1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK

The /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park measures 5,920 km² and spans some of the most spectacular arid and desert mountain scenery in southern Africa. It includes the /Ai/Ais Hot Springs Game Park in Namibia and the Richtersveld Park in South Africa.

Recognized by UNESCO as the Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape as a World Heritage Site, the area is renowned as a biodiversity hotspot and boasts some of the richest succulent flora in the world.

The /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park also features the world’s second largest canyon, the Fish River Canyon, which meanders between the spectacular cliffs characteristic of the desert landscape.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Formally established in 2003, the park is rich in natural history. Bones uncovered at Kokerboomkloof indicate that some animal species currently present in the region (e.g. springbok, zebra and klipspringer) were also present over 4,000 years ago.

Geographical features include distinct periods of geological history dating back 2,000-million years.

The 350 million year old and erosion-rich Orange River gorge abounds with history, folklore and grandeur. Animal images found in caves, some estimated as being over 25,000 years old, also abound in the area.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE

The area is part of the Succulent Karoo biome which has the richest succulent flora in the world harbouring about one-third of the world’s approximately 10,000 succulent species, and is also one of only two entirely arid ecosystems hotspots.

Geographically located in the South Western portion of Namibia and the north western portion of South Africa, the park is composed of unique metamorphic and sedimentary formations that have been dramatically eroded over time.

It contains two major climatic systems: a temperate winter rainfall region with high air humidity, and an inland region with higher temperatures, summer rains and low humidity, with a narrow transition zone of approximately 10 to 20km between them.

/ Ai/Ais meaning ‘burning water’ brings to mind the park’s hot springs and offers a hint to the soul of this park. A true desert wonderland, this stark desert landscape hides a number of natural gems: Blistering sun, boiling springs, larval rock formations, and scorching sweeps of desert expanse – and nestled among this harsh vista in vivid patches of green and blue, is an abundance of plant life – a full third of all succulent plant species in South Africa. Here, life seems more vivid, more vibrant because of the very nature of the harsh desert environment within which it thrives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>South Africa, Namibia</th>
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<td>Area</td>
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species occur in small colonies on the highest peaks with about 30% of the total floristic composition being endemic to the park. It is estimated that 50 genres out of a total of 160 from the Mesembryanthemaceae family occur here.

Two trees are particularly associated with the /Ai/Ais - Richtersveld: the bastard quiver tree and the half-mens (half-human), Pachypodium namaquanum, which the Namas revere as embodiments of their ancestors, half human, half plant, mourning their ancient Namibian home. The Orange River mouth is a wetland of international importance and a Ramsar site.

Wildlife found in the area is adapted to withstand the arid climate, with many species concentrated in the denser vegetation around the Orange River, including over 50 species of mammals and almost 200 bird species. The area also boasts a large variety of lizards, snakes, tortoises and scorpions. While the park has very few mega herbivores due to the harsh environmental conditions, populations of mountain Zebra and Oryx appear to be on the increase.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

The Richtersveld is one of the last regions where the Nama people's traditional lifestyle, based on nomadic pastoralism, has been preserved. This component of the Park is land that belongs to the community (through a land claim) and managed by the South African Parks Board. The residents have the right to live in the park and are entitled to graze a total of 6000 head of livestock. However, the majority of Richtersvelders choose to live in four settlements adjacent to the park, with people who are responsible for caring for the livestock choosing to live within the park.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

The park was established with similar but varying management priorities; /Ai-/Ais Hot Springs Game Park is focused on conservation and tourism while the Richtersveld is focused on tourism, direct community beneficiation and conservation.

The establishment of joint management strategies and implementation plans remains a priority of both components of the park. To aid this, a variety of working groups and committees have been constituted. The signing of an international treaty between South Africa and Namibia has effectively transformed the technical committee into a joint management board, and these working groups into park management committees. The Park Management Committee has since, successfully jointly managed daily operations in the park.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

Mining remains the largest challenge to the park, with several areas along the river under Exclusive Prospecting Licenses. Some work is underway to enforce regulations for rehabilitation and reclamation.

Livestock grazing taking place in Richtersveld National Park to mitigate effects of increasing drought poses some challenges to biodiversity. Joint committees currently work together to deal with arising challenges, manage grazing practices, and deal with matters of illegal grazing, fishing and poaching. Water management also remains an on-going challenge for the park due to the arid conditions.

A fourth challenge is the management of alien plant species in the park – especially Prosopis glandulosa and wild tobacco species.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

Tourism initiatives have been varied and numerous within the park, including a range of facilities and adventure tourism initiatives. Adventure tourism includes a 5-day 300km Desert Knights Mountain Biking Tour aimed at showcasing the unique landscape and rich cultural heritage of the area, and on-going development of Desert Kayak Trails. Development of eco-tourism livelihoods among local communities to service adventure tourism needs, including the training of river guides, and catering and camp attendant training to service the Desert Kayak Trails is underway. Park staff have also recently undergone joint rescue training to improve the park’s ability to respond to adventure tourism emergencies.

The newly refurbished /Ai-/Ais Hot Springs Resort was reopened for business in 2009, and is one of the main tourist attractions of the park, offering tourists a different form of eco-tourism.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In 2013, a joint radio network linking the two component reserves was launched. Work is underway to strengthen communications between Namibian and South African component parks, with hopes of improving management and implementation between the parks.

Park staff underwent GIS training in 2013 to enable them to create management maps of the area and effectively use monitoring tools needed in conservation processes. The next few years will see the development of updated park maps and strengthened monitoring strategies.

Further development of adventure tourism hikes and trails is also currently underway, as is training and development of community members to service this emerging area.

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Chimanimani Transfrontier Conservation Area

Chimanimani meaning ‘to be squeezed together’ describes the narrow pass in the mountain range through which the Musapa River flows. The name brings to mind the towering peaks of barrier mountains, laughing waterfalls, cool-hearted forests and deep, brooding caves. It is a place of undiscovered secrets, breathtaking beauty and hidden depths. The palate of the park is flushed with fresh greens, crisp blues, and the hidden earth tones packed away in its famous caves.

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1. **AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK**

The Chimanimani TFCA is one of Africa’s least-known nature reserves, and is made up of Chimanimani Nature Reserve in Mozambique (2,368 km² of which approximately 645 km² conservation area represent the full and 1,723km² buffer zone); and Chimanimani National park in Zimbabwe (200 km²) and Eland Sanctuary (15km²) in Zimbabwe. It encompasses a number of mountain ranges with high peaks rising to 2,436m.

Development in this park gem has been intentionally limited to preserve the pristine natural beauty of the area. The park boasts the inclusion of spectacular mountains, virgin forests and world-renowned cave systems, and has minimal infrastructure.

2. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

This TFCA was established to conserve the biodiversity of the highlands ecosystem, as well conserve the local wildlife, promote tourism and work with communities to develop eco-tourism and sustainable resource harvesting practices.

A strategically designed buffer zone supports the multiple use options of natural resources in the park.

3. **NATURAL HERITAGE**

The park encompasses a tropical mountain biome. Chimanimani falls within the Eastern Zimbabwe montane forest-grassland mosaic eco-region and has also been described as the Afromontane center of endemism. The park lies within an agro-ecological region, receiving high rainfall varying between 1000mm to 1270mm a year, which gathers from the south east monsoon winds sweeping inland from the Indian Ocean, and. Climate in the mountains varies from being generally humid and tropical to temperate, with temperatures varying from very cold winters (2°C) to temperate summers (up to 28°C).

The landscape of Chimanimani TFCA is characterised by rugged terrain Quartzite Mountains, with its escarpment containing a number of rivers, most of which emanate from falls that sprout through rocks; the whole area lies within the Buzi River System. Most of the river system is pristine, although recent years have seen pollution from alluvial gold mining impacting on the Lucite and its major tributary, the Haroni.
Along the river banks, there are marshy springs and wetlands. The Eland Sanctuary in particular, is dominated by fine sandy soils which are as white as salt.

Biodiversity characteristics of the Chimanimani TFCA include diversity and endemism in the flora and fauna. There are six major vegetation types, including semi-deciduous Mombo woodlands; low altitude moist ever-green forests; dry montane forests; montane grassland; Sclerophyllous afromontane scrub, which include some endemic Protea and Faurea species; and rocky vegetation (Aloe & Euphorbia spp., including some endemics such as Vellozia argentea). Local erosion has created soils which support yellow woody trees, Erica and Leucospermum along with ferns, orchids and aloes. This unique environment supports many unusual species of flora and fauna as a result of the unique combination of altitude, soils, rainfall and fire, which is endemic to the area. Over 1000 vascular plant species have been recorded for the area of which 45 are endemic.

Little is known about species diversity of animals and level of endemism, but among large mammals, charismatic species like leopard and other species including mountain reedbuck, kipspringer, blue duiker, common duiker, samango monkey (endemic to the Afromontane Forest) and various small mammals occur in the area. However, wildlife populations are low due to subsistence poaching.

The park is home to over 160 bird species, 49 fish species, 35 amphibian species, of which two are endemic (Bufo vertebralis grindleyi and Anthroplepis troglodytes) and 60 reptile species.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

Neighbouring communities on the Zimbabwe side of the park are connected through origin and marriage. The people share the same Chief on the upper Chikukwa section.

Communities around the park are dependent on the parks’ natural resources for their livelihoods. Sustenance poaching and natural resource harvesting remain important resources for these communities.

Joint stakeholder management committees have been formed to begin to facilitate joint decision-making strategies, and implementation of action plans.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

Protection of biodiversity: including the preservation of pristine wilderness areas within the highlands; conservation of lowland and mid-altitude evergreen forests, and conservation of water resources from this important catchment area.

Cultural – historical conservation: including the preservation of historical monuments within the park, and the conservation of the important spiritual landscape of the Chimanimani.

Community engagement and development: through development of eco-tourism livelihoods strategies, co-involved park management, sustainable natural resource harvesting, and the adoption of biological and mechanical conservations agriculture.

Applied management strategies: including strengthening scientific feedback towards informing applied management, through the support of monitoring programmes and scientists.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

Mining remains the largest challenge to the park, with several Climate change issues: Increasingly erratic rainfall has been identified as a climate change issue in this TFCA, which has reduced the growing seasons from two to one in this prime agro-ecological farming area. Unsustainable agricultural practices and illegal hunting are key drivers of loss of carbon sinks.

Illegal gold-planners: Gold panning of riverbanks is an on-going threat to the aquatic ecosystems. Mining activities affect both general water quality, and directly impact on aquatic species.

Ongoing sustenance poaching: While historical records show widespread presence of large game species such as sable and zebra, they have not been seen in recent times. The establishment of the Chimanimani TFCA gives hope for the recovery of most wildlife species that currently occur in small population sizes.

Natural resource harvesting and agricultural activities: The dependence of local communities on natural resources presents ongoing challenges – both for the people and the biodiversity in the park.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

The park provides basic facilities catering to the self-sufficient explorer, and maintains a low volume management style. Hiking, rock climbing, birding, camping in caves among the sparkling waterfalls and natural swimming pools are some of the tourist attractions offered.

A picnic site is located at the base of the Bridal Veil Falls in the Eland Sanctuary. The sanctuary itself offers spectacular views of the Porkpie mountain range and the Bridal Veil Falls which plunge 50 meters down into a base about 10 meters wide. Ndzou Camp can be accessed on the Mozambique side of the park, and boasts an elephant tracking experience.

Other attractions in this area include viewing the rare Barrosus Palm tree and the unique rock formation of the Mawenje Mountain. Visitors to this part may also look forward to viewing the Nyakwaha and Haroni Botanical Reserves, as well as the Haroni and Mukurupiri waterfalls.

There are ongoing initiatives to develop local capacity for ecotourism among communities bordering the park on both sides of the border, with several initiatives linked to cultural tourism in the area.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Is with many of the TFCA’s, communication between the two parks and their bordering communities requires strengthening to enhance and strengthen joint management practices.

