receive staff and visitors. In Badingilo, Lafon and Bala camps underwent refurbishment and a hangar was constructed. A headquarters site was selected in Badingilo and construction began, including an airstrip, two hangars, a borehole, a solar system and tented accommodation. Due to challenging terrain ground access across the landscape, airstrips were reopened and five aircraft procured to enable surveillance and logistics.

Key positions were filled to build up teams in both parks and a board was formed for African Parks South Sudan. A workshop was held in Juba for the development of the Long-Term Sustainability Strategy for the Boma-Badingilo landscape, attended by much of the African Parks South Sudan team, senior management and members of the South Sudanese Ministry of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Collar up to 106 additional animals and conduct an aerial survey to include the Sudd wetlands
- Develop a management strategy for remaining elephant, giraffe and buffalo populations
- Complete Phase I of Badingilo HQ construction
- Complete stakeholder mapping and begin socio-economic baseline assessment for a draft Land Use Plan
- Host up to four tourist groups during and after the 2024 collaring operation

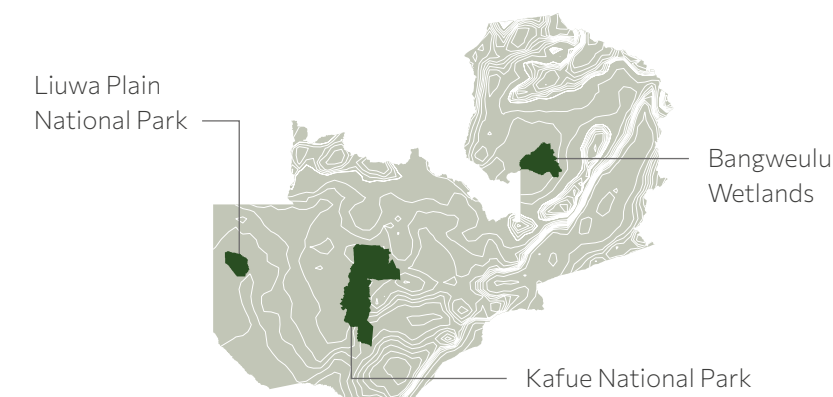


After experiencing this elephant up close at the Boma and Badingilo collaring operation, these Kassangor community elders and their communities have committed to supporting conservation efforts of the species © Marcus Westberg

 126 animals of 12 species collared for monitoring	 17 ethnic groups engaged	 12 Echo and TANGO team members trained in community engagement
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Liuwa Plain National Park has one of the longest conservation histories in Africa, dating back to the 19th century when the King of Barotseland appointed his people custodians of the land © Scott Ramsay



ZAMBIA

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

Zambian Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW)



The Zambian Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW), under the Ministry of Tourism, is focused on protecting and conserving Zambia's wildlife estates while enhancing the quality of life among communities and maintaining healthy biodiversity. African Parks commenced its work with the DNPW in Liuwa Plain National Park in 2003 and in the Bangweulu Wetlands in 2008. Mr Dominic L. Chiinda is the Director of Department of National Parks and Wildlife.

BANGWEULU WETLANDS

6,645 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2008

PARK MANAGER : ANDREW CHOMBA

PARTNERS Zambian Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) & the Six Community Resource Boards

KAFUE NATIONAL PARK

22,480 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2022

PARK MANAGER : CRAIG REID

MAJOR FUNDERS Dutch Postcode Lottery, Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF), Stichting Nieuwgeluk Philosophy, The Wildcat Foundation, US DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), Wyss Foundation
PARTNER Zambian Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW)

LIUWA PLAIN NATIONAL PARK

3,369 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2003

PARK MANAGER : DEON JOUBERT

MAJOR FUNDERS Stichting Natura Africae, WWF Belgium
PARTNERS Zambian Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) and the Barotse Royal Establishment (BRE)



PROTECTING BANGWEULU'S SHOEBILL CREATES LASTING BENEFITS

– To help preserve the wetlands of Bangweulu, park management works with six community chiefdoms that comprise the project area to sustainably manage resources in the park such as fisheries, beekeeping and lechwe harvesting. This in turn supports a system where communities are the stewards for the natural resources found in the area.

To reach community members, who otherwise don't have access to information about the importance of wetland conservation, a species-specific conservation focus on the Shoebill Nest Protection Programme is creating an effective tool to help address a variety of biodiversity issues such as fire, maintaining healthy populations of indigenous flora and fauna, and the value of living alongside wildlife. The educational value of the programme has been substantial with over 1,500 people reached through awareness sessions. Coupled

with open discussions between community members and park management teams, a deeper understanding of the communities' perspectives and concerns has also been developed. In addition, community members are employed as guardians to protect the shoebill on a 24-hour basis during peak nesting season between June and November. This year 26 community members were employed for up to six months at a time to look after 13 nests and their inhabitants.

Over the past two years, 12 shoebill chicks have been rescued and brought into the captive rearing facility for rehabilitation before being fitted with GPS devices and released. Unfortunately, four did not survive, three of which were attacked by red ants and, although treated, the shock was too great and all died. From the challenges overcome and lessons learnt over the past two years, the shoebill rehabilitation programme has not only benefitted shoebill conservation, giving the population a real chance at expanding, it is also creating a lasting positive impact on the people who depend on the park's healthy ecosystems.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Camera trap footage and other observations of Bangweulu's large hyaena population identified 45 dens, far more than previously found. Sadly, Mwansa, the cheetah female, was killed in August and, subsequently, neither of her cubs

survived. A more detailed risk assessment is required to inform the continuation of the cheetah reintroduction strategy. A bird ringing project, undertaken by researchers from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, banded 72 individuals of 20 species, providing hands-on experience and training to the shoebill team and tourism department bird guides on waterbird physiology, taxonomy and mist net ringing techniques.

In biodiversity protection efforts, a specialist law enforcement data analyst conducted a ten-day training course with the investigation team covering data collection, conflict avoidance and other areas of concern. Additional key staff, and a new operational control centre built at Nkondo, enhanced overall conservation law enforcement.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – The six Community Resource Boards (CRBs) received financial and leadership training in collaboration with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW), as well as continued guidance on the allocation of the Community Development Fund – money allocated to the CRBs for community projects – to ensure that projects are selected which will benefit the communities. In addition, the DNPW conducted an extensive consultation process with all stakeholders in the Bangweulu General Management Area (GMA) to develop the Bangweulu General Management Plan, which guides the overall management of the GMA and which was signed by all six chiefdoms in November.

New youth groups were formed to further outreach on reproductive health, supported by the Charlize Theron Africa Outreach Programme. Each group received peer educator training from the Ministry of Health, but will require further guidance and support as the importance of family planning is emphasised in fast-growing communities. A selection of Muwele Primary School students took part in two Global Birding Big Days in the swamps. The impact of this experience highlights the importance of exposing local children to the landscapes in which they live. Small events such as wildlife art competitions and excursions to the swamps to view lechwe and shoebill contributed to vital environmental education and outreach.

To further natural product utilisation in the communities and ensure sustainable harvesting, a partnership was formed with CIFOR-ICRAF (Centre for International Forestry Research & World Agroforestry) to work on developing value chains for resources such as mushrooms, and caterpillars. However, further work is needed to revise the Fishery Management Plan and ensure improved inclusion of communities in the governance of natural resources. Community surveys showed that outreach efforts are not reaching enough people across the landscape, and more extensive information sharing is needed, also as a means of receiving more regular feedback from communities.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Shoebill Island Camp has lived up to its name with amazing shoebill sightings over the winter months (June to August) – some visitors saw up to five wild shoebill in a day! The camp hosted ASHIA Cheetah Conservation donors and the African Wildlife Conservation Foundation (AWCF) to discuss the ongoing cheetah reintroduction and shoebill programme, both of which they support. Nsobe Campsite was busy throughout winter and into September. Kayeshi Camp was refurbished and fully utilised over the season.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – With the finalisation and signing of the General Management Plan, special-use zones, conservation zones, and development zones that inform land utilisation were designated and clarified. A progressive outcome was the establishment of a new wildlife corridor between the GMA and neighbouring Lavushi Manda National Park.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Formulate commercial strategy for community tourism
- Implement revised community strategy to improve benefit sharing across the GMA
- Implement fisheries management plan, adhering to national fishing ban and no new weirs
- Ensure effective biodiversity research, monitoring, reintroduction and rehabilitation programmes
- Maintain 150+ km of all-weather roads for effective mobility



As one of the main sources of revenue and protein for Bangweulu's communities, sustainable fishing is managed with the support of all six chiefdoms
© Lorenz Andreas Fischer

 13 shoebill nests guarded by 26 locally employed guards	 6 chiefdom signatories of park Management Plan	 US\$90,000 shared with community bodies for own-use projects
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BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR CONSERVATION

AT SCALE – At 22,480 km², Kafue National Park represents a park of scale that demands a management approach to match. Since the signing of a management partnership with the Government of Zambia in 2022, biodiversity recovery, infrastructure development and consolidation of tourism have been the primary focus areas in managing this critically important ecosystem, which forms part of the Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) – one of the largest conservation areas in the world. With 2023 being the first full year of African Parks management in Kafue, and thanks

to the foundation laid by an 18-month Priority Support Plan established in 2021/22, the long-term restoration of the park is on track.