To facilitate this, the Chimanimani Conservation Network was launched in August 2014. The network aims to create an active network of tourism and environmental stakeholders who can together identify the most urgent challenges facing the park. The aim is to reduce duplication of effort and strengthen collaboration among stakeholders. Although dozens of possible projects have been identified, securing a working budget for implementation remains a challenge.

There is also an initiative to strengthen the carbon sinking potential of the area, the promotion of sustainable resource harvesting practices, restoration of ecosystems affected by illegal mining activities, introduction of sustainable bee-keeping, conservation farming, permaculture, community-water bottling and strengthening of ecotourism opportunities. Permaculture and sustainable agriculture strategies aim to facilitate the integration of trees with crops. Sustainable farming practices are already practiced in Chikukwa Village, and work is under way to extend these practices to other villages in the vicinity of the TFCA.

9. CONTACT DETAILS

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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK

The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park is considered to be the largest animal kingdom in the world. Spanning three counties (Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe), and consisting of community, state and private land, it is a feat of collaboration towards the protection of sustainable conservation areas. The Transfrontier Park joins together some of the most established wildlife areas in southern Africa into a core park of approximately 37,572 km². The second-phase transfrontier conservation area sweeps around this core to form a mammoth park of almost 100,000km².

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Officially mandated in 2000, the Skukuza Agreement signalled the three nations’ intent to establish and develop the park and surrounding conservation area. But this was only the most recent historical event associated with this timeless piece area of land. Stone and iron-age implements have been discovered across the area, evidencing the near continuous presence of people in the park. San hunter-gatherers contributed numerous rock-paintings scattered across the region, and evidence of Bantu dwellers dating back 800 years is also present.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE

Home to three biomes (grasslands, forest and savannah), this area comprises a vast scope of lowland savannah ecosystem, bisected by the Lebombo Mountains and four main landscapes including lowland plains savannah in the majority of the area; a somewhat hilly granite plateau in the western portions; the Lebombo Mountains rising to an average of 500m above sea level, and floodplain riverbank areas along the Save, Changane, Limpopo, Olifants, Shingwedzi and Komati rivers.

Geographically, the park features two spectacular cliff landscapes: Chilojo Cliffs in Gonarezhou National Park and Shingwedzi Cliffs in Limpopo National Park. Five major river systems cross the eco-region, while dry savannah is maintained due to a relatively low average rainfall of about 550mm per annum.

There are five major vegetation types, including mopane woodlands and shrubveld in the north, mixed bushveld in the south, sandveld in the south-east of Mozambique, riverine woodlands in Kruger and Gonarezhou, and seasonally flooded dry grasslands in Banhine National Park.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

In South Africa, the Makuleke people have reclaimed the northernmost reaches of the Kruger National Park, from which they were removed in 1969. They have since elected to continue conservation land-use practices, and focus on livelihoods based on eco-tourism; a goal reflected in the goals of the TFP, and across all three parks and their communities. A system of community consultations was established before the park was formally declared, resulting in two focal areas: a) development of voluntary resettlement and compensation plans, and b) realignment of the Kruger National Park boundary along the Limpopo River, resulting in a number of strategies and action plans for implementation. Similar consultations regarding beneficiation are happening across component parks.
To improve collaboration between parks and communities, an annual Shangaan festival was initiated in 2013. There are two exciting areas of development surrounding land use practice: a) the research-based AHEAD Programme aims to provide an integrated platform addressing integration challenges between ecosystem, wildlife health, livestock health, human health and livelihoods, and to inform applied management, and improve land use practices in a cohesive manner through adaptive management.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

A joint management board and committees have been established to manage conservation; safety and security; finance; human resources; legislation; and tourism. The management board has also initiated an institutional reform process focussing on both the development of transfrontier conservation and park-level implementation priorities. Standardization of fee and rate structures, introducing a joint operations protocol and development of cross-border tourism products optimizing Great Limpopo’s tourism development opportunities are also far advanced.

TFP management priorities are focused on biodiversity conservation and tourism. The park is exploring a number of intervention strategies, including rehabilitation of the land (Kruger), reforestation through tree planting (Limpopo), reducing the number of cattle and introducing rotational grazing while restoring soil-eroded areas (Gonarezhou), and a planned introduction of alternate fuel sources to counter charcoal use among communities.

Capacity building opportunities include exploring community beneficiation through experimentation and rules of engagement, e.g. a cautious approach to park grazing by livestock while guarding against such potential problems as poaching and perceptions of interference with tourism. In all parks, there is need to engage more with park and TFP management plans.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

Bilateral wildlife management: Mozambique and South Africa are seeking increasing ways to work together on management issues, for example, in dealing with rhino poaching as escalating incidences of poaching have become a major challenge to rhino populations. Park structures allow for enhanced communication channels between the two countries, and a bilateral draft cooperation agreement on rhino and elephant protection, as well as joint operations plans and cross-border patrol protocols have begun to be implemented. The signing of an MOU in the field of biodiversity, conservation and management, along with a large grant will aid Mozambique’s anti-poaching efforts in this regard.

Climate change impacts: Rising temperatures, shifts in seasonal weather patterns and water shortages have begun to impact on this great reserve; desertification is also seen as a threat – especially in Kruger Park. At the same time, floods contrasted with persistent drought leading to wildlife and livestock deaths are also on the increase. While strategies of seasonal human migration, rehabilitation of degraded areas, and community beneficiation activities are being integrated, impacts are escalating and widening.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

This vast park offers a range of tourism opportunities, including the proposed cross-border Shingwedzi Cliffs Wilderness Trail between South Africa and Zimbabwe; an annual Shangaan festival in July; a Rio Elefantes Canoeing Trail down the Olifants River; a Palarangala Wilderness Trail through pristine wilderness; the Lebombo Hiking Trail; and the Elefantes Gorge Backpacking and Fishing Trail. The Shingwedzi Trail is a cross-border adventure trail implemented through a public-private community partnership, and benefiting communities in both countries.

In 2006, the Giriyondo Tourism Access Facility (TAF) between the Limpopo and Kruger National Parks was opened, allowing visitors cross-border access within the perimeters of the two parks. Almost 5 000 animals were translocated from Kruger to Limpopo National Park, and combined with 50 km of fencing being dropped, has encouraged more animals to cross the border of their own accord.

To support further cross-border developments, a bilateral event to launch the tourism season was held in 2013, celebrating the 10-year anniversary of the treaty signing to introduce a range of future joint-tourism products.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Plans to integrate various private and state-owned conservation areas in South Africa and Zimbabwe are currently underway, as are efforts to include the Banhine and Zinave National Parks, as well as the Massingir and Corumana areas and interlinking regions in Mozambique.

The park is in the process of developing an Integrated Development and Business Plan to guide its implementation over the next 10-year period, including development of key policy documents, (e.g. policy on benefit sharing, alternative livelihoods and wildlife crime management).

To support tourism development, a Bush to Paradise Islands Route (Great Limpopo TFCA and Vanilla Islands), including the Greater Limpopo TFCA as a core attraction, is under development. Similarly, the World Heritage Sites Route (Lubombo, Great Mapungubwe, Great Limpopo and KAZA TFCA) will offer visitors an experience of world heritage sites in these TFCA.

these practices to other villages in the vicinity of the TFCA.

9. CONTACT DETAILS

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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK

In August 2003, an MOU was signed between Angola and Namibia to form the Iona-Skeleton Coast Transfrontier Conservation Area. Four areas were considered for inclusion, including the Iona National Park (Angola), Namibie Partial Reserve (Angola), the Skeleton Coast National Park (Namibia) and a proposed contractual conservation area (Namibia) involving local communities in the Kunene and Erongo Region provisionally known as the North West People’s Conservation Area.

The Iona National Park (Parque Nacional do Iona) is found in the Namibe Province of Angola, 200km from the city of Namibe. It is Angola’s oldest and largest national park, covering 15,150 km². The Namibie Partial Reserve, covering 4,450 km² is a protected area located north of Iona National Park. It is separated by a narrow strip of occupied land along the Curoca River and has IUCN category IV status.

In the far northwestern corner of Namibia, the Skeleton Coast National Park and Iona National Park meet at the Kunene River. The Skeleton Coast National Park shares a boundary with Iona National Park along the Cunene River and the Atlantic Ocean forms its western border. The newly proclaimed Dorob National Park is to the south of the park and to the east is an area that includes livestock farms and a settled communal area. The park is divided into a northern and a southern section and covers an area of 16,845 km². Uniquely, the northern section is only accessible by airplane, while the southern section is open to those with 4-wheel drive vehicles, and is accessible as far as the Ugab River gate.

This TFCA has much to contribute in terms of conservation, especially as regards migration of species across the region, the improved protection of the Kunene River and ecosystem, and shielding of the Welwitschia mirabilis plants.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Each of the component reserves draws on a history of conservation, with the youngest established more than 35 years ago. The Iona National Park was proclaimed a reserve in 1937 and upgraded to a national park in 1964. The Skeleton Coast National Park was proclaimed in 1971. Before independence and the Angolan civil war, this park was an animal paradise, rich in big game. Illegal poaching and destruction of infrastructure have caused considerable damage, with the government needing to restore control and order over the park. The Namibie Partial Reserve was proclaimed in 1960.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE

Iona National Park and the Skeleton Coast National Park both occur in a desert biome that includes the Namib Desert. It is renowned for its incredible rock formations and spectacular mountains while the Skeleton Coast National Park is rich in minerals, including diamonds and other gemstones. The Atlantic Ocean forms the western border of the Skeleton Coast National Park with the cold Benguela current bringing much marine diversity. The shoreline is dotted with shipwrecks and is inaccessible to most tourists. Natural springs sustain the desert biome while the great Kunene River is an annual river that forms a border with Angola in the north. The Hoarusib, Ugab and Uniab rivers are also important life support systems in the park.
Both the Skeleton Coast National Park and Iona National Park have several similar species known for their uniqueness, including black-faced impala, desert dwelling elephants, the desert lion, black rhinos and the remarkable Welwitchia mirabilis plant. This organism can live for thousands of years in these very harsh desert environments. The endemic Damara Tern also breeds only on the beach in the Skeleton Coast National Park.

It is hoped that the range increase now available across the parks for wildlife migration will result in resettlement of species such as the endangered black-faced impala back into their historical ranges. With the merging of the component parks, reintroduction of historically occurring species such as giraffe, mountain zebra, black-faced impala, hippopotamus and roan antelope, are being planned.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES
With a low density population in the area, and little viable agricultural land or industry in surrounding areas, the Skeleton Coast National Park has little community engagement and communities bordering the park receive no direct benefit. Community involvement is only in areas (conservancies) that are managed outside the park and under the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES
The management priority of the Skeleton Coast National Park’s is conservation (due to its high natural value as a pristine environment and wilderness), rather than community engagement.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES
Climate change poses several challenges to the area. One of the primary challenges is declining fish species due to rising ocean temperatures. Severe drought, rising sea levels, habitat destruction, flooding, animal migration, species extinction and revenue loss are some of the other challenges faced by the park. Off road driving and therefore access to the park is an additional challenge, limiting the amount of income generated through tourism into the area, and impacting on revenue streams to support implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Capacity also needs to be developed in transboundary communication at the TFCA level, with language and information sharing as some of the main challenges stalling progress around integrated management and joint action-taking.

Tourism development, especially into the Iona component park, is high on the wish list for the park, and linked to long-term sustainability of the area.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES
There is currently virtually no infrastructure in Iona, and so an important part of the cross-country collaboration will be in the Namibian park and wildlife staff to assist in training and up-skilling Angolan staff. It is hoped that collaboration between the component

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE
Increased co-operation between Namibia and Angola in developing the Iona-Skeleton Coast Transfrontier Conservation Area may lead to the establishment of a much larger TFCA spanning three countries along the Namib coast. This would be known as the Three Nations Namib Desert Transfrontier Conservation Area (TNND TFCA), and would include the /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld TFCA to the south, the proposed Namib-Skeleton Coast National Park (NSNP) in Namibia and Iona in Angola. The NSNP would be the eighth-largest protected area in the world, and the sixth-largest protected area and largest park in Africa, covering 10,754 million hectares. It would consist of the current Sperrgebiet National Park, the Namib-Naukluft Park, the proposed Walvis Bay/Swakopmund conservation area, the National West Coast Recreation Area (upgraded to national park status), and the Skeleton Coast Park. A new Marine Protected Area borders the proposed NSNP and several private game reserves and communal areas would add a further 14 million hectares of conserved land and sea.

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1. **AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK**

Kagera TFCA is situated along the Kagera River, which is a natural boundary between Tanzania and Rwanda. This TFCA is made up of the Ibanda Rumanyika Game Reserve with a combined area of approximately 1,300 km² (Tanzania) and Akagera National Park 1,200 km² (Rwanda) respectively. It is located within the East African Community (EAC) with Tanzania being a member of both SADC and EAC and Rwanda only of the EAC.

Ibanda / Rumanyika Reserve is made up of two component parks, and is relatively close to Lake Victoria in the north western part of Tanzania. Akagera is located in the north eastern region of Rwanda, and named after the Kagera River which flows along its eastern boundary and feeds into Rwanda’s labyrinth of lakes. This park is still in the conceptual phase of development, offering an exciting range of new possibilities.

2. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Former refugees fleeing the Rwandan civil war resettled large areas of the Akagera National Park in the late 1990s resulting in the reduction of the park size from 2,500 km² due to reallocation of land to returning farmers. This component of the TFCA is managed by the Akagera Management Company under a 20-year agreement implementing a joint management agreement between the African Parks Network and the Rwanda Development Board. Rumanyika Game Reserve was named in honor of the local king Rumanyika Orungundu, who ruled the area in the 19th century. Communities in the area still build traditional ‘moshonga’ homes, dating from this period, and evidence of the earliest use of iron in the region can be found here.

As early as the 1960s, Ibanda Arena Game Reserve was used as a traditional hunting ground, when part of the reserve belonged to Uganda. This reserve contains rock engravings dated at over 200,000 years, as well as the ruins of the Kuaka port and rulers’ palaces, dating back to the 15th century.

3. **NATURAL HERITAGE**

The TFCA encompasses a range of biomes, including savanna, afro-montane forest and grasslands, moist woodland, and tropical rainforest.
The area lies just south of the equator. The Kagera River, flowing from west to east provides a permanent and reliable source of water for humans and wildlife throughout the year. Average rainfall in the area is falls between 750-800mm per annum, with some frost in the higher lying areas (although rainfall is becoming increasingly erratic due to climate change). Heavy downpours are common during the rainy season (February to June); this area receives almost 90% of the region’s precipitation. Temperatures range between 22-27°C during the daytime, and 16-21°C at night.

Vegetation in the area is made up of grassland dominated by scattered Acacia trees with a cover of less than five percent, confined to low lands and undulating hills. The area also harbours wooded grassland, found in low lands and parts of elevated ground. Tree height and canopy cover differs considerably depending on location. Patches of afro-montane forest can also be found.

Because of the Kagera River, a complex system of lakes and papyrus swamps cover over a third of the area, enjoying the status of the largest protected wetland in eastern Africa; these marshes and swamps-fringed lakes occur in low-lying flat areas, varying between being permanent or seasonal.

The Kagera TFCA is home to a diversity of wildlife species such as elephant, buffalo, eland, roan antelope, topi, waterbuck, impala, reedbuck and bushbucks, wart hog, olive baboons and leopard. The park also hosts large populations of hippo and crocodile. Lining the string of lakes along the Kagera are some of the continent’s densest concentrations of water birds, with a species list of over 525 species, including many Palearctic migrants and endemic species. The park is the northern limit of a number of Zabeian species.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

This area has a long history of co-existence between communities and wildlife; the park is therefore surrounded by human activities. Although there is a history of co-habitation in the area, there are also challenges regarding human-wildlife conflicts – especially where wildlife encroaches on agricultural activities or infrastructure. Similarly, people in the area are having a detrimental impact on natural ecosystems through vegetation clearing to make space for growing settlement and agricultural activities.

Work to resolve these challenges is being done through the introduction of alternative livelihood practices such as sustainable agriculture (through locally-adapted seed provision) and creation of alternate income streams such as employment opportunities within dam rehabilitation projects.

Revenue-sharing has been introduced within the Akagera component, through which 5% of the annual park income is distributed among a variety of community development projects.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

The main management priority of Ibanda Rumanyika game reserve is wildlife conservation and sustainable use through sport hunting.

In Akagera, infrastructure and restoration projects are a priority, including the erection of boundary fencing, park management infrastructure and upgrading of a community centre. A day visitor centre, including a reception area, café and education centre is currently under construction. Roads, park signage and access infrastructure is also being upgraded and restored. There is currently only one entrance into the Akagera component, through the Kiyonza Gate.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

One of the challenges to the establishment of an MOU between the Rwanda and Tanzania is that Rwanda is situated outside of SADC, and therefore not beholden to regional policy. While both countries are interested in taking plans for the TFCA forward, there are still strategic agreements that require negotiation and finalisation between the two governments.

As with many other TFCA, poaching remains an ongoing challenge. Park staff is currently undergoing training, and a recent grant to the Akagera component has facilitated an upgrading of anti-poaching equipment to supplement the training.

Alien plant control, especially along the riverine and lakes systems, is a challenge, with large populations of invasive plant species affecting riverine health and straining ecosystem services in the area.

Climate change impacts include increasing floods and excessive winds. Deforestation and other unsustainable land-use practices have impacted negatively on the region’s carbon sinks, exacerbating increasing occurrences of drought and, changing rainfall patterns. Human impacts include threats to food security and an increase in human-wildlife conflicts, as well as impacts on agricultural lands in the form of increased soil erosion and excessive winds. Some work is underway to implement water desalting points for both people and wildlife to begin to build resilience within the area.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

Ibanda Rumanyika Game Reserve offers tented camps within the area. A recent visit into the Akagera component by journalists and travel writers bodes well for widening exposure of the park, and increasing tourism into the area. This part of the park includes two game lodges and a tented camp in its tourism offerings. Visitors into the park are steadily increasing, almost doubling during some periods in the last 5 years.

Hunting tourism is also offered in the park, including big game species. Boat safaris are also popular in the area, with spectacular game and bird-viewing on offer. Cultural tourism offerings are also on the increase.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Work is progressing towards a signing of an MOU towards the formal establishment of the TFCA.

The area currently also plans to re-introduction of black rhino and lion into the Akagera component of the park.

9. CONTACT DETAILS

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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK
This expansive park is the world’s largest transfrontier conservation area at approximately 520,000 km², a size rivaling that of France. Occupying the Okavango and Zambezi river basins, it encompasses areas within the borders of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and includes 36 formally proclaimed national parks and a host of game reserves, forest reserves, game management areas, and conservation and tourism concession areas designated for use of natural resources – in total, 11 categories of conservation area participate in the TFCA. Most well-known of the component parks are the Bwabwata National Park complex in the Caprivi Strip, Chobe National Park, the Okavango Delta (the largest Ramsar Site in the world) and the Victoria Falls (World Heritage Site and one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the world).

Here, these counties have created an opportunity to harmonize regional legislation towards landscape approaches to conservation and the ecological sciences. The area also provides immeasurable eco-system services to the entire region.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
The park was declared in 2006, through the signing of an MOU between the five participating countries, followed by the signing of a treaty in 2011, through which the park was formally and legally established.

Cultural history in the area dates back to more than 80,000 years ago. More recent evidence documents the migration of “Abantu” settlers into the area around 1750, where they encountered small family groups of Khoi-Khoi and Bushman; groups of !Kûng and Khoé Bushmen are still found in the area as hunter gatherers.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE
The park encompasses savanna, grassland, dry, and moist woodland biomes, combined to contribute to rich ecosystem diversity. The scope of the park makes it difficult to provide a full account of the range of features across the landscapes; a few highlights have been provided here. Lying almost at the bottom of a vast sand pit formally known as the Kalahari Basin, the Caprivi area is generally water and nutrient-poor, although some areas of alluvial clay along rivers and watercourse improve fertility. Chobe and surrounding areas are transected by the continuous sedimentary sequence of rocks known as the Kalahari Copper belt, deformed by metavolcanics and metasediments, with a flat or gently undulating topography. In contrast, the Victoria Falls region is a fluvial landscape, occupying a wet region, and supporting high velocity flow rates through its rivers and streams. The sheer scope of this park provides both range and opportunity for species diversity. There are four key structural vegetation types within the park including grassland, wetland, dry forest and a variety of woodland types covering the greatest portion of the area, as well as saltpans and scrublands.

There are more than 3,000 plant species throughout the park, of which 100 are endemic to the sub-region.

The area caters to large-scale migrations of mega fauna, including several Red Data List species, of global biological importance; the park contributes to the conservation of threatened species such as African wild dog, wattled crane, Nile crocodile and cheetah. Other mammalian species include buffalo, hippopotamus, lion, lechwe, roan, sable, eland, zebra, wildebeest, waterbuck, puku,
bushbuck, sitatunga, wild dog, spotted hyena and are still naturally regulated in many areas. The park is also home to the largest contiguous population of African elephant (approx. 250,000). Over 600 bird species have been identified, as well as 128 reptile species, 50 amphibian species and diverse invertebrate species.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES
The TFCA is home to approximately two million people with predominant livelihoods being pastoralism, hunting, fishing, natural resource harvesting, growing of crops and employment within the expansive tourism sector in the region.

A unique feature of the TFCA is that local communities were not required to re-settle outside the boundaries of the park, but remained encompassed within the park, with the aim of improving the socio-economic conditions through routing of development, tourism and conservation projects to their benefit. Communities are engaged as partners within the TFCA through comprehensive participatory planning processes. This has begun to result in conservation becoming a more locally viable land-use option.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES
A system of rotational tenure is used to distribute the role of the coordinating country.

To harmonize existing policies and legal frameworks, the appointed project managers identified a number of disparities among the constituent conservation areas. Negotiations are underway, with a special focus on:

- Natural resource management, especially as regards wildlife corridors, shared watercourses, and applied management strategies and practices impacting on economic and ecological decisions;
- Tourism, with a focus on developing economic linkages between countries, facilitating commitments to responsible tourism, and the harmonization of park fees at single entry points; and
- Legislation, specifically through the recognition of the TFCA in national legislation and relevant policy documents.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES
Climate change is having an escalating effect on multiple areas within the park. The persistence of drought resulting in famine and rapid spread of disease places increasing pressure on natural resources, and sometimes results in escalating human-wildlife conflict. This is underpinned by increasingly erratic and unpredictable rainfall in the region, and brings with it a host of compounded impacts on both people and ecosystems. Mitigation strategies currently being implemented include land-use planning, fire mitigation, and alternative water resource harvesting and access mechanisms.

Proposed strategies include the development of more coherent catchment management systems, as well as working with local communities to integrate adaptation and mitigation strategies responding to a range of implicit and explicit threats related to climate change.

Poaching, of elephant and rhino particularly, is an ongoing challenge. In stark contrast, over-population of mega herbivores is placing increasing pressure on vegetation and grazing resources. While expanded available range for these animals has reduced some over-population challenges, coordinated efforts to mitigate poaching and manage large game distribution more effectively remain a priority.

Other human-wildlife conflicts include overlapping land-use practices and competition for natural resources.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES
The KAZA TFCA abounds with tourist sites and attractions, including the Okavango Delta, Victoria Falls, the unexplored Angolan woodlands and the Caprivi Strip. Current tourism infrastructure (including hotels, lodges, airports etc.) and the untapped potential to further develop infrastructure offer a window of opportunity for transforming the TFCA into a premier tourist destination, thereby strengthening its already considerable economic value.