To ensure that community engagements are constructive, the community development team, together with The Nature Conservancy, spent considerable time visiting all villages around the park. Based on these engagements a comprehensive Community Needs Assessment and a Constituency for Conservation Index survey were rolled out, both of which are invaluable in defining the Community Engagement Strategy. With the release of the 2022 KAZA aerial survey results, insight into Kafue’s wildlife abundance was provided, helping park teams gain a deeper understanding of the conservation management needs across the vast landscape. Collaring of elephant and buffalo played a crucial role in understanding animal movements, which also supported conservation law enforcement efforts. Fire management skills and equipment were prioritised to manage this element which is a significant driver of ecosystem functions in Kafue. To ensure park protection, 20 new scouts were recruited and trained.

The year ended with the release of seven young lion rescued last year after their mothers were caught in snares and died. After receiving 13 months of care in captivity, where they were bonded with an adult lioness, the youngsters were released into the park after being fitted with satellite VHF collars. The efforts to rescue, rehabilitate and release the lion required significant expertise of multiple partners and experts to ultimately turn a tragic set of circumstances into a success story.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – Elephant population numbers were confirmed by the KAZA aerial survey to be growing, a sign of an increasingly secure environment, while encouraging numbers of species such as buffalo, puku, sable and hartebeest were recorded. Tracking collars are currently active on 39 elephant and three buffalo, while 12 vultures are being tracked through a partnership with North Carolina Zoo and Birdlife Zambia. In partnership with the Zambian Carnivore Programme, Musekese Conservation and Panthera, lion, cheetah and wild dog are being monitored to help inform decision making and broaden the understanding of these keystone species in the ecosystem. The two fire management teams undertook trials with helicopter-based incendiary devices and additional fire management equipment. The growth of the conservation law enforcement team and Aerial Support Unit, together with additional specialist training, yielded excellent results in disrupting and reducing the illegal wildlife trade networks.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – A total of US\$29,182 was contributed to the Community Resource Boards (CRB) for own-use projects. To formalise a relationship with communities, MoUs were signed with 15 CRBs, while a comprehensive grievance mechanism was also rolled out to support a clear flow of communication and transparency between park management and communities. Over 160 community meetings were held, reaching 1,682 people, and 1,277 community members attended environmental awareness sessions. Three schools and 500 school children were supported with various educational resources. Data collection

towards the Fishery Management Plan began in the park’s three major community fisheries to ensure that livelihoods are protected while managing the resource base.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – A total of 16,755 visitors experienced Kafue – the highest recorded to date – of which almost 50% were local. The Kafue Wild Trail Run, part of the Wildlife Ranger Challenge, raised the profile of Kafue as a unique destination with a range of offerings. The management team ran various training interventions on customer care and wildlife tracking, while 12 young interns gained exposure to the tourism industry. The commercial team concluded negotiations with operators for Tourism Concession Agreements that were not in place when the long-term agreement was finalised, resulting in eight renewals and one new concession. Following board approval an Expression of Interest was advertised for a hotel development on Lake Itezhi-Tezhi in the south of Kafue.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – Significant progress was made on the completion of the Long-Term Sustainability Strategy and the General Management Plan. The Kafue team grew, peaking at over 550 staff, providing employment opportunities in the local communities. Four senior manager houses, mid-level staff accommodation and two barracks were completed, and an additional aircraft hangar was erected. Five airstrips were maintained and relicensed. Over 2,000km of roads were maintained and improved.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Translocate 2,000 wildebeest and 300 zebra from Liuwa Plain National Park
- Recruit and train 50 new Scouts
- Launch the General Management Plan
- Complete Commercial Development Plans
- Complete and implement the Community Engagement Strategy



A fishing permit system, regulated in partnership with communities and government, allows sustainable seasonal fishing on Lake Itezhi-Tezhi in Kafue National Park © Mike Dexter



1,682 community representatives attended community meetings



700 sponsored children visited the park



196% increase in tourism income since 2022



COLLECTIVE CUSTODIANSHIP OF THE LANDSCAPE – For 20 years, African Parks has been working in partnership with Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) and the Barotse Royal Establishment (BRE) to manage Liuwa Plain

National Park and restore its legacy. The park is home to both wildlife and people. Approximately 12,000 community members live in or around the park, depending largely on farming, fishing and harvesting natural resources to sustain their livelihoods. As such, through ongoing community engagement and integration, Liuwa has become a major supporter of sustainable livelihood projects, employment and education in the area.

Through a variety of programmes, communities’ legal rights to natural resources have been protected while, at the same time, resource harvesting is being managed to ensure its long-term sustainability. One such project is the traditional

fishing permit system, where park management provides permit books to the Silalo Indunas (area chiefs) who, in turn, issue permits to the community members. The 14-day fishing permit allows local people to fish in the park’s waters while a general permit is given out for harvesting of other natural resources for own consumption. In this way, illegal fishing is curbed and resources are protected for the local communities.

A major challenge for communities in and around Liuwa is ongoing human-wildlife conflict (HWC) which poses a threat to cattle farmers. To address this, Liuwa introduced a HWC Mitigation Fund and sensitisation programme in January, which includes financial reimbursement to registered farmers adhering to the regulations of the fund for cattle that have been killed by a predator. The fund also provides conflict mitigation tools such as cowbells and solar alarm lamps to deter hyaena and other predators. During the year over 300 cattle farmers were registered as recipients of the fund, while 15 incidents were documented and four pay-outs made. Ongoing sensitisation meetings to raise community awareness around HWC were also held which resulted in more cases being reported as people started realising that support is available.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – The wild dog pack remained stable despite natural losses. Two females birthed pups but, sadly, they all died due to natural causes. The Liuwa Plain lion pride swelled to 24 individuals. The Zambian Carnivore Programme (ZCP) discovered a new hyaena clan in the north-western part of the Game Management Area (GMA) and 24 new cubs were documented in total. A variety of species were collared or re-collared including two eland, seven hyaena and three cheetah. In park protection efforts, the conservation law enforcement team made 34 arrests. As a way of improving operations, 15 new community scouts underwent training in Chunga and joined the Liuwa team in November.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – The domestic dog rabies vaccination programme continued with

2,575 dogs and 296 cats inoculated. The Community Resource Board Agro-Vet shop in Kalabo entered its second year, providing community members with access to equipment and seeds and promoting sustainable farming methods. Processing of mangoes continued, with over 3,500 kg of wet mango processed producing 237 kg of dried mango. A major benefit to local fishermen was the provision of a truck to get their fish to market in the larger centres such as Mongu thereby enabling them to earn higher prices for their catch. Two hundred and thirty students were supported with school fees and three new teachers were added to the group of community teachers who received salaries in 2023, bringing the total number of supported teachers to 28.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – Liuwa Camp was constructed and opened toward the end of the year boosting the parks tourism offering. Overall, the park generated a total of US\$202,072 from tourism and enterprise activity, of which US\$154,589 was from tourism.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – After five years in place the Land Use Plan was reviewed and some changes suggested. Work began on the extension of the technical village at the park headquarters to accommodate more employees required for Liuwa Camp. New tourism signage was erected in the park to facilitate tourist access to the various camps and destinations.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Increase income generation through management of Liuwa Camp
- Celebrate 20 years of Liuwa Plain National Park partnership
- Renewal of the management agreement with incorporation of a portion of the Upper West Zambezi GMA
- Implementation of the Fire Management Plan
- Handover of Hino truck and Agro-Vet shop to the Community Resource Board



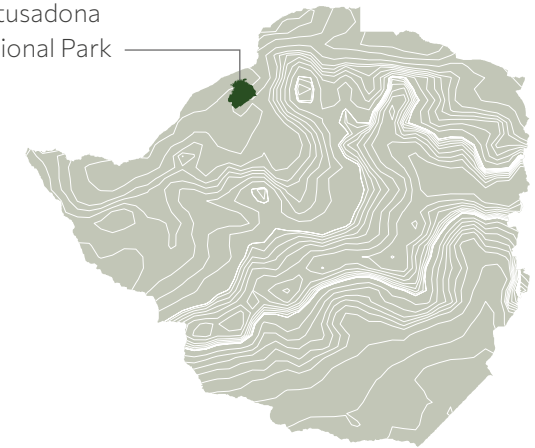
A total of 24 spotted hyaena cubs (*Crocota crocuta*) were documented in Liuwa Plain National Park this year © David Findlay

 230 scholarships provided	 4,686 farmers involved in conservation agriculture projects	 16 hyaena clans
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Scholarships were provided to 28 school children from around Matusadona National Park, ensuring these children can continue with their education
© Melanie Van Zyl

Matusadona
National Park



ZIMBABWE

GOVERNMENT PARTNER

Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (PWMA)



The Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (PWMA) operates under the Parks and Wildlife Act [Chapter 20:14] of 2001, managing about five million hectares of land, or 13% of Zimbabwe's total land area. Mandated with the protection, management, and administration of Zimbabwe's wildlife, the Authority signed a 20-year mandate with African Parks for Matusadona National Park in 2019. Mr Fulton Mangwanya is the current Director General of the PWMA.

MATUSADONA NATIONAL PARK

1,477 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2019

PARK MANAGER : MICHAEL PELHAM

MAJOR FUNDERS Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF),
Stichting Natura Africae, Wyss Foundation



COMMUNICATION IS KEY TO SAFEGUARDING BIODIVERSITY – Matusadona National Park borders the Nyaminyami Rural District communal lands. To sustain biodiversity conservation within the broader 17,000 km² Sebungwe region, park management is supporting the development of a Land Use Plan, which is being undertaken together with the local Rural District Council, traditional leaders and communities to incorporate the needs of both people and wildlife. This participatory process included inputs from nearly 500 community members thus far.

Through these inclusive conversations meaningful and actionable solutions are being found to address land degradation, for sustainable and legal land use and to gain insight into the future needs of

communities. Once implemented, the Land Use Plan will formally recognise wildlife corridors and community wildlife conservancies in the Nyaminyami Rural District with designated zones for sustainable agricultural production, reduced human-wildlife conflict (HWC), potential community-run tourism and revenue generation, and funding opportunities for socio-economic projects.

This robust communication between park management and local communities is also significantly improving HWC reporting. Before 2019, few incidents were reported leading to the assumption that there was minimal conflict with wildlife. However, the incidence of reported HWC has risen each year since the management partnership with the Zimbabwe Government was signed, with 28 in 2020, 255 in 2021, 477 in 2022 and 247 in 2023, seven of which sadly resulted in deaths of community members. This increase in reports can partly be attributed to the improved relationship between local people and the park and the growing trust communities have in the park’s efforts to reduce conflict, but it also indicates that the issue is greater than previously believed. As a result, park capacity has been increased to respond effectively

to HWC in the district. Park management also uses the data to identify patterns in HWC and, together with the affected community, target specific areas of intervention to prevent conflict.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION – A Temminck’s ground pangolin research and monitoring project, the first in the park, was established in collaboration with the Tikki Hywood Foundation, with the aim of collecting sufficient data to learn about this little known, secretive species in the wild, while educating surrounding communities on the importance of its conservation. The movements of the nine elephant collared in 2021 have proven conclusively that seasonal dispersal still takes place through several surprisingly intact corridors.

The conservation law enforcement team grew to 90 members this year with the recruitment of a further 34 rangers (all residents of the four neighbouring chiefdoms). A new field operations manager was appointed who will begin preparations for the reintroduction of roan and black rhino. A new tented Forward Operating Base was built in the Sanyati Gorge area to provide conservation law enforcement coverage along the vulnerable eastern boundary. This has had positive results, as the 2022 and 2023 tigerfish spawn in the Sanyati Gorge went ahead unhindered by illegal nets for the first time in over 25 years.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – In 2023, over 13,000 children were reached through the Reading Around the Reserve Programme in collaboration with Book Aid International, 28 disadvantaged students at risk of leaving school were granted bursaries and 113 students visited the park through the Environmental and Young Rangers programme. Over 200 students are members of seven wildlife clubs. Of Matusadona’s employees, 62% hail from the four chiefdoms with 163 of the staff complement of 164 being Zimbabweans.

A key goal for the department is to kick off the “Fish to Fork” pilot scheme in King’s Camp, a fishing community residing within the park. The project’s objective is to see better, more equitable, returns

for the local fishing community and, once realised, to expand to fishing camps outside of the park.

PARK REVENUE GENERATION – From an average of US\$80,000 per annum preceding 2019, the generation of US\$351,246 in 2023 clearly shows that the park’s profile with regional and local visitors is rising. Several new campsites were opened, including one with a game-rich inland spring and a campsite with a spectacular viewpoint on the escarpment. The newly built 12-bed Jenje Bush Camp hosted its first group of guests in August to favourable reviews. Two additional game drive vehicles were purchased, increasing the tourism fleet to two pontoon boats and four vehicles for game drives and cruises, with the opportunity to capitalise on the many houseboat visitors. Four Learner Guides, qualified to take game drives and boat cruises, were recruited into the Tourism Department.

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT – The road network was expanded, and the old road map reviewed and redesigned, to include newly opened roads and new camps. The installation of a 115 kVA solar plant and inverter system ensured that the Headquarters is able to function 24/7, including the conservation office, operators’ room, administration, technical services and the clinic. Staff housing completed during the year included duplexes for middle management as well as a renovated tuck shop and recreation room for the Tashinga Staff Village, while refurbishment of a senior management house and the Umbabala housing complex is underway. The newly purchased ferry offers reliable and affordable transport between the park and the nearby town of Kariba and will help solve the park’s accessibility issues.

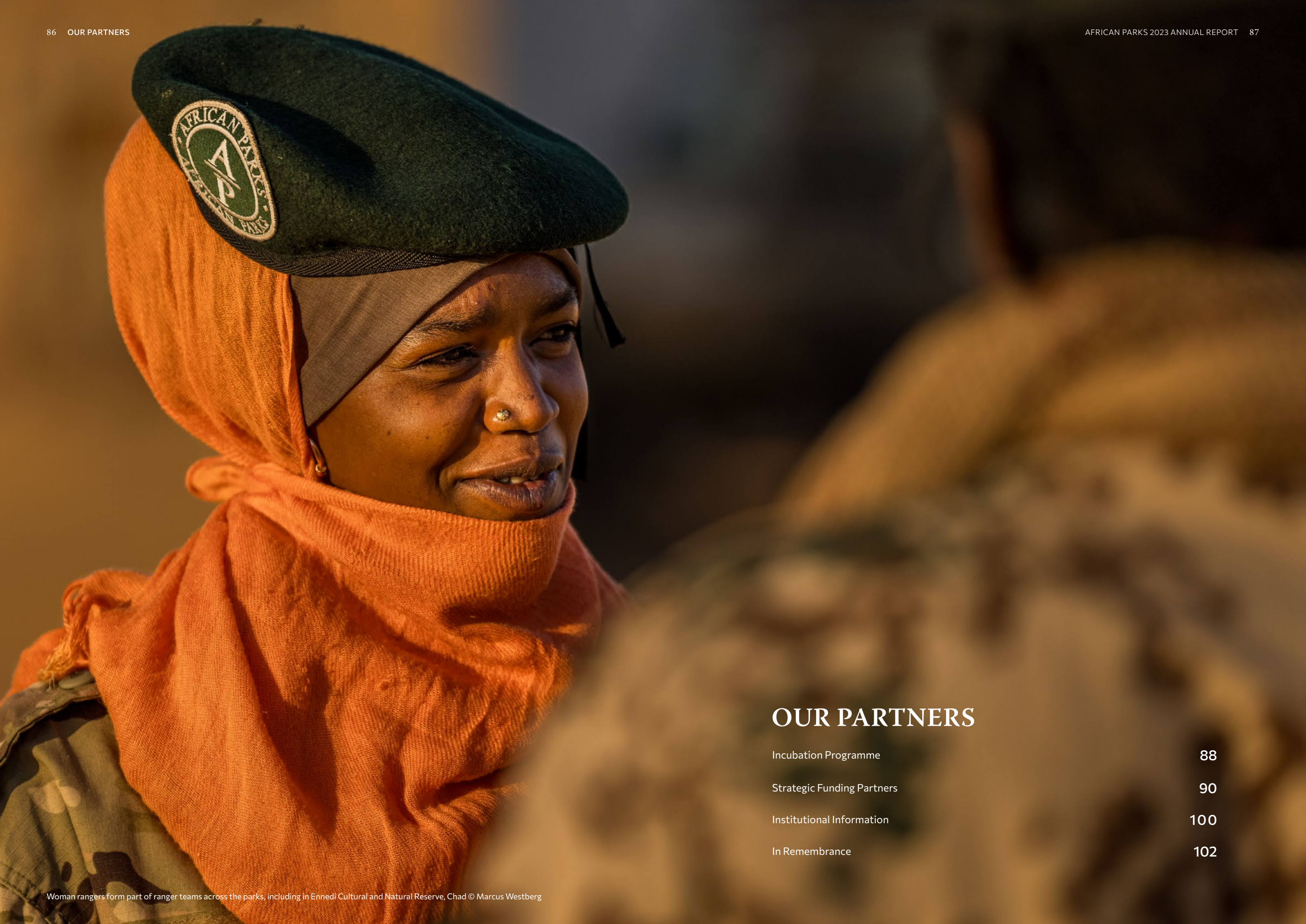
OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