A range of tourism offerings is available, from budget to luxury accommodation and tours, a wide collection of cultural and heritage tourism experiences, and growing numbers of adventure tourism opportunities. Cultural tourism in particular is a growing market in the park, providing both a means to create alternative livelihood strategies, and to celebrate the rich cultural diversity within the area through the sharing of traditional knowledge and practices.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE
The construction of an Integrated Development Plan is currently underway, with various joint projects aimed at improving natural resource management, land-use planning, tourism, infrastructure and alternative livelihood development, being investigated and informing the plan; a first step is the development of five separate IDPs to inform a master plan, and it will be the job of the TFCA to promote the fair and equitable distribution of benefits from the plan. A project team has been appointed to undertake the task of consolidating the separate plans into a master plan for the park.

A small example of the benefits of the master IDP is the identification of a number of wildlife corridors, with conservation strategies to manage specific species such as wild dog.

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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK

The TFCA is made up of South Africa’s Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and Botswana’s Gemsbok National Park. This is the only Transfrontier Park to date that is open in the true sense of the word – here tourists can move freely across the international border within the boundaries of the park. In recognition of a verbal agreement reached in 1948 leading to the de facto existence of the park, no barrier exists along the international border separating the constituting parks.

The sheer vastness of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park requires little extensive management intervention, allowing the nomadic ungulate populations and their predators to maintain balance within the natural system.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Kgalagadi is Africa’s first Peace Park. A bilateral agreement recognizing the new Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park was signed in 1999 between Botswana’s Department of Wildlife and National Parks and South African National Parks, and the park was officially opened in May 2000.

The park was established to protect the unique biodiversity in the area. High sensitivity of arid regions to climate change, and the increasing risk of desertification resulted in global recognition of the importance of plants and animals that have adapted to withstand environmental extremes.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE

The park conserves one of the world’s most abundant semi-arid biomes. Southern and western areas are composed of mainly Kalahari xeric savanna, with some Kalahari Acacia-Baikiaea woodlands.

As is common in arid regions, the weather can reach extremes. January is midsummer in southern Africa and the daytime temperatures are often in excess of 40 °C. Winter nights are cold, with temperatures below freezing. Extreme temperatures of -11 °C and up to 45 °C have been recorded; precipitation is sparse.

**Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park**

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<thead>
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<th>Countries</th>
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The Tswana word Kgalagadi, meaning ‘place of thirst’ - a name that captures its spirit completely. The vista is one of washed out greys, bottle greens, browns and golden yellows, contrasted with the vibrant reds and oranges of dune and sun permeating every stretch of horizon. It is a place where mornings bring life, movement and energy, and the aging day brings increasing silence, stillness and scorching heat.

The reserve offers sparse vegetation, including deep-rooted Acacias and other hardy plants. Also endemic to the region are the horned melon, the African horned cucumber and the hedged gourd.

Despite arid conditions, the park is a biotope for fauna, offering excellent game viewing due to arid conditions, concentrating game in the dry riverbeds of the Auob and Nossob Rivers.

With more than 55 mammal species, it is renowned for predator watching, it is home to a range of mammalian predators, including black-maned Kalahari lions, cheetahs, leopards, and hyenas. Their counterparts of migratory herbivores seasonally traverse the park in the hundreds, and include blue wildebeest, springbok, eland, and red hartebeest. Smaller residents include ground squirrel and meerkat, as well as honey badgers, pangolin and bat-eared foxes. It also boasts more than 200 species of birds.

The Tswana word Kgalagadi, meaning ‘place of thirst’ - a name that captures its spirit completely. The vista is one of washed out greys, bottle greens, browns and golden yellows, contrasted with the vibrant reds and oranges of dune and sun permeating every stretch of horizon. It is a place where mornings bring life, movement and energy, and the aging day brings increasing silence, stillness and scorching heat.
4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES
The park is an important cultural heritage area for the ‡Khomani San people. Originally proclaimed a conservation area in 1931, the South African side of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, was established to protect migratory gemsbok herds roaming the area. The ‡Khomani San were resident hunter-gatherers in the arid Kalahari Desert, and fencing of the park resulted in forcible removals and resettlement into villages around the park, precipitating a change in their lifestyles from hunter-gatherers to pastoral herders.

In 1996, the ‡Khomani San initiated a land claim on this land, and settlement was reached in 2002. A historic agreement was entered into between the ‡Khomani San and Mier communities, and the South African National Parks, involving leasing of land to the park. Part of the land was set aside for the use of these native peoples, who retain commercial benefits and rights to the land, and use of the land for symbolic and cultural purposes.

There is a high level of poverty in the surrounding areas, with communities building livelihoods primarily based on small-stock herding, craft manufacturing and cultural performances.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES
Biodiversity conservation, tourism and community-based natural resource management, and the implementation of a cultural heritage plan to accommodate the ‡Khomani San and Mier communities are the key management priorities for the park.

Major biodiversity interests are the managing water resources between biodiversity conservation and tourism interests, and addressing an apparent decline in numbers of nomadic species such as red hartebeest and springbok.

The preservation of the cultural and traditional knowledge of the two indigenous communities (‡Khomani San and Mier) while improving their livelihood opportunities is a major human interest of the park, through the !AeiHai Kalahari Heritage Park. A key objective is to expose Bushman children to their traditional ancestral lifestyles, facilitated through the implementation of the Imbewu programme and its traditional veld school.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES
Distribution of water resources: Water scarcity is an ongoing challenge. The TFCA is engaging in ongoing drought relief and disaster preparedness programmes with neighbouring communities.

Pastoral activities impacting on biodiversity: The main economic activity for bordering communities is agriculture. Water scarcity, impact on biodiversity and a lack of economic diversification are pressure points derived from this activity. Youth grants are currently being offered to incentivize and catalyze economic empowerment projects and stabilize alternative livelihoods in these communities.

Managing people – park relationships: Gaining access to the park for indigenous communities remains a challenge despite their landowner status. Communication challenges continue to impede development of mutually beneficial mechanisms to provide access to cultural and ancestral resources. There is currently no park policy in place to guide divergent needs of communities and conservation managers. However, the !AeiHai Kalahari Heritage Park does have a joint management board, comprising of representatives from ‡Khomani San and Mier communities and South African National Parks.

Compounding climate change impacts: Increasing droughts and decreasing rainfall due to climate change are placing further pressure on limited water resources servicing park and communities. The TFCA on the Botswana side is engaged in the construction of additional boreholes and the development of alternative rain harvesting strategies in communities adjacent to the park in an attempt to alleviate prolonged water shortages. There is growing need for mainstreaming climate change adaptation strategies into the parks’ management plans.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES
Access to Kgalagadi TFCA can be gained through four access facilities in three countries: from Botswana through Two Rivers / Twee Rivieren, Mabuasehube and Kaa; from Namibia through Mata-Mata, and from South Africa through Two Rivers.

Other highlights:
- The Ta Shebube desert circuit is a new tourist destination on the Botswana side, featuring two lodges, at Polentswa and Rooiputs, and promoting high-quality, low-density tourism.
- The !Xaus Lodge, owned by the Khomani San (Bushmen) and Mier communities, in partnership with SANParks is a fully catered luxury lodge in the park, boosting tourism and benefits for the affected communities.
- The park also has three tented wilderness camps and a network of 4X4 routes has been developed.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE
Three exciting developments are underway in the park:

In 2013, a draft integrated development plan, joint operational strategy and standard operating procedure for the movement of people, goods and services in the park were finalized, with a joint management committee to oversee activities. It is hoped that the strategy will improve strategic management of the park significantly in the next few years.

A second promising development is increased interest by landowners on the Namibian side of the border in joining their land to Kgalagadi and becoming part of the ecotourism attraction through the Mata-Mata access facility. Communication around the matter is helpful.

With the injection of funding from multiple international parties, ongoing work in establishing and developing the !AeiHai Kalahari Heritage Park is also underway, and will open up increasing avenues for cultural tourism, as well as creating a heritage preserve for the local people.

9. CONTACT DETAILS
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1. An Overview Of The Park

The Liuwa Plains-Mussuma Transfrontier Conservation Area (LMTFCA) covers an area of 14,464km² between Angola and Zambia and is currently a category “C” emerging TFCA. It consists of the Mussuma area in Angola and Liuwa National Park in the western province of Zambia. The push for the development of the TFCA came from a motivation document produced in 2009 by the Peace Parks Foundation, which indicated the potential and viability of the Liuwa Plains-Mussuma TFCA. One of the significant values of this TFCA is the protection of Africa’s second largest herds of migrating wildebeest and zebra populations.

It is hoped that the establishment of this TFCA will lead to a range of benefits, including: fostering trans-national collaboration and co-operation especially with regards to ecosystem management; drawing investment and in-kind support from additional partners, the private sector, local communities and NGOs; enhancing ecosystem integrity by harmonizing environmental management procedures across international boundaries and working to remove man-made barriers restricting the natural movement of wildlife across the area; strengthening frameworks and strategies through which communities can participate in, and tangibly benefit from, the management and sustainable use of natural resources; to facilitate and strengthen the establishment of a sub-regional economic base through area-appropriate development frameworks; and to foster socio-economic development through transborder ecotourism.

2. Historical Background

Liuwa Plain National Park was historically a traditional park under the local chiefdom, until it was taken over by the government in 1972. The park possibly has the longest history of wildlife protection in Africa, enjoying protection when King Lubosi Lewanika declared it a ‘game reserve’ in the 1880s. In 2003, the Zambia Wildlife Authority and the Barotse Royal Establishment entered into a formal agreement with African Parks (Zambia) for the management of Liuwa Plains National Park for a period of 20 years. This partnership yielded positive results as illustrated by an increase in blue wildebeest numbers from 15,000 in 2003 to nearly 43,000 in 2011.
During this time, the Angolan government proclaimed Mussuma National Park in preparation for the TFCA's development, and in order to further protect wildlife migration on the Angolan side. This was followed by an inception meeting to start the process of developing an Integrated Development Plan, meeting with strong support from both countries.

Game species in the area showed a rapid decline towards the end of the 1990s, but seems to have started recovering again after the involvement of the African Parks Network, who spent extensive resources on community outreach and development activities.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE
The TFCA occupies the northern reaches of the Barotse Plain, lying between Lungwebungu and Luawinga. The area covers the Zambezian Flooded Grassland eco-region, the Miombo Woodland eco-region (primarily in Angola) and the Zambezian Cryptosepalum Dry Forest eco-region that occurs in patches north of the Lungwebungu River riparian zone. Liuwa National Park is situated in the upper west Zambezi flood plains, resulting in coverage of a significant portion of the catchment area of the Zambezi River, Africa’s fourth largest river system.

Large areas of the plain become flooded annually between December and April. In the southern areas, there are scatterings of flat open pans, many of which hold their water until well into the dry season. Game movement is extensively controlled by seasonal shifts, with game following water movements across the plain.

Vegetation cover consists of a mosaic of grasslands and woodlands; tree species include Burkea Africana and Baiiea plurijuga and Diplorhynchus scrub. The plains are dotted with occasional small tree-islands or clusters of raffia palms, but consist primarily of vast stretches of grassland.

Home to Africa’s second largest migratory population of wildebeest and zebra, after the Serengeti, massive herds migrate annually from the Liuwa Plains National Park in Zambia to the Mussuma region in Angola for the duration of the flood season and return again after the water has receded.

It is also home to numerous rare and endemic floral and faunal species, where the flood plains act as critical breeding grounds for several endangered reptiles, amphibians and birds. The area contains a number of remnant species, such as buffalo, needing an opportunity to recover and reestablish their populations. Primary species occurring in the area include wildebeest, hartebeest, sitatunga, tsessebe, reedbuck, hippos, crocodile, zebra, oribi, wild dogs, spotted hyena and leopards. There are also more than 300 recorded bird species, 56 of which are rare or migrating, contributing to the Important Birding Area status of the park.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES
There are about 432 villages and 20,000 people living in and around Liuwa Plains. These people have a long history of co-existing with the wildlife, and the park plays an important role in local Barotse culture.