- Finalise landscape-wide Land Use Plan
- Launch “Fish to Fork” pilot scheme in King’s Camp
- Complete preparations for black rhino reintroduction
- Increase the tourism portfolio



Matusadona provides protection to a small but healthy population of about 40 lion (*Panthera leo*) © Kelly Landry

 US\$567,000 generated by sustainable community fishing groups	 5,759 national visitors and 3,044 international visitors	 13 active wildlife monitoring tags (9 elephant, 1 lion, 3 pangolin)
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OUR PARTNERS

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SCALING IMPACT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

INCUBATION PROGRAMME

While our vision is to manage 30 protected areas by 2030, we recognise that more needs to be done to protect key biodiversity-rich areas for the benefit of people and wildlife. To address this challenge, we launched the Incubation Programme in 2018 to invest in practitioners who share in our ambition to effectively manage protected areas through long-term management agreements. Our goal is to support ten additional protected areas, managed by partners and spanning a further 15 million hectares, by 2030.

Our support includes the development of management agreements with government partners; sharing African Parks' business structures, governance disciplines and best practices; conducting operational reviews and procedural audits to identify gaps; providing financial support through sub-grants or assuming conduits of funding at the request of donors, as well as mentoring. Incubation sites are evaluated based on similar criteria to those we use to manage our own areas of operation, and the partnerships are conducted on institutional, operational and financial levels, with support and exchange adapted to the partner's specific needs and circumstances.

In 2023, we focused on developing the Incubator Programme as an efficient tool aligned with the needs of various protected area managers and technical and institutional partners and donors. As a result, internal processes were reviewed, a senior team was recruited and additional funds were raised for the programme. Two new partnerships advanced well, with due diligence processes finalised and board approval given, for Upemba National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo, managed by Forgotten Parks Foundation and ICCN, and Lantoto National Park in South Sudan, managed by Enjojo Foundation and the Government of South Sudan. A decision was also taken to terminate our partnership with Wild Africa Conservation (WAC), working in W National Park in Niger, due to growing security threats within the park hindering WAC's ability to effectively manage the park.

Going forward, the Incubation Programme team will

further improve the programme's structure, work on a solid partner support framework and develop annual targets to maximise the level of support and mentoring to benefit our partners.

We are proud to partner with like-minded organisations in our Incubation Partners' portfolio, which currently includes three non-profit organisations, managing five protected areas across 104,177 km² (10.41 million hectares).

Parcs de Noé This international non-profit organisation aims to conserve biodiversity through field-based programmes targeting endangered species and protected areas, and by contributing to local economies and livelihoods, supporting education and health, improving resilience to climate change, and encouraging behavioural change through environmental sensitisation. With its internal "franchise", called Parcs de Noé, it has been managing Termit and Tin-Toumma Nature Reserve in Niger since 2018, Binder-Léré Faunal Reserve in Chad since 2019 and Conkouati-Douli National Park in the Congo since 2021. With every year that passes, Noé increases its positive conservation impact and now, with fully staffed Park Management Units, it is scaling its operational and financial capacity, in tandem with operational research, to better understand the areas under its management.

FORGOTTEN PARKS foundation Forgotten Parks Foundation, DRC: The non-profit foundation entered into a public-private partnership (PPP) agreement with the DRC Government to rehabilitate and manage the Upemba National Park in 2017 and, in 2023, it signed an amendment providing for a long-term management mandate. The Upemba team is in the process of reviewing its management team structure and putting in place efficient management systems, while gradually increasing its presence and capacity inside the park to manage serious challenges such as the presence of Mai-Mai rebels and illegal mining.

Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust (MMCT): An environmental trust that works towards the sustainable use of natural resources, to benefit the local communities of Mount Mulanje Biosphere Reserve, and protect and restore the unique biodiversity of the mountain. The Trust is currently in a transitional phase, from a technical advisory role to the Department of Forestry, to commencing a long-term management mandate, and is in the process of restructuring the organisation to fit this specific purpose.

CATALYSTS FOR CONSERVATION

STRATEGIC FUNDING PARTNERS

We are deeply grateful to a core group of funders who provide largely flexible, multi-year funding of more than US\$500,000 per year. We also acknowledge several European strategic private funders who prefer to remain anonymous. Together, these strategic partners have helped us scale our efforts in protected area management across Africa with their incredibly generous and, mostly, unrestricted support.



Bel Group – A family company and a major player in the food industry through portions of dairy, fruit and plant-based products, and one of the world leaders in branded cheeses. Their corporate mission is to provide everyone with a healthier and more sustainable food. Bel is also committed to fighting climate change and is working towards reducing their net Greenhouse Gas emissions, including contributing towards increasing the capacities of carbon sinks through practices such as the preservation of ecosystems. As such, Bel is partnering with African Parks to fund the Chinko Conservation Area through the purchase of VCS carbon credits that were issued for the first time in 2023.



The Government of Benin – The Government made a significant five-year commitment of US\$6 million when President Patrice Talon invited African Parks to assume management of Pendjari National Park in the W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) Complex that spans Benin, Burkina Faso, and Niger. The aim of the partnership is to conserve, manage, and develop this unique landscape. In addition, the Government of Benin has been instrumental in expanding our footprint into W Benin through a funding commitment of US\$6 million. Its contribution has been critical in attracting other private and institutional funding to support the management of Pendjari and W national parks in Benin, which represent a significant portion of the largest intact wild ecosystem in West Africa.

Bill Pope

Bill Pope – In 2022, Bill travelled to four parks under African Parks’ management – Zakouma and Ennedi in Chad, Odzala-Kokoua in the Republic of Congo, and Chinko in the Central African Republic (CAR). It was an ambitious trip to some of the

most remote parks in central Africa and the Sahel. During this trip, Bill was able to meet some of the incredible people who are working, day in and day out, to protect and conserve these extraordinary landscapes. Inspired by the people and work of African Parks, Bill made a generous multi-year commitment at the strategic partner level.

The Dhanam Foundation **The Dhanam Foundation** – Established in 2004, the Foundation is an independent non-profit private organisation based in Palo Alto, California. It focuses, primarily, on education, child welfare and human services, nature conservation and land protection. In 2023, the Foundation renewed its commitment to African Parks by pledging to support the restoration efforts of Siniaka Minia National Park in Chad. The Foundation also provided supplemental funding to support dugong conservation efforts in Bazaruto Archipelago National Park in Mozambique.



DOB Ecology – A Dutch foundation, DOB Ecology believes that strong and healthy ecosystems are vital ingredients for life, wellbeing, and sustainable development. The mission of DOB Ecology is to support partners that work to protect and restore threatened ecosystems and (re)build the conditions for resilient livelihoods of local communities. The multi-year partnership between DOB Ecology and African Parks revolves around intelligence-based conservation in Odzala-Kokoua National Park.

Donna and Marvin Schwartz

Donna and Marvin Schwartz – Extraordinary advocates for conservation and animal-related causes, Donna and Marvin have a special interest in, and strong commitment to, saving elephant and other large species threatened by poaching. The Schwartzes’ relationship with African Parks began in 2012, providing critical support to anti-poaching work throughout central Africa.

Edith McBean

Edith McBean – A long-time advocate for biodiversity conservation, with an enduring passion for species protection and habitat protection. With over three decades of dedicated leadership, Edith has played a vital role in advancing these crucial causes for African Parks since 2013. In 2023, her strategic partner-level contribution towards safeguarding the great migration in South Sudan exemplifies her unwavering dedication to preserving this impressive landscape.