Local tribes were retained in the park as official gamekeepers by the Litung-Lewanika in the 19th century. During this period, Indunas held various conservation responsibilities - an institution that continues to exist. Communities practice sedentary agriculture with mixed farming methods, while living with wildlife. People in the region have developed a sophisticated system of rights to resource use, including fishing and harvesting of natural resources such as thatching grass, building poles and palm fronds. A role growing out of their traditional role as game keepers is as resource protection scouts.

Although the centralized management of the park in 1972 undermined many of these cultural practices and traditional institutional regulations, park management in subsequent years realized the value of these practices, and in 2005 began documenting them; they have since been re-established with the assistance of the Barotse Royal Establishment. The TFCA enjoys strong community engagement and participation in strategic management.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES
As the TFCA is still emerging, there has not yet been joint planning on management priorities. The Liuwa National Park is currently managed by the Government as a protected area for game.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES
Although many community practices are admirable, there are still issues related to poor land use practices, including growing concerns over deforestation, fires and ring barking of trees. In addition, the Mussuma area is not protected and hunting is presently uncontrolled and viewed as poaching from the Zambian perspective.

As with other TFCA's, climate change-related concerns are growing; here, it is in the form of declining rainfall, and the associated stresses on both wildlife and human populations.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES
Many parts of the park are still challenging to access, with few roads leading into the area. Adventure tourists can access the area from February to April by walking and canoeing, although this needs to be arranged in advance, and carefully planned for.

There are also five community campsites in operation, serviced by communities, and including cultural tourism offerings.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE
Current plans include a climate change adaption project that aims to enhance local adaptation to the receding canal water (resulting from declining rainfall patterns), which negatively impacts on canal transportation and market access. There is also a need to develop tourism infrastructure to incentivize increased tourism into the area.

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1. **AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK**

In northern Zimbabwe, the Mana Pools National Park has the mighty Zambezi River separating it from Zambia’s Lower Zambezi National Park. The two national parks lying opposite each other make for a massive wildlife sanctuary. The Lower Zambezi-Mana Pools TFCA measures 17,745km² and lies in the Zambezi Valley, below the Kariba Dam; it has been used by wildlife as a thoroughfare between the escarpment and the Zambezi River since the dawn of time.

Composed of the Lower Zambezi National Park (4,092 km²), and the Mana Pools National Park in northern Zimbabwe (2,196 km²), with 2,500 km² of river frontage, islands, sandbanks and pools, it is a verdant landscape. While component parks are among the least developed in southern Africa, the TFCA is now recognised as a World Heritage Site based on its wildness and beauty, and the pools so characteristic of the area are designated as a Ramsar Wetland Site. There are four permanent pools which are the remnant ox-bow lakes that the Zambezi River carved out thousands of years ago as it changed its course. Long Pool (extending 6km), is the largest of the four pools and has an impressive population of hippo and crocodile.

2. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The area has a dark history in which the Zambezi River acted as a major trade route for slave and ivory trade. In more recent history, the ecosystems of the area themselves were rescued from industrial slavery when the Mana Pools National Park was saved from a hydro-electric scheme in the early eighties; the scheme, had it been successful, would have resulted in the flooding of this subsequently declared World Heritage Site. The import of this rescue becomes even clearer in light of the designation of the area as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance in 2013.

As the lakes seasonally gradually dry up and recede, the region attracts many large animals in search of water, making it one of Africa’s most renowned game viewing regions. There are a wide range of large mammals including very high concentrations of hippopotamuses and crocodiles and large dry season mammal populations of elephant and buffalo. The area also boasts over 350 bird species and rich aquatic wildlife.

3. **NATURAL HERITAGE**

The park falls in the dry woodland and moist woodland biomes, offering lush, vivid landscapes. Located in southern central Africa, the TFCA ranges from the recent river alluvia of the valley floor to the ancient gneisses overlain by thin lithosols.

With wet hot summers and dry winters, this transfrontier park is great for game viewing. The mean annual rainfall is approximately 700mm with a mean annual temperature 25°C. Mana Pools National Park has a large flood plain on the lower Zambezi that floods during the rainy season turning it into a broad expanse of lakes.

The riverbanks running through the park are flanked by forests of mahogany, wild figs, ebonies and baobab while the flood plain is fringed with mopane forest with a few winterthorn trees and huge acacias interspersed. The vegetation changes to open albida (Faidherbia albida) woodlands on the old river terraces and hills that form the backdrop to the Park.

A landscape strewn with the cast-off remnants of a ponderous river that left behind Mana (‘four’) orphan pools as it strove for increasing speeds in its race to reach the ocean, the Lower-Zambezi–Mana Pools TFCA is a lush gem of woodlands and moist riverine life, dressed in green, blue and brown.
4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

On the Zambian side, communities live outside the park but within the game management areas. They are engaged in wildlife conservation through established community structures (Community Resources Boards). The Zambian park has a Village Scout Programme where scouts are recruited, trained and equipped to patrol and protect the Lower Zambezi’s wildlife and deter illegal activity. This programme has provided training and employment for young men and women in the surrounding communities. An implementing organisation, Awely, has now joined the park in a community support programme where they run workshops with the local communities.

On the Zimbabwean side, the communities bordering Mana Pools National Park live from the river (approx. 100km). Sapi and Hurungwe communal areas incorporate Chewore and Marongora safari areas and are part of the TFCA; these parks engage the communities through the CAMPFIRE Programme which facilitate community beneficiation through controlled hunting.

Most community livelihoods on the Zambian side revolve around farming and fishing from the Zambezi River which borders Zambia and Zimbabwe, whilst on the Zimbabwe side communities are mostly involved in farming and CAMPFIRE programmes. The community programmes are promising and relationships are strong between the parks and the surrounding communities.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

Supporting documentation, preparatory work and draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) have been finalised for the governments of Zambia and Zimbabwe to formalise the TFCA. However, the TFCA as yet, has no formal Integrated Management Plan. The TFCA is managed for conservation of natural resources such as wildlife, vegetation, fish, etc., as well as and sustainable utilisation of natural resources through controlled hunting and eco-tourism.

The Lower Zambezi National Park and the surrounding Game Management Areas have management plans, and the Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) has initiated Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) activities which include local farmer training workshops on strategies to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts. These include innovative strategies such as chilli fencing, throwing of fireworks, and fencing off gardens with big logs to deter hippos (although this strategy works only to some extent as some farmers do not build the fences carefully, if at all).

Mana Pools National Park also requires a World Heritage Property Integrated Management Plan to ensure long term priority for the protection of the natural values and to guard against encroachments and impacts from sport hunting, poaching, boating along the Zambezi, fishing, campsites/chalets for tourists and other inappropriate development, as a matter of priority.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

As with many other areas in the region, escalated erratic rainfall patterns are having an increasing effect in the area. Localised rainfall variability further compounds uneven movement and distribution of wild animals, which has caused a high prevalence of, and increase in the number of human-wildlife conflicts, as people and game compete for water resources. In an attempt to meet their needs, communities have responded by moving very close to the river, sometimes within 1m of the river, thereby transgressing the statutory limit of 50m in operation.

Unsustainable fishing methods are also having a severe impact on the aquatic biodiversity of the area, as is increased water pollution from the Kafue River, which passes through major industrial economic areas in Zambia on its way to the TFCA.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

There are a wide range of tourist facilities from lodges to communal or exclusive campsites.

Adventure tourism offerings include 3-day walking safaris, lion tracking, fishing (tiger fish, bream and vuundu), canoeing and game drives which all need to be booked in advance. Tourists are offered the unique privilege of walking on the old river terraces, unaccompanied by guides in the open Albida woodland because visibility is good and there is little danger of unexpectantly coming across dangerous animals.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Development of a World Heritage Property Integrated Management Plan for Mana Pools is currently being considered. Linked to this is the development of an Integrated Management Plan for the area to facilitate collaboration between the component parks.

Addressing water challenges among communities is becoming increasingly urgent; the TFCA’s climate change working group is currently working to develop strategies to mitigate impacts and build resilience among communities to be able to weather climate variability.

9. CONTACT DETAILS

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Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area

A pallet of turquoise seascapes capped in white juxtaposed with deep rich earth tones of green and brown forest, woodland and marshland, undulates before you, as you enter a landscape where every angle offers a different view into the magnificent natural arena that is the Lubombo TFCA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
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1. **AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK**

Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area spans an area of 10,029km² and borders Swaziland, Mozambique and South Africa. As one of the most striking areas of biodiversity, it lies in the Maputaland Centre of Endemism that includes five Ramsar sites: Ndumo Game Reserve, the Kosi Bay System, Lake Sibaya, the Turtle Beaches and Coral Reefs of Tongaland and Lake St. Lucia (Africa’s largest estuary). Lubombo boasts the first marine TFCA in Africa, the Ponta do Ouro-Kosi Bay TFCA, where Mozambique’s Ponta do Ouro Partial Marine Reserve turtle monitoring programme links up with the one across the border in South Africa’s iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

It aims to serve as a vehicle for the conservation and sustainable use of biological and cultural resources whilst promoting regional peace, co-operation and socio-economic development.

The primary objective of Lubombo TFCA is to create an enabling framework to facilitate economic development through appropriate optimisation of opportunities presented by the countries’ natural assets, ecologically and financially sustainable development, and the sustainable utilisation of the natural resource base through holistic and integrated environmental planning and management.

The TFCA also aims to reunite the last naturally occurring elephant populations of KwaZulu-Natal and southern Mozambique, which historically moved across the border along the Futi system and Rio Maputo floodplains.

2. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

In 2000, five protocols toward the establishment of the Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation and Resource Area were signed between Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland. Five sub-TFCAs were formed.

3. **NATURAL HERITAGE**

Lubombo occupies dry woodland, grassland and east African coastal forest and scrub biomes. Its eastern border contains extensive systems of wetland formations, including riverine and estuarine communities, sea grass beds, mangrove, saline and freshwater hygrophilous grasslands, reed and sedge beds, swamp forest, fresh and saline coastal lake systems and marine shoreline with sandstone reefs supporting the sub-region’s most diverse coral communities.

A key feature of this TFCA is the Lebombo Mountain range from which the TFCA got its name; the mountains are made up of volcanic remnants with basalt valleys to the west and rocky shores to the east. The geology of the area is associated with the sedimentation of the supercontinent Gondwanaland which existed when all the southern continents were in one mass.

The park boasts diverse assemblages of species, with a high status among plant endemics found in the area and standing as one of four centers of globally significant plant endemism in southern Africa. Some areas lie in strategic positions at the southern limit of the tropics where many species are at the southern limit of their range while containing species from temperate zones to the south. The area supports an impressive variety of terrestrial plant communities and ecosystems including floodplain, savanna, mangrove, swamp forest, dry icuati forest

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and woodlands on sand, coastal dune forest, sand forests, dry grasslands, and hygrophilous grasslands.

In terms of reptile species, the eastern terrestrial side of the park contains a healthy population of Nile crocodiles and the coastline provides important nesting sites for leatherback and loggerhead turtles; levels of endemism are high, especially in burrowing species in the dune forests. The park supports at least three fish species which are endemic or near endemic to the area. Greater St. Lucia Wetlands Park’s significant features include coral reefs with soft corals, 800 species of marine fish, humpback whales, ragged tooth sharks, whale sharks and manta rays. There is a wide variety of bird species due to a broad range of habitat types, including three species and 47 subspecies that are near endemic to the Maputaland Centre. Historically, the park supported a wide range of mammal species, protecting populations of national importance including “big 5” species.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

This area has a rich history of people-environment interactions and holds intrinsic value to the Swazi nation, who use it as the annual venue for ‘butimba’ (a traditional hunting event led by the Swazi King).

Communities rely on the area for important subsistence resources including fish, honey, building materials, wild food plants, medicinal plants and game; small but significant areas are cultivated within the park itself. At least one programme within the TFCA is aimed at strengthening beneficiation through sustainable harvesting and practices.

To facilitate communication between the park and communities, community liaison forums have been established; a community development technical advisor has been appointed to provide input and assist with implementation of the parks community development strategy through the park management unit. The aim of this strategy is to facilitate sustainable economic development and benefit-sharing among communities living in and around the park through a consultative, participatory process; part of the strategy includes the development of nature-based tourism and conservation enterprises.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

Management priorities include biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, invasive alien species and fire management, and community-based natural resource management; with a declared purpose of contributing to the protected areas system in the region by conserving the excepection biodivesity of both inland and coastal zones with lie in the Tongaland-Pondoland bio-geographical region, and which enables linkages between marine, coastal and inland components.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

Coordinating meetings and activities across the three countries and many small parks is a challenge. Not all countries involved commit to financial support that facilitates the TFCA initiative, resulting in lack of funds for infrastructure development. Land claims in some areas result in ongoing shifts in park borders, and the reduction of park area. The TFCA is also experiencing escalating costs by the incorporation of private land. Political instability in some countries hampers development and monitoring activities, and land use conflict in some areas undermines the TFCA’s aims.

Unsustainable resource harvesting practices also have significant impact on park ecosystems, and poaching of rhino and elephant is an ongoing challenge. Non-residents remove resources such as mangrove produce, game meat and fish.

Like most other protected areas in the region, this TFCA is negatively impacted by climate change, with increased temperatures and decreased rainfall affecting food production and pasture for livestock, and subsequently causing increasing deforestation and poaching. Harvesting forest resources for charcoal production, fuel wood and other uses, and timber clearing for agriculture contribute to climate change directly, and reduce the resilience of ecosystem services within the TFCA.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

Magnificent scenery as well as a rich historical and cultural environment make this area a significant tourist destination. Ancestral and sacred sites and important cultural associations with certain species of animals are prevalent in the area. Sites of interest include the sacred Hlatikhulu forests, King Dingaan’s Grave and Border Cave in South Africa, the ruins of the old border post at Manhoca in Mozambique, and the Royal Hunting Reserve within the Royal Hlane Game Reserve in Swaziland. A unique form of traditional fishing and fishery management (fnya) is also practised by communities in the area as well as traditional craft markets where community members are able to market their goods. In the coastal regions of the park conventional tourism initiatives such as scuba diving, 4X4 scenic routes, dolphin and whale shark sightings and deep sea fishing are offered.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In 2013, work started on drafting an integrated development plan for the Usuthu-Tembe-Futi (UTF) component of the TFCA. A joint operational strategy was also developed for the Maputo Special Reserve (MSR) and Tembe Elephant Park components of the Usuthu-Tembe-Futi TFCA. Efforts to develop the infrastructure and community involvement in the park are ongoing.

Climate change adaptation is also currently being planned for implementation into surrounding communities, with a focus on increasing resilience of sustainance crops.

9. CONTACT DETAILS

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Lesego Sello, International Coordinator
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1. **AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK**

The Maiombe TFCA encompasses the Maiombe Forest, stretching over four countries, including the south-west corner of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Cabinda Enclave in Angola, the Republic of Congo and south-west Gabon. Here, core areas of protection rest within controlled utilization of various types and levels. Maiombe Forest forms the south-western part of the tropical rainforest in the Congo Basin and the southern margin of distribution for a large variety of species of flora and fauna in West Africa, including lowland gorillas and chimpanzees. Termed one of the world’s richest “hot-spots” of biological diversity, it contains 70% of all terrestrial global biodiversity found in tropical forests. As a result, it has been awarded World Heritage status.

2. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

In 2000, the Angolan government considered the effects of the armed conflict in the country on biodiversity conservation efforts, acknowledging that during times of war and political instability, environmental issues and nature conservation are generally given low priority. They also acknowledged that the long-term welfare of its residents and national economic sustainability and stability relied on protecting its natural resources. In 2002, the initiative was adopted by the Republic of Congo and an MOU was signed between Angola, Congo and the DRC in 2009, with Gabon joining the initiative in 2013. It is hoped that these efforts may also contribute to political and economic stability in the region. Currently several NGOs support local-level projects within the TFCA, and a number of United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), also support development.

3. **NATURAL HERITAGE**

The Maiombe Forest, part of the Tropical Rainforest biome, forms the southern margin of evergreen tropical rainforest in West Africa. Climate in the region is hot and humid, with mean annual temperatures of 23-26°C and a mean annual rainfall of around 1,200 - 1,800 mm. Fog occurs frequently.

Maiombe Forest is a multi-storied forest, ranging from dominant layers of tall evergreen trees (40-60m), with narrow canopies, through layers of smaller trees and shrubs with climbers, to diversified layers of herbaceous and epiphytic plants.

It is home to a wide variety of fauna, from insects and other invertebrates, to freshwater fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals. The forest also has species of outstanding universal interest, including the two great ape species – chimpanzee and lowland gorilla, and forest elephant. Forest buffalo, several species of guenons, Bosman’s potto, golden potto, several species of bush-babies, several small forest duiker species, water chevrotain, sitatunga, bushpig, and forest hog also live here, as do several genet species, two-spotted palm civet, leopard, giant pangolin and tree pangolin, flying squirrels and a variety of squirrels, rodents, and bats. The African manatee is found in the Zaire River, and the forest also boasts a variety of at least 95 bird species with the grey parrots and the great crested laurie of special interest. Some of these species are listed in the IUCN Red List as threatened, but inventory and status of species remains insufficient and scarce.
4. **PARKS AND COMMUNITIES**

Most of the residents in the forest rely on subsistence cultivation, small-scale husbandry, hunting, and participation in logging operations. Population in all countries as well as an unknown number of internally displaced people and refugees, have suffered decades of armed conflicts, the results of which include poverty, unemployment and lack of access to basic services and commodities.

A consultation process with resident communities for the conservation of the Maiombe Forest and its biodiversity is ongoing. This initiative is twofold: protecting the rich and significant biodiversity of the forest and to alleviate poverty through sustainable alternative livelihoods in contrast to the current non-sustainable utilisation of the forest's natural resources. There is hope that a transfrontier initiative will serve to build medium and long-term sustainable socio-economic welfare of resident communities, and also contribute to peace and stability in the region.

5. **TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES**

Broad management priorities for the TFCA include sustainable management of the Maiombe Forest ecosystem for protecting biodiversity of global importance, enhancing sustainable socio-economic development for communities in the region, and building a culture of peace and cooperation in a trans-boundary and post-conflict zone and beyond.

Specific management priorities include development of a regional program for the study and conservation of the Maiombe Forest, with focus on conservation of great ape populations. Other priorities include developing legal and policy frameworks, institutional frameworks and participatory approaches, spatial/land-use planning, law enforcement, awareness raising, technical capacity building, baseline surveys and bio-monitoring, and financial sustainability.

6. **MAIN CHALLENGES**

All countries in the TFCA are troubled by unresolved political and economic instability. As a result of high population densities, the Maiombe Forest is subject to a high rate of degradation, mainly through heavy logging and poaching. Poaching includes in-country and cross-border illegal trade in wild species of flora and fauna and their products. Poaching is driven by the demand for bush meat and the pet trade. The problem with poaching of apes specifically is that young apes are often orphaned, requiring care until they are old enough to be released back into the wild. The establishment of a sanctuary is costly; fortunately some organisations have offered to help with capacity building for a successful programme to be put into place. Maiombe Forest is more affected by poaching and logging in Congo than in Angola; such differences may lead to increased cross-border impact on the better protected areas.

Other identified threats include unsustainable development works, mining interests, invasive species, especially, human-wildlife conflict and the impacts of armed conflict and poverty. Joint protection efforts and enforcement measures are therefore crucial.

7. **TOURISM INITIATIVES**

Traditional leadership and resident communities in the TFCA There are a few hotels in the Cabinda Angola area that are old but still functioning, and tours run from here into the forest. Safari packages include activities like river tubing, gorilla and animal watching, trekking, hiking, swimming in waterfalls, rivers and lakes, camping and caving. Although more and more people visit the Congo area, responsible tourism (biodiversity conservation, education, and empowerment of local communities) is still an untapped concept in the region.

It has great potential however with the Atlantic coast and its long sunny beaches, extraordinary landscapes from savannah to rainforest, a unique flora and fauna, a rich cultural history and friendly people making the country a good destination for tourists.

8. **LOOKING TO THE FUTURE**

Traditional leadership and resident communities in the TFCA countries have expressed a keen interest in developing this initiative, stressing the need to develop alternative livelihood opportunities in order to replace current hunting, poaching and logging activities. These may include employment opportunities within the TFCA initiative, support in developing subsistence agriculture and livestock husbandry and exploring other possibilities of sustainable use of resources. Long-term focus includes exploring the options to develop well managed community-based eco-tourism.

Training is required on several levels, from high-level training for leadership in implementing the TFCA in each country to training resident communities to protect the forests and how to benefit from alternative livelihoods and possibly eco-tourism. Assistance of international NGOs to train and to build capacity will be required as well as help from national NGOs to lead education and awareness campaigns.

9. **CONTACT DETAILS**

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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK

2,000m above the bushveld and wetlands of Vwaza March, this plateau is classified as one of Africa’s premier centres of plant diversity, and a ‘Global 200’ priority region for conservation. The park enjoys status as an Important Birding Area (IBA) due to its large number of biome-restricted birds.

The TFCA covers 19,280km² and includes Nyika National Park, Lundazi, Mitenge and Mikuti Forest Reserves and Musalangu Game Management Area in Zambia, and Nyika National Park and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve in Malawi. The Nyika Park in Malawi offers the highest diversity of large mammals and largest concentration of roan antelope in Africa and supports the world’s greatest blue swallow breeding population.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An MOU towards the TFCA’s establishment was signed in 2004, launching a series of developments into the area. A joint project management team from both countries is in place to implement integrated management decisions.

In 2013 a draft integrated development plan was finalised, resulting in the inclusion of the North Luangwa National Park to the TFCA. Ministerial approval for this addition has since been obtained and the TFCA description will soon be changed to include North Luangwa National Park.

Culturally, the area offers a variety of historical sites including ancient dwelling sites with rock paintings (for example, at Fingira Rock and Wan’gombe Rume), various iron-ore mines, iron-smelting kilns and the remnants of complex traditional iron-working traditions.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE

This TFCA is located amid a high undulating montane grassland plateau reaching 2000m above Vwaza Marsh, and encompassing a moist woodland biome. The area is a major watershed for both Lake Malawi and the Luangwe River in Zambia, and contains six distinct physiography zones.

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**Malawi Zambia (Nyika) Transfrontier Conservation Area**

Follow the wind across a vista of undulating grasslands, gently dancing around vivid wildflowers; skimming over wetlands and marches as they chuckle with the cacophony of frogs, birds and insects; stirring through woodlands cloaked in shades of green and brown bedecked in jewel-toned orchids; and finally settle into the deep earth, safely holding clues to our cultural past nestled in her serene bosom. The Swahili word Nyika, or ‘hinterland’ brings to mind all of these scenes and more.

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The park is divided into seven catchment zones, and most streams and rivers run throughout the year. Nganda Hill in Nyika is the highest peak in the park at 2607m. Climate in the area is colder than the surrounding region, with cold, wet, misty conditions. In contrast, Vwaza Marsh consists of low hills and pediments to the east and a generous region of alluvium and wetland to the west; the reserve is generally flat, at an average altitude of 1125m. Similarly, Lukusizi is fairly flat beyond its western foothills, and like Kasungu, has few topographic reliefs beyond small inselbergs.

The park contains four vegetation types including: Brachystegia woodland, Montane forest, Montane grassland and Dambo grasslands. Plant diversity is high in the area, including an astounding 215 species of orchid.