Iona National Park’s community development team prioritises time with local Himba communities, discussing the importance of conservation and engaging on key topics relevant to communities and the park © Marcus Westberg



Above: Akagera National Park, Rwanda, is considered an important ornithological site with nearly 500 bird species, including the little bee-eater (Merops pusillus) © Scott Ramsay



The Dutch Postcode Lottery – The Lottery has been raising funds since 1989 to support organisations working towards a fairer and greener world. At least 40% of every ticket sold goes to charity. The Lottery has steadily grown to become the biggest charity lottery in the Netherlands, supporting 146 non-governmental organisations. Since its founding, the Lottery has dispensed over €8 billion. Over the last five years, African Parks has received €4.5 million in unrestricted funding. We were the recipient, together with World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Peace Parks, of €16.9 million for a Dreamfund project in 2020 to boost the ecological and socio-economic development of the world's largest terrestrial transfrontier conservation area, the Kavango Zambezi (KAZA), which helped fund operations in developing Kafue National Park, Zambia.



The Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF) – A joint initiative of Save the Elephants and the Wildlife Conservation Network, the ECF is a flexible and responsive fund that

supports the best efforts by the most trusted organisations globally, working to secure a future for elephant in Africa. Since 2015, the ECF has not only contributed more than US\$5.9 million to African Parks, but also expertise on best practice in elephant conservation. This has benefitted critical surveillance, intelligence-based protection, and human-elephant conflict mitigation activities for some of our most threatened elephant populations.



The European Union (EU) – The EU has been a crucial long-standing partner of African Parks, working together towards joint conservation and development objectives in central Africa. Since 2005, this partnership has helped create areas of stability in volatile regions and attract additional funding and partners. The EU's support has been critical in managing large landscapes. Through improved management of these ecologically important landscapes; striving towards safety and security for people and wildlife; and strengthening opportunities in green sectors, together we continue to work towards our common goals.



The Fondation des Savanes Ouest-Africaines (FSOA) or West African Savannah Foundation (WASF) – The

Foundation is a conservation trust fund promoting the preservation of protected areas of the WAP Complex, while advancing education, science, and local economic development. The Foundation was set up by the Benin Government and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), with financial contributions from the Benin Government, Global Environment Facility (GEF), and Financial German Cooperation (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau – KfW). The Foundation has been providing significant annual financial contributions towards management of Pendjari National Park since 2017. From 2019 to 2020, FSOA provided 85% of funding to implement a Priority Action Plan to secure the Beninese W National Park, which evolved into a full management mandate to African Parks in June 2020. In 2023, the FSOA contributed €1.12 million to Pendjari and W in Benin. Its larger vision is to create a sustainable source of funding and to support the synergy of activities within the W-Arly-Pendjari Complex.



Fondation Segré – A Swiss foundation established in 1996, it is committed to helping protect the biodiversity of our planet through active conservation of threatened species and their habitats, and restoration of degraded ecosystems. Fondation Segré became a strategic funding partner of African Parks in 2016 and has contributed over US\$8 million to support a range of parks. In 2023, Fondation Segré assisted African Parks in Ennedi Natural and Cultural Reserve, Chad, and the newly added Boma-Badingilo landscape in South Sudan.



The Hempel Foundation –

The Danish Hempel Foundation is the sole shareholder of the Hempel Group and a dedicated philanthropic organisation. The Foundation is committed to making a difference by empowering children to learn and to address the biodiversity crisis, focusing on three crucial areas: sustaining specific key biodiversity areas, the development of new sources of finance for biodiversity conservation, and strengthening collective efforts. In 2023, the Hempel Foundation supported African Parks on the ground

Below: In Matusadona National Park, Zimbabwe, rangers ensure that fishing boats are legally registered and seaworthy in Lake Kariba Basin around the park © Melanie Van Zyl



in Nyungwe National Park, Rwanda and in Boma and Badingilo national parks, South Sudan.



The Howard G. Buffett Foundation – The Foundation views its resources as rare risk capital that can improve conditions and create change in the most difficult circumstances and geographies. Since 2014, the Foundation has supported a range of habitat and wildlife conservation projects, as well as operational and security improvements, at Rwanda’s Akagera National Park. In 2021, the Foundation took the lead in supporting the historic translocation of 30 southern white rhino to Akagera National Park. Continuing its commitment, in 2023, the Foundation provided ongoing support to safeguard the growing rhino population at Akagera.



Legacy Landscapes Fund (LLF) – LLF is an international fund, established by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development as an independent charitable foundation under German law. Its financial resources stem from public and private sources. In addition to funding from the

German Government through KfW Development Bank, NORAD and the French Agence Française de Développement, each site needs to have a private match-funding partner. LLF addresses the biodiversity financing gap by sourcing significant and sustained long-term funding from both public and private donors, thus contributing to conserving biodiversity within a 30x30 framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Two protected areas managed by African Parks are among the pilot sites receiving funding from LLF: Odzala-Kokoua National Park in the Republic of Congo and Iona National Park in Angola.



Lion Recovery Fund – An initiative operated and managed by the Wildlife Conservation Network, the LRF is a nimble and flexible fund investing in the most innovative and effective projects across Africa to recover lion populations and restore their landscapes. Since 2017, the LRF has contributed US\$4.72 million to African Parks. This funding has benefitted nine different African Parks sites, with a particular focus on several parks in West and central Africa,

Below: Setting up camera trap surveys in Pendjari National Park, Benin, helps conservation teams better understand wildlife species and behaviour © Marcus Westberg



Above: A Fada community gardening project, supported by Ennedi Cultural and Natural Reserve, Chad, provides seed to over 40 market gardeners’ associations © Marcus Westberg

given the extreme vulnerability of lion populations in these regions. The LRF has invested heavily in Chinko in the CAR, part of a vast 65,000 km² wilderness that has immense potential for lion recovery.

Fentener van Vlissingen Family

The late Paul Fentener van Vlissingen – Paul provided the bulk of the initial funding that established African Parks in 2000. In 2010, his daughters Alicia and Tannetta Fentener van Vlissingen committed €25 million to the African Parks Endowment Fund, in accordance with their father’s final wishes. Income from the Fund is earmarked, primarily, for African Parks’ overhead costs. During 2023, the Fund contributed €1.35 million to African Parks.



People’s Postcode Lottery – The Lottery manages draws on behalf of 20 independent postcode trusts in Great Britain. Since 2015, African Parks has received more than £9,8 million awarded by Postcode Planet Trust. In 2023, we were awarded £1.5 million by Postcode Planet

Trust, which was used to support the three Malawi parks and Garamba National Park in the DRC.

Rob Walton Foundation

The Rob Walton Foundation (RWF) – RWF supports ambitious projects, partners and programmes to foster a planet where people and nature thrive. With the passion of their founder, RWF works with urgency and an earnest belief that it will take all of us to reach global conservation goals, protect biodiversity, and create opportunity for communities. Rob Walton has been an invaluable partner to African Parks since 2003, providing support to safeguard the long-term health of protected areas, which are critical to the wellbeing of wildlife and local communities across Africa. In 2021, the RWF made a transformational US\$100 million five-year commitment, the largest endowment gift in African Parks’ history. Portions of the Foundation’s annual contributions have supported various parks within our portfolio, including Chinko, Ennedi, Liwonde and Nkhotakota, as well as sparked matching grants to Iona and Odzala-Kokoua, in conjunction with the Legacy Landscapes Fund. Moreover, RWF made pivotal commitments to launch the African



Above: In Zakouma National Park, Chad, specialised horseback training helps provide one of the most effective means of transport for rangers © Marcus Westberg

Parks Conservation Academy and enhance the reach and effectiveness of the Strategic Partners Programme. These initiatives will collectively strengthen the field of protected area management across Africa, demonstrating the Foundation's dedication to conservation leadership and capacity building.



Stichting Natura Africae – A charitable foundation established in 2017 by Jan Verhagen, a Dutch entrepreneur, Natura Africae is dedicated to the conservation of national parks and protected areas in Africa, recognising the reciprocal relationship between the livelihoods of local communities and the successful protection of an ecosystem's wildlife. In 2023, the Foundation supported park operations in Liuwa Plain, Odzala-Kokoua, Matusadona, Nyungwe and Ennedi. The grant also provided catalytic funding to strengthen African Parks' community development work, particularly related to education.



Stichting Nieuwgeluk Philosophy – Nieuwgeluk Philosophy supports large and small change-oriented initiatives that are sympathetic to people, animals

and nature. The Foundation's goal is to make heart-warming contributions that make a difference to the preservation of a liveable world for current and future generations. In 2023, Stichting Nieuwgeluk Philosophy supported core costs in Zakouma National Park, the rhino translocation to Zakouma in December and community development in Kafue National Park.