Fauna diversity is as spectacular and includes a number of rare, endemic species and wide-ranging species, with over 95 mammal species, 426 bird species, 47 reptiles and 34 species of amphibian. While no clear indication of invertebrate diversity is available, there are 200 butterfly species in the park.

Apparent reduction in poaching frequency, and corresponding improvement in animal sightings have led to a wildlife restocking programme, and surveys now indicate a general increase in wildlife populations, especially of elephant, hippo, buffalo, roan antelope, hartebeest, zebra, warthog and reedbuck.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

Surrounding communities are engaged in mainly smallholding agriculture on customary tenure, and cattle grazing within the protected area is a challenge in some parts of the park.

While park staff has had difficulty in maximising stakeholder consultations with communities, these communities have also begun to bring their concerns to the table. Cross-border trade, and other cultural exchange initiatives are important to these communities who share many of the same traditional values. Efforts are also underway to provide community beneficiation, although this process has not yet been formalised and is still in the process of development.

Community outreach and support during flooding is already established. In response to both the need to mitigate flood-related threats to people, and decrease poaching activities, work is being proposed to develop alternate livelihood practices that shift people away from the floodplains, including sustainable farming strategies.

In contrast, water resource management challenges are significant for the Zazuni community – especially during the dry season. Collaborating with the Chigwere Cultural Village, a borehole was installed to help mitigate water shortages.

Parks on both sides of the border have also begun to employ permanent labour teams for road clearance and fire management in the TFCA.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

The key management priority for this TFCA is biodiversity conservation. Alarmingly, issues of deforestation, floods and water scarcity are not clearly mentioned in the management plan, beyond reference to them as management problems, and indicating a need for management strategies to guide action plans.

Implementing the TFCAs’ anti-poaching programmes across international borders has been a priority since the establishment of the park. This is being addressed through the appointment of a wildlife law enforcement advisor who is coordinating the Zambia Wildlife Authority’s anti-poaching programmes and Malawi’s Department of National Parks and Wildlife programme, resulting in joint law enforcement projects across international borders, and has met with resounding success. Ongoing training initiatives to capacitate reserve staff are underway.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

Key challenges to the park include a high incidence of poaching leading to decreasing viability of the ecotourism trade into the area; human-induced forest fires set by poachers to flush game or honey harvesters trying to smoke out bees are creating lasting impacts on some forest areas; and pressure on forest resources from tobacco farming in surrounding areas, where wood is being harvested to cure tobacco, leading to increasing deforestation is increasing.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

Malawi Nyika National Park has well-established infrastructure, with roads, airfield and an up market lodge and other accommodation at Chilinda. The Zambian Nyika and Vwaza Marsh also have facilities that are developed. However, infrastructure in Luangwa Valley is well developed only in the south of Musalangu. The frontier road between Lundazi and Vwaza Marsh is accessible for tourist traffic.

Cultural heritage resources and artifacts also contribute to tourist attractions to the area, including ancient dwelling sites, rock paintings and Iron Age smelting sites. The Chigwere Cultural Village is gaining increasing popularity with tourists, with the communities who run it offering an enthusiastic experience of local cultures.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The releasing of a trust fund grant of almost $5 million has catalysed work to establish more effective cross-border management of biodiversity in the Nyika component. Co-financing commitments nearing $11 million over the next five years add to this cash injection into the park.

A draft integrated development plan has been finalised, resulting in the inclusion of North Luangwa National Park into the TFCA. Work is currently being done to finalize this integration and begin implementation of integrated management strategies into this new area. Plans are also underway to re-establish populations of sable, black rhino, eland, waterbuck and roan antelope into the park, linked to the success of anti-poaching activities in the area.

Increasing provision of boreholes to supply communities around the Vwaza Marsh area has been placed on the park agenda in an effort to improve community resilience during drought periods. Linked to this, are broader, park-wide community education actions around climate change.

9. CONTACT DETAILS

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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK

The Maloti Drakensberg TFCA covers an area of 8,113 km² of which 5,170 km² is in Lesotho and 2,943 km² is in South Africa. It is a world heritage site offering both cultural and natural value. The park is composed of four sub-regions, namely, (i) the Eastern Cape Drakensberg and Witteberge, (ii) the KZN Drakensberg, (iii) the Lesotho Maloti mountains, and (iv) the eastern Free State.

Straddling the eastern border between Lesotho and South Africa, it incorporates more than 300 km of Maloti and Drakensberg mountain ranges, and includes the Sehlabathebe National Park in Lesotho and the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park in South Africa. An MOU between South Africa and Lesotho was signed in 2001, and seven years later, management plans for both component parks were completed. In 2013, World Heritage Site status was extended from the uKhahlamba Drakensberg World Heritage Site to include the Sehlabathebe National Park, and becoming the Maloti-Drakensberg Park and Lesotho’s first World Heritage Site.

This park provides a platform for protecting rich biological diversity, cultural heritage and key watersheds within the Maloti and Drakensberg mountains in an integrated manner.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Maloti Drakensberg Mountains are home to a vast array of cultural heritage features, including globally renowned San rock art. Other cultural heritage features include various palaeontology, stone-age and iron-age excavations, site and artefacts.

There are a range of ethnic groups associated with the region, each with a unique living heritage. The mountains, with their highest peak Thaba Ntlenyana rising to 3,482m, are home to the world’s grandest outdoor gallery, containing the largest, most concentrated collection of rock paintings in Africa, south of the Sahara. 35,000-40,000 individual images are housed in more than 600 known sites; and painted by the San people over a period of more than 4,000 years.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE

The park encompasses both a grassland biome and afro montane forests, and is an important centre of endemism for montane plant species. Comprising a 500 kilometre-long alpine and montane area along the southern, eastern, and northern borders of the landlocked mountain Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa, the TFCA can be found in the south-eastern portion of the Great Escarpment of southern Africa.

The geology of the area consists primarily of sandstone and basalt, commonly found in horizontal bands. Basalt deposits (early jurassic period) overlay late triassic sandstones of the clarens formation, both part of the Karoo Supergroup. Soils are thin on the basalt plateau, but deep on the clarens sandstone. Summit soils become wet and water-logged in summer and are subject to freezing during the evenings and thawing during the day in winter.

By far, the most important water catchment for the people of both Lesotho and South Africa, the integrated wetland systems provide critical water purification and ecosystem storage services for both countries. The Tugela-Vaal Scheme and the Lesotho Highlands Water Project transport water from the catchment to the metropolis of Johannesburg and surrounding cities, while at the same time producing electricity for Lesotho.
Fauna and flora

This area contains a range of globally significant fauna and flora, including over 2,500 species of flowering plants, of which 13% are locally endemic. Plant diversity and endemity in the region are related to broad-scale altitudinal, topographic, climatic and edaphic gradients, as well as an array of micro-habitats.

Each of the three bioclimatic zones in the park is associated with a specific vegetation type: the montane zone is characterized by Podocarpus latifolius forest and grasslands (with some protea savanna elements); the sub-alpine zone by fynbos and grasslands (with some Protea savanna elements) and wetlands; and the alpine zone by the ‘tundra-like’ heath, Erica-Helichrysum, and grasslands.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

This vast stretch of land is home to almost two million people, contributing to an explicit goal of the park – to make a positive difference in the livelihoods of people in these communities. Significant numbers of other people are also indirectly dependent on the region for ecosystem services. Large areas of park are under various forms of common property regimes, including land-uses and tenure systems, formal protected areas, privately owned commercial farms, range management areas, and human settlements. These multiple forms of land-use result in a variety of human-biodiversity challenges, including impacts from grazing, conflicts between traditional tribal resource management and park resource management strategies, and conflicting land-use priorities. The two countries have different land management strategies, with diverse governance systems (state vs. traditional authority).

Key livelihood activities include agriculture, extractive resource use and tourism. A primary challenge in an area with such a large population is to conserve the natural environment and maintain healthy ecosystem services while meeting the development needs of its people.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

There are two overarching priorities for the TFCA: (i) to conserve globally significant biodiversity; and (ii) to contribute to community development through nature-based tourism. Integration between the two independent Project Coordination Units is already underway, facilitating and supporting the work of implementing agents in the component parks. Meeting the former priority has proven easier than the latter, with a long history of collaborative management between Lesotho and South Africa as regards conservation of biodiversity. The latter priority contends with a range of challenges, from competing land-use priorities and practices, to diverse policy and land governance structures. However, work around education and sustainable farming is already underway.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

While there is a drive to improve tourism (and related livelihoods options) into the area, there are still challenges of inaccessibility into some areas with tourism attractions, as well as a lack of adequate resources to improve, maintain and expand tourism assets.

The area is also under increasingly serious threat from various unsustainable land-use and management systems as well as issues related to cross border crime such as stock theft, drug smuggling, and attacks on hikers, all of which call for more concerted and coordinated efforts for mitigation and management.

To counter these threats, a Transfrontier Security Strategy was developed jointly by relevant agencies from both countries, and is currently being implemented.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

This TFCA offers a range of tourism highlights and opportunities. There are a number of well-established camps and campsites across the region, ranging from rustic bush camps to well-equipped luxury lodges and destination accommodations. Cultural tourism opportunities are as bountiful, with several cultural villages, multiple sites of public access to rock art, and a selection of cultural tour packages on offer. There are also an increasing number of adventure tourism offerings available, including annual mountain biking challenges, a number of well-marked and maintained hiking trails, and mountain climbing routes. Currently, those are more developed on the South African side, but growing numbers of tourism offerings being offered in the Lesotho component, or spanning both countries.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

There are currently two related strategies being explored to improve community beneficiation and reduce the impact of cattle grazing in prime ecosystems. The first is a proposed development of a payment scheme for those deriving ecosystem services from the area – the income generated would be used to facilitate beneficiation for local communities as well as maintain and manage park services for these areas. The second is the proposed re-introduction of managed resource associations to manage grazing numbers within communal land.

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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK

In the southeast border of Tanzania and extending to the border of Mozambique, the Mnazi Bay-Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park (MBREMP) has an area of 650km²; Quirimbas National Park, stretches 110km along the northeast coast of Mozambique, and is constituted of the 11 southern most islands of the Quirimbas islands covering an area of 7,500km².

With a total area of 8,150km² and the high levels of connectivity, this coastline TFCA is a critical source and refuge for the dispersal and maintenance of reef diversity to downstream areas in the north and south on mainland coastal areas, and to the east side of the Mozambique channel. The complex is globally unique, acting as a critical node for supplying marine organisms to the East African coast (Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and northern South Africa).

2. NATURAL HERITAGE

The TFCA falls under the East African Coastal Forest and Scrub Biome. Climate is tropical, with the rainy season from December to April and dryer cooler season from May to September. Daytime temperatures range from 25°C to 35°C and the water temperatures fall between 24°C and 27°C.

This northern Mozambique coast experiences extremely high mixing due to cyclonic and anti-cyclonic eddies generated in the north of the Mozambique channel, and is defined by breakpoints to the north, where the East Africa Coastal Current touches the Tanzania coastline flowing north, and to the south where the narrowest part of the Mozambique channel induces changes in currents and upwelling features on the Mozambique coast.

Mudflats, salt pans, mangroves, rocky and sandy shoreline, coral reefs and seagrass beds which are host to many species all form part of this area. Mangrove forests have an integral part in coastal and marine ecosystems because they are highly productive, producing large quantities of organic matter that serves as biotic food; they are breeding and nursery grounds for invertebrates and fish. These forests trap river sediments that would otherwise smother seagrass beds and coral reefs, stabilizing the coastline by preventing shoreline erosion from wave action and changing sea levels. There are approximately 70km² of mangrove forest in the conservation area, accounting for nearly a tenth of all the

Sea turtles deftly glide beneath the surface, passing through the string of ocean pearls that are the Quirimbas Archipelago, visiting coral neighbours along the way and pausing their oceanic journeys to nest among the golden white sandbanks of the north-eastern coast. Travelling further inland, other denizens of sea and sky encounter mangroves, standing sentinel in with their bizarre root-arms in the air. This is an area of surreal beauty, clothed in fantastical wonder.
mangrove forests of Tanzania, with seven reported mangrove species.