The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) – The Agency has been

implementing the Central Africa Regional Programme for the Environment (CARPE), an important effort to preserve the Congo Basin's ecosystem, assisting governments and local communities to work together to sustainably manage natural resources and make long-term plans for forest land use. With a commitment of US\$27 million over the last eight years (2016-2024), USAID has been providing support to African Parks to improve protected area management and wildlife conservation in the Garamba Complex and the Chinko Conservation Area within the Mbomou-Uele border region, straddling the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR), and to promote sustainable livelihoods among households dwelling inside and on the periphery of these protected

areas. Apart from a myriad conservation and sustainable livelihood impacts being achieved, this USAID partnership is contributing towards the establishment of a foothold for governance, security and stability for the surrounding communities, and the wider DRC-CAR-South Sudan transboundary landscape.



The United States Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) – INL

advances security, stability, and the rule of law, prerequisites for sustainable economic development and protection of natural resources. Since 2017, INL has partnered with African Parks on critical conservation law enforcement support in protected areas, enhancing the professionalisation and effectiveness of rangers across Africa. While standardised operational capacity transcends all protected areas managed by African Parks, ten protected areas have received direct support in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, the Republic of Congo, the Central Africa Republic, Benin, Malawi and Zambia. INL support has led to the development

of leadership and core training infrastructure, enables air surveillance, improves the welfare of rangers and canines, enhances technology for communication, wildlife monitoring and information management and advances national and regional collaboration with other security and conservation partners. Evidence management training and support for judicial systems have also contributed to notable increases in wildlife crime convictions. These interventions not only protect wildlife, but also contribute to increased security of neighbouring communities and regional stability.



The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) operates to

conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats. Since its initial partnership with African Parks in 2013, USFWS has consistently provided support to bolster conservation endeavours in key protected areas across central and western Africa. In 2023, USFWS continued its commitment by supporting the management and protection of Odzala-Kokoua and

Below: The Chinko Conservation Area, CAR, provides a 55,000 km² home to rich biodiversity © Marcus Westberg



Zakouma, as well as backing elephant conservation initiatives in Garamba, Pendjari and W national parks.



The Wildcat Foundation –

Wildcat is a private philanthropic foundation, whose purpose is to help save, and provide for the long-term conservation of endangered wildlife and wild places in Africa. It supports innovative new approaches that disrupt traditional wildlife protection paradigms, focusing largely on comprehensive training modules, equipment, and technology for rangers. The Foundation first partnered with African Parks in 2014 and has continued to demonstrate its commitment to conservation by investing in eight parks across seven countries. In 2023, Wildcat continued critical support for the development and implementation of conservation law enforcement strategies in Garamba in DRC, Pendjari and W in Benin, and Kafue National Park in Zambia.

UBS Optimus
Foundation



The UBS Optimus

Foundation – A grant-making organisation, the Foundation offers UBS clients a platform to use their

wealth to drive positive social and environmental change. The Foundation selects programmes that tackle environmental and climate issues, those with the potential to be transformative, scalable and sustainable, as well as programmes that improve children’s health and education. In 2022, the Foundation awarded African Parks a multi-year grant in support of Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve in Malawi.



World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) –

WWF has been supporting African Parks since 2007, with the goal of promoting the African Parks management model across Africa. WWF Zambia contributes to core operating costs and conservation projects in Liuwa Plain National Park and Bangweulu Wetlands. WWF Belgium became a strategic funding partner in 2017, supporting the Malawi parks and Liuwa Plain National Park.



The Wyss Foundation –

The Foundation is a private charitable organisation dedicated to supporting innovative, lasting solutions that improve lives, empower communities and strengthen

Below: To establish environmental awareness, Garamaba National Park's Camp Dungu hosted nearly 500 children who visited the park during the dry season © Marcus Westberg



Above: Twenty new red-necked ostrich chicks were recorded in Ennedi Cultural and Natural Reserve, Chad, a sign of the successful 2021 reintroduction of the species to the park © Marcus Westberg

connections to the land. The Foundation’s relationship with African Parks began in 2015 with a grant to support the restoration of Akagera National Park, followed by a significant investment in Malawi’s Liwonde National Park and Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve. In 2017, the Foundation made a ground-breaking commitment of US\$65 million to provide ongoing support for Akagera and the Malawi parks, along with start-up funding for five new parks. This enabled the addition of Pendjari and W in Benin, Bazaruto Archipelago National Park in Mozambique, Iona National Park in Angola and Matusadona National Park in Zimbabwe. In 2021, the Foundation furthered its support of African Parks with another extraordinary commitment of US\$108 million, which will provide for the continued support of current Wyss-funded parks, as well as start-up funding for another five new parks. Three new parks in the African Parks portfolio – Kafue National Park in Zambia, Badingilo and Boma national parks in South Sudan – are benefitting from the Wyss Foundation’s latest commitment and two are benefitting from renewal commitments – Bazaruto and Pendjari.



**RAINFOREST
TRUST**

Rainforest Trust –

For over 30 years, Rainforest Trust, a US-based non-profit, has been dedicated to supporting the creation and expansion of protected and conserved areas worldwide. Focusing on regions critical for threatened biodiversity and large wilderness areas, Rainforest Trust, in partnership with donors, local NGOs, and communities, is working to establish formal protection across an area of over 100 million acres. In 2021, Rainforest Trust partnered with African Parks in a collaborative effort to bolster the legal framework of the conservation area to create the Chinko National Park in the Central African Republic. This initiative serves as a catalyst for broader regional conservation endeavours. Building upon this success, Rainforest Trust entered into a second partnership with African Parks in 2023 to facilitate the restoration and expansion of Boma and Badingilo national parks in South Sudan to safeguard the remarkable antelope migration with a US\$11 million commitment.

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

We are ever grateful to our Boards, for their governance, leadership, oversight and financial support. The details of the governance structures are as of 31st December 2023.

AFRICAN PARKS NETWORK BOARD

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W NATIONAL PARK COMMITTEE

Hugues Akpona (Chair), Alfred Koffi Allogninouwa, Abdel Aziz Baba-Moussa, Jeannot Fransico, Jean Marc Froment, Enrico Pironio, Georges Sossou

IN REMEMBRANCE

Sadly, with each passing year, we are tasked with saying farewell to friends and colleagues – some lost in tragic and shocking incidents. In 2023, we pay tribute to each of the lives lost, and are grateful for the way that each contributed to and supported the African Parks mission to protect biodiversity across the continent. All of them left their mark, and all will be missed. We send our heartfelt condolences to their families, friends, and loved ones.

We pay tribute to the brave individuals killed in the line of duty:

IVANO H BANDA joined Liwonde National Park in 2018 as a Ranger. He passed away on the 18th of May from a buffalo attack while on patrol duty.

KOUGA INOCENT GNAMI joined Pendjari National Park in 2020 as a Ranger. On the 15th of September, while on patrol with his team, he was shot and killed by a group of militants.

LIMBANI CHIDAKWA joined Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve in 2018 as a Ranger. He passed away on the 21th of September due to drowning in Bua River while on duty.

Below, we acknowledge those African Parks staff members who passed away due to other causes:

GRACE NATURE SYDANE joined Odzala-Kokoua National Park in 2022 as a Ranger. She passed away on the 4th of January.

STEVEN GONDONGWE joined Kafue National Park in 2022 as a Fire Team Supervisor. He passed away on the 11th of February.

YOUMANI NESTOR NAKA joined Pendjari National Park as a Ranger in 2017. He passed away on the 19th of February.

BINGA MAFWEDA joined Matusadona National Park in 2022 as a Coxswain. He passed away in April.

YACOU B TOURAP joined Zakouma National Park in 2016 as a Surveillance Radio Operator. He passed away on the 2nd of May.

JACKSON KALIMBA joined Liwonde National Park in 2017 as a Junior Fence Supervisor. He passed away on the 9th of July.

MALEMA DHIKI BÉONT joined Garamba National Park in 2018 as a Ranger. He passed away on the 10th of August.

GILBERT SHAMILIMO joined Kafue National Park in 2008 as a Wildlife Police Officer. He passed away on the 3rd of September.

BIO SINAKPARÉ SARIGUI joined W National Park as a Ranger in May 2023. He passed away on the 9th of October.

GILBERT BIO GANWOROGUI joined W National Park in 2021 as a Ranger. He passed away on the 23rd of October.

KELVIN MUMBA joined Kafue National Park in 2022 as a Painter. He passed away on the 18th of November.

JAMES ABDUL joined Liwonde National Park in 2017 as a Fence Attendant. He passed away on the 24th of November.

PIERRE ALAYA joined Chinko in 2017 as a Builder. He passed away on the 25th of November.



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2023 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

2023 contained several highlights and some real challenges, especially the **closing of several major institutional funding cycles** in four parks. These have a big impact as the “cycle close” and start dates are not always seamless, with operations potentially temporarily incurring unfunded expenditure, creating pressure for short-term donations. The net result is slower than planned closing of the funding gap.

This feeds into our next challenge – **cash flow**. These unfunded gaps seriously impact cash flow. More significantly, only when closing retentions (5%-10% of contract value) are approved by third party audits, is African Parks reimbursed. This, and our portfolio growth, specifically the maturing of our three new parks (Kafue, Badingilo, Boma) and finalisation of our investment in Nyungwe and Iona, heavily impacted cash flow, requiring some interventions.

In the **first intervention** costs were trimmed by 10%. Only unfunded activities and capital investments which could be postponed to the following year and, where viable, postponing unfunded replacement capex, were considered. This saw a US\$9 million reduction in the funding gap.

Since 2022 we have deliberately worked to increase reserves organically to fund our working capital needs. Reserves, however, grew slower than working capital requirements, outstripping cash availability. As a **second intervention** we engaged some of our key donors with our challenge, resulting in the Rob Walton Foundation redirecting funding earmarked for our endowment to our reserves, enabling the organisation to navigate the remainder of the year, and Q1 of 2024, less constrained, producing one of our bigger financial **highlights**.

Another **highlight** was living up to our “dare to” value. A rigorous due diligence process before investing in our Rhino Rewild project required a major commitment in time and effort from our executive

team. The acquisition was completed successfully, with the project being funded and fully operational in December 2023.

The financial highlights in this section are derived from the summary management accounts for the group, which are prepared on a cash basis and do not contain non-cash elements such as depreciation or exchange rates profits and losses. All entities within the group aim for balanced budgets by ensuring that income equals expenditure.

Grant funding accounted for 86,3% of the group’s total income at US\$118 million, with the remaining 13,7% coming from commercial income (10,6%) and endowment income (3,1%) respectively. Grant funding is made up of individual donors and foundations 64,3% (69% – 2022), government funding 3,2% (3% – 2022), endowment 3,3% (2,1% – 2022) and institutional funding 20,9% (28% – 2022). Grant funding per the management accounts (US\$136,8 million) compares to the US\$127,1 million in the summarised annual financial statements. US\$9,7 million relates to consolidation adjustments posted in the financial statements.

These adjustments ensure that donor income relating to the addition of property, plant and equipment is only matched to the corresponding expenses as assets are depreciated. The adjustments effectively defer revenue, which is carried on the balance sheet under deferred income. It also includes the elimination of inter-company entries as required by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and, in 2023, the injection of working capital into equity for working capital funding purposes.

As at the 31st of December 2023 African Parks Foundation of America (APFA) managed a US\$67,2 million (US\$57,3 million – 2022) endowment, generously donated by Rob Walton Foundation. The principal investment was increased during 2023 to US\$65 million and global market recoveries have seen the portfolio recoup previous losses. African Parks also received the first drawdown on the endowment of US\$2,9 million. Stichting African Parks Foundation (SAPF) also managed a US\$39,9 million endowment and African Parks received a drawdown on this of US\$1,4m. These endowments provide African Parks with unrestricted funding in the form of annual drawdowns that, to a large degree, assist in funding institutional oversight.

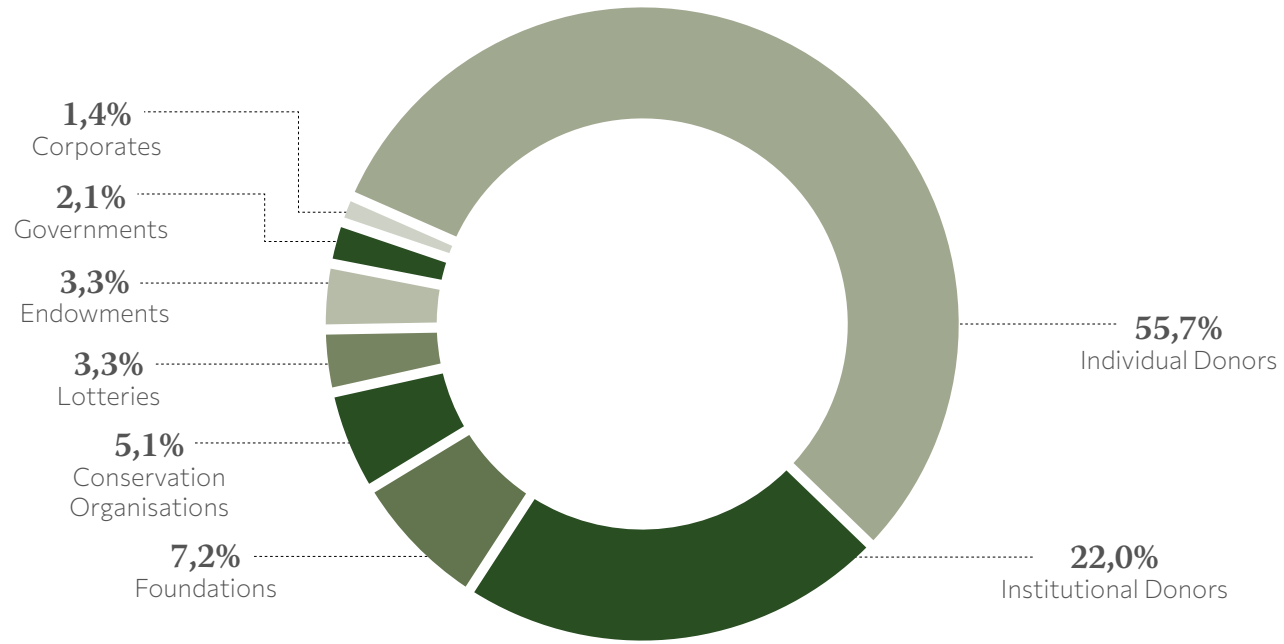
The funds are invested in a mix of equity, bonds and cash according to the funding committee’s investment policy. The endowment fund assets are held on the balance sheets of SAPF and APFA, both foundations that fundraise for African Parks Network (APN).

APN controls group spending through careful annual budget pre-approval and monitoring processes. Actual spend against these budgets is monitored every month through the monthly management accounts. The total budget approved by the APN Board for 2023 was US\$122,3 million (2022 – US\$103,2 million).

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS VS ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2023

	Protected areas US\$'000	Projects Rhino Rewild/ Aouk US\$'000	African Parks Network US\$'000	Total per management accounts US\$'000	Consolidation adjustments US\$'000	Total per financial statements US\$'000
Income	107,967	15,653	13,191	136,812	(10,406)	127,101
Grant funding	95,367	15,653	7,030	118,050	(7,479)	107,275
Gross park revenue	12,600	-	1,869	14,469	(370)	14,839
Endowment income	-	-	4,292	4,292	-	4,292
Other income	-	-	-	-	695	695
Total spending	107,679	15,659	12,693	136,031	(20,236)	115,795
Operating expenditure	93,097	2,780	11,020	106,898	(582)	106,316
Capital expenditure	14,581	12,879	1,673	29,133	(19,654)	9,479
Net surplus before taxation	288	(6)	498	781	10,526	11,306

SOURCES OF DONOR FUNDING



SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The accompanying summary group financial statements (the “summary financial statements”) comprise a summary of the audited financial statements (the “financial statements”) of the group for the year ended 31st of December 2023.

BASIS OF PREPARATION

The summary financial statements are prepared in accordance with the framework concepts and measurement and recognition requirements of IFRS and the requirements of the Companies Act of

South Africa. They do not contain all the disclosures required by IFRS, and the requirements of the Companies Act applied in the preparation of the group financial statements, and should be read in conjunction with the financial statements for the group for the year ended 31st of December 2023. The summary financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis.

This summarised report is extracted from audited information but is not itself audited. The annual financial statements were audited by KPMG Inc who expressed an unmodified opinion thereon. The audited annual financial statements and the auditor’s report thereon are available on the company website. The directors take full responsibility for the preparation of the summarised financial statements and the financial information has been correctly extracted from the underlying annual financial statements.

SUMMARISED GROUP STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

A summarised group statement of comprehensive income is presented below. A consolidated surplus for 2023 of US\$11. 3 million (2022: surplus US\$448,731) was recorded.

	2023 US\$'000	2022 US\$'000	% change
Income	126,406	97,932	29.1%
Grant funding	107,275	85,898	24.9%
Endowment income	4,292	2,000	114.6%
Other operating income	14,839	10,034	47.9%
Administrative expenses	(20,666)	(15,458)	33.7%
Employee benefit expenses	(43,774)	(36,990)	18.3%
Depreciation	(9,479)	(8,028)	18.1%
Other expenses	(41,875)	(36,624)	14.3%
Results from operating activities	10,611	833	
Net foreign exchange differences and finance revenue/(expense)	695	(234)	
Surplus before taxation	11,306	599	
Taxation	25	(143)	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	11,331	456	
Other comprehensive income/(loss)	-	(7)	
Total comprehensive surplus/ (deficit) for the year	11,331	449	

Income is recognised as a function of expenses incurred. African Parks employs a balanced budget principle whereby donor funds received are first recognised within liabilities as unutilised funds. Once utilised, these funds are then recognised as grant funding. Taking a business approach to conservation, costs incurred are first financed through operating income, followed by grant funding. The APN overhead costs are financed partly from the investment income generated by our endowment funds. The fund assets are not recognised on the APN statement of financial position.

The increase in **income** by 29,1% reflects an increase in operations due to a combination of:

- Investment in the Rhino Rewild project
- Three maturing protected areas, Kafue, Badingilo and Boma
- Nyungwe and Iona National Parks completing their bases of operations construction

- Completion of step change in Benin park operations to better manage the security situation
- Increased investment in the institutional platform (head office and regional investments) in line with the 30x30 strategy

Other operating income consists of commercial revenue of US\$12,6 million (US\$3,3 million in 2022). This increase is mainly due to significant tourism growth in Akagera and Nyungwe, the addition of Kafue’s commercial portfolio and inflationary growth over the remaining portfolio. The commercial income in APN of US\$1,9 million (US\$1,3 million in 2022) relates to aircraft lease recoveries and donor trips. Finally, although negligible, other operating income also includes recoveries from insurance claims received in the year.

Net foreign exchange differences and finance expenses consist of realised and unrealised foreign currency gains/(losses) incurred during the year.

ABRIDGED GROUP STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	2023 US\$'000	2022 US\$'000	% change
Assets			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	77,259	61,363	25.9%
Right of use asset	519	642	
Current assets			
Inventories	5,873	1,176	399%
Receivables and prepayments	23,221	23,147	
Cash and cash equivalents	33,350	10,425	220%
Total assets	140,222	96,756	
Equity and liabilities			
Capital and reserves			
Foreign currency translation reserve	(2,166)	(2,171)	
Retained earnings	8,496	7,059	
Working capital reserve	9,618	-	
Maintenance reserve	322	322	
Non-controlling interest	(516)	(733)	
Non-current liabilities			
Deferred taxation	1 094	1 081	
Lease liabilities	404	549	
Current liabilities			
Provisions	871	287	
Trade and other payables	10,652	9,962	6,9%
Undrawn funds	30,063	18,816	59,8%
Lease liabilities	104	90	
Deferred income	81,280	61,494	32.2%
Total equity and liabilities	140,222	96,756	

Capital expenditure amounted to US\$ 29.1 million representing investment in infrastructure, equipment, motor vehicles, radios, aircraft, etc.

Primary contributors to the increase in Property Plant and Equipment (PPE) are the Rhino Rewild project land, buildings and equipment acquired in South Africa, maturing parks (Kafue, Badingilo and Boma) ramping up buildings and infrastructure and Nyungwe and Iona completing their infrastructure projects. It is worth noting all PPE (Individual items exceeding US\$500 and with a life span of more than one year) is capitalised since we control the use of these items. Should African

Parks leave a park it would not retain the use of most of the PPE for that park and would need to recognise a loss on “disposal”. All aircraft remain in the name of APN and can be re-purposed to other parks.

For **receivables and prepayments** US\$19.4 million of this balance relates to receivables from donors and US\$3,8 million from affiliate entities such as APFA. The remainder is made up of prepayments, deposits and other miscellaneous debtors.

Cash and cash equivalents represent a combination of funds held locally by the parks within their local banks

or as petty cash and funds held by APN in its offshore accounts. The group was exposed to Central African Francs (CFA), Zambian Kwacha (ZMW) and South African Rand (ZAR) at yearend, with parks holding a total of US\$0,8 million worth of CFA, US\$0,6 million worth of ZMW and APN Head Office holding US \$1,5 million worth of ZAR.

A **Deferred Taxation** balance existed within the books of the Rwandan Parks.

Unutilised Funds represent grants received that were not utilised in the current year. The reason for non-utilisation was because they represent either unearmarked funding that will be utilised in future years, they are earmarked for specific activities that are yet to take place, or they were surplus funds raised. These are held as cash, as well as receivables, and are only disbursed in the earmarked project and period.

THE COMPOSITION OF SUCH UNUTILISED FUNDS WAS AS FOLLOWS AT YEAR END:

Restriction Level	2023 Group	2023 Company	2022 Group	2022 Company
Restricted at park level	75%	76%	84%	75%
Restricted aviation reserve	7%	16%	1%	3%
Unrestricted at park level	11%	00%	8%	6%
Unrestricted at portfolio level	6%	13%	7%	16%

Deferred income represents donor funds that have been spent on the acquisition of property, plant and equipment. Deferred income is released to profit or loss as donor income as and when these items are depreciated. This treatment of deferred income allows for a better matching of income and expenses.

The **foreign currency translation** reserve is the result of the consolidation of parks that have functional currencies other than the US Dollar.

ABRIDGED GROUP CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	2023 US\$'000	2022 US\$'000
Net cash inflow from operating activities	36,960	17,852
Net cash outflow from investing activities	(25,152)	(17,857)
Net cash outflow from financing activities	11,116	1,519
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	22,924	1,514
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	10,426	8,912
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	33,350	10,426

Cash and cash equivalents consisted of retained earnings and donor funds received but not yet spent on the designated programmes.

GOVERNANCE

Sound governance, disciplined internal controls and professional financial management are core focus areas at African Parks.

The main governing body, African Parks Network, based in Johannesburg, South Africa, is a registered non-profit company in terms of Section 10 of the Companies Act of South Africa. African Parks Network is the strategic and decision-making entity responsible for approving the business plan of each park, determining capital investments, operating budgets, standard operating procedures, and appointing skilled park management.

The African Parks Network Board, consisting of one executive and seven non-executive Board members, is responsible for the overall governance of the organisation. Three specialised sub-committees, the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee, the Remuneration and Human Resource Committee, and the Conservation Committee, ensure additional focus on governance.

Each park managed by African Parks has a local Board set up in-country. Each Board is represented by partner institutions, key stakeholders, and African Parks Network, and is directly accountable to government for the professional management of the park.

Parks are required to operate in accordance with the standard operating procedures determined by African Parks Network. Park management reporting disciplines include the preparation of monthly management accounts, annual budgets, and annual business plans, which are reviewed and approved by the local boards and African Parks Network management in Johannesburg. All employees are required to sign a code of conduct and to observe the highest standards of ethics. Liaison with African Parks stakeholders, identified as local government, local communities, donors, employees, and affiliated organisations, is conducted through formal channels of communication as specified in the standard operating procedures manual.

The African Parks Network group financial statements comply with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and are audited by KPMG South Africa.

African Parks Network has affiliated organisations in The Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, the UK, and the USA. These are: Stichting African Parks Foundation (The Netherlands); African Parks Foundation Switzerland; African Parks Foundation Germany; African Parks UK; and African Parks Foundation of America (USA). These entities have charitable status and their role is to further the mission of African Parks. These separate legal entities are governed by independent Boards but are bound by a collaboration agreement that ensures a common purpose for all.

JOIN US

When you donate to African Parks, you are not only protecting Africa’s iconic landscapes and wildlife, you are also contributing to community livelihoods and restoring planetary health. Through our work and impact, we are enabling safe places where jobs are created, sustainable enterprises are funded, schools are built, mobile health units are deployed, and conservation-led economies begin to grow. We operate at scale and are 100% accountable for every single dollar that comes to us, as well as every aspect of park management, guaranteeing that funds deliver the most immediate and direct impact. Our vision is to help protect 30% of Africa’s biodiversity by 2030. Coupled with our track record, we believe we have the strategy to make this possible. Your support, no matter how big or small, will help us achieve this goal for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

Thank you for your support and if you would like to find out more, please contact:

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