Coral reefs within the Park are among the most diverse hard coral communities in east Africa. This high diversity is probably due to the influence of the South Equatorial Current and the park’s complex range of proximate habitats. In total, 258 hard coral species have been identified in the park - coral fauna is dominated by species in the Acroporidae and Faviidae families.

There is a thousand-metre wide tidal expanse of thick, healthy seagrass beds along the northern end of the Msimbati Peninsula; ten species of seagrass have been reported in MBREMP, and are home to many marine biota.

Approximately 400 species of fish have been identified in the park. Although five species of turtle have been recorded, the most common species are green and hawksbill turtles, both of which nest in the park at various times of year. The IUCN has designated all turtles of the western Indian Ocean as endangered, with hawksbill and leatherback turtles considered critically endangered. Sea turtles are protected internationally under the Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species (CITES).

Several types of cetaceans also occur, including humpback whales, sperm whales, and four species of dolphin (common bottlenose dolphins, Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins, Indo-Pacific humpback dolphins, and spinner dolphins).

Avian fauna is understudied, but the area is recognised as an important birding area for shorebirds and waders. The park is home to a large population of crab plovers, although numbers seem to be declining. Other animals of interest include hippos, crocodiles and elephants.

3. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

Around 30,000 people live in the MBREMP - these people depend heavily on marine resources. Local communities are represented through village councils; each council comprises representatives of the village community (e.g. village leaders, fishermen, farmers, hoteliers, forest users, etc.). The council empowers a village liaison committee to act on their behalf.

The Quirimbas National Park works with an existing and functioning technical working group and NGOs to engage community associations. This networking group has been operating since 2008.

Eco-tourism initiatives that have been establishing over the last few years provide training for local staff that are taken on as employees.

Building the capacity of communities to engage in sustainable use of resources as well as to adapt to climate change in ways that allow them to moderate potential damage are some of the key foci for community engagements.

4. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

The Mnazi Bay – Quirimbas TFCA is a conceptual TFCA that does not have a management plan yet, but aims to contribute to protected areas conserving the exceptional bio-geographical transition of the Swahelian /Maputuland region with the responsibility to improve management and conservation of both inland and coastal zones within one area while promoting sustainable use of natural resources by the local communities.

5. MAIN CHALLENGES

The abundance of coral genera that are vulnerable to bleaching is notable, particularly in the wake of bleaching that occurred in 1998 as a result of strong El Niño conditions, causing rises in sea temperatures and resulting in a decline in the reefs of Mnazi Bay by 30-50%. Evidence from this event is still apparent although regrowth and re-colonization by hard and soft corals has been robust, this event demonstrated the susceptibility and resiliency of Mnazi Bay's reefs to seawater warming.

Increased sea levels and sea surface temperatures, which are the results of climate change, have been identified as already having major impacts on coastal and marine ecosystems. Impacts include coral bleaching, fresh water influx to corals, and dying of mangrove forests. On both the Mozambican and Tanzanian sides of the TFCA, communities have been trying to adapt to decrease in rainfall through their own efforts. Communities have tended to depend more on coastal resources and forests for construction, firewood and timber which is posing threats to these coastal ecosystems. Another challenge the TFCA faces is the translation of climate change discourse to local languages to help facilitate explanations to communities. Over-fishing is also a challenge.

6. TOURISM INITIATIVES

There is a range of accommodation options from basic beachfront cottages to luxurious villas. Tourism is increasing as people learn about the TFCA. Strengthening tourism infrastructure and publicizing tourism offerings will help to provide sustainable income for park management.

7. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

One of the key priorities for the park is the development of management plans and strategies to coordinate sustainability and conservation action plans.

It is an ongoing challenge to raise awareness among community members and TFCA/park staff on climate change effects and different adaptation strategies. The sustainable use of resources is an ongoing discussion with the local communities. Work is currently underway to rehabilitate selected coastal regions to re-establish climate resilience, as well as to introduce improved sustainable resource harvesting practices.

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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK

Niassa-Selous TFCA is one of the largest TFCAs in Africa covering an area of 154,000 km². Two thirds of the area is protected through the Selous Game Reserve to the north (Tanzania), which at about 48,000 km², is Africa’s largest single protected area. The Selous Game Reserve is also the continent’s oldest protected area, dating back to 1896, and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its counterpart, the Niassa Game Reserve is Mozambique’s largest conservation area covering 42,000 km². The two protected areas are linked by a corridor – the Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor, which comprises of an area of about 10,000 km² extending approximately from south to north for a length of 160 to 180 km following the Ruvuma River.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

An MOU on cross-boarder cooperation between Tanzania and Mozambique was signed in 2007.

The corridor between the component parks were settled by the Undendeule and Ngoni, with the Yao people later joining these communities. A number of significant historical gravesites are found in the area, as well as a few discoveries of old smelting sites and other related artefacts.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE

Moist and dry woodlands are the primary biomes in the area. Niassa-Selous TFCA ecosystem is one of the largest transboundary natural dry forest eco-regions in Africa.

The areas key physical features are granite inselbergs, seasonal and permanent wetlands and rivers – creating excellent conditions for a range of globally significant biodiversity.

Rainfall generally decreases from the northern section, with about 1,200-1,300 mm rainfall per year towards the south, and having a mean annual rainfall of about 800 mm along the Ruvuma River. Mean annual temperature is approximately 21°C. The corridor has the typical unimodal rainfall system of the miombo woodland ecosystem.

With a size larger than Malawi, the TFCA constitutes one of the largest elephant ranges in the world and contains half of the worlds remaining wild dog population; it supports a large diversity of other globally significant, threatened and CITES-listed fauna and flora species.
This woodland ecosystem as a whole is the largest transboundary natural dry forest ecosystem in Africa, covering an area of 150,000 km², and extending across southern Tanzania into neighbouring Mozambique. It includes a range of habitats including wooded grasslands, open savannah areas and moist and dry forests.

The Selous–Niassa Wildlife Corridor provides a significant biological link between these two reserves, supporting the conservation of one of the largest elephant ranges globally and extending the range of approximately half of the continent’s remaining wild dog population. The area is also home to significant populations of buffaloes, sable antelopes, lions, leopards, wild dogs and other a large variety of wildlife.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

All the communities in the corridor area, are involved in community-based natural resource management activities.

A unique feature of the park is that the corridor is located entirely on the land of 29 villages within the administrative areas of Namtumbo and Tunduru districts in Ruvuma region; it is composed of a contiguous network of five Wildlife Management Areas managed by community-based organisations. There, in cooperation with local and district authorities, 17 villages established two wildlife management areas, the “Mbarang’andu” and “Nalika” WMAs. The three community-based organisations, Chingoli, Kisungule and Kimbanda, established their wildlife management areas in the southern part of the corridor and their people have been involved in capacity development.

Therefore maintaining a balance between village development needs (and associated natural resource harvesting and management) and biodiversity conservation (and related wildlife management) is a priority for the TFCA.

An innovative strategy to negotiate between these two priorities has been implemented in the area, involving a participative process of land-use planning where local communities designate areas in which they conserve and manage wildlife and other natural resources; communities derive revenue from these areas. It is through this strategy that the TFCA contributes not only to conservation but equally important to development and poverty alleviation in these rural areas.

Long-term conservation management of the Selous and two communal associations, Mbarang’andu and Nalika adjacent to the Selous, have resursted in larger concentrations of wildlife in the northern part of the corridor. According to aerial surveys, undertaken every three years, the wildlife populations are relatively stable. Wildlife populations in the southern part of the park have begun to recover since the surrounding communities have become actively involved in their management; however, wildlife is still timid and will need a few more years of protection to reach sizable populations.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

This TFCA, like many others, was established to facilitate cross-border cooperation to promote regional economic growth, development, the traditions of good neighbourliness and a peaceful environment, and the conservation of important biodiversity areas. Thus, cross-border conservation was officially recognised and identified as one of the key areas for cooperation. Major management priorities include biodiversity and wildlife management, promotion of sustainable natural resource harvesting practices and tourism. The project aims to initiate the economically sustainable development and conservation management of one of the most significant and widely recognized wildlife corridors in the SADC Region. Goals include the conservation of biodiversity in the Miombo-woodland ecosystem and overall improvement of the livelihoods of local communities by sustainable use of natural resources to combat poverty.

Activities on the ground include the exchange and mutual support of research and of anti-poaching information, parallel patrols, and agreements about the utilisation of natural resources.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

Even though the TFCA was formed between two consenting countries, their involvement in such activities as training of stakeholders are not the same across the two countries. The Mozambican counterparts have not participated in the training courses offered to date and need to be brought on board. Efforts need to be made to dedicate people from the Mozambican side to work with Tanzanian counterparts.

Habitat degradation due to uncontrolled wildfires, high human population growth and associated agricultural expansion will increasingly lead to higher carbon emissions from the area. Tobacco and increasingly paddy farming in wetlands contribute to the loss and fragmentation of natural habitat. In combination with ribbon strip developments along the major roads they will form a genetic blockade between the world’s largest protected Miombo-forest ecosystems and wildlife habitats.

As with other parks in the region, climate change is already having an impact on the area. One of the key issues is the loss of carbon sinks through deforestation and the destruction of other ecosystems. Currently, a need to conduct assessment on land use activities and their relationship to landuse activities has been identified; this includes exploration of alternative landuse options including conservation agriculture, tree farming, bee-keeping and aquaculture. In the meantime, work was begun on rehabilitation of damaged ecosystems through co-engaged mobilisation of stakeholders in the area.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

Being a place that is teeming with wildlife the TFCA creates opportunities for hunting tourism, which is currently the only form of tourism in the area. Hunting concessions are well established in the northern part of the corridor, and are world renowned for classic big game hunting.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Development of alternative land-use and sustainable development opportunities are well under way in the area. Rehabilitation of key ecosystems to build climate change resilience into the system is also underway.

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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK

The Western Indian Ocean is a huge open marine waters space that includes the Small Island Developing States and others outside the SADC region such as Kenya and Somalia, and the marine areas around Tanzania, Mozambique and South Africa. The Western Indian Ocean Transfrontier Marine Park (TFMP) is still within the conceptual phase of development, with no formal MOUs having been signed as yet.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The vast range of the TFMP makes it difficult to provide a historical insight into the area. However, one of the highlights is the re-discovery of the coelacanth – a prehistoric fish thought to be one of the links between ocean and land life, and once thought to be extinct.

Situated along major trade routes between the East and West, it has been host to high-seas trade for over 1,500 years, well before the arrival of Europeans into the region. The islands are, sadly, characterised by a history of colonisation and indentured-labour immigrants and slavery.

A rich and diverse cultural milieu arising from this past characterises the region, with influences from Africa, Asia (especially India and Malaysia), and Europe.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE

As the name suggests, this park is primarily composed of marine environments, and includes terrestrial areas bordering marine bodies and those completely surrounded by oceans. The sheer vastness of the area means it encompasses a range of terrestrial biomes, including eastern African coastal forest and scrub, moist woodland, and granitic Indian ocean islands.

Landscapes include dune forests, coastal forest, and marine to mountain thickets. Oceans within the TFCA also range in depth and composition; those with rocky floors contain large amounts of coral and high species diversity; deep oceans also occur within the park, as do a range of inter-tidal zones with diverse characteristics. Estuaries, characterstic of trees, algae, seaweed and wetland flora abound in areas where fresh and saltwater meet, creating 'trade centres' within the world's aquatic biomes, with high species diversity. Marine biomes are divided into coral reefs, estuaries and oceans ecosystems, all of which fall within the park; oceans contain the largest and most diverse ecosystems, making this Africa's TFMP with the highest levels of diversity. This park is host to the third largest coral reef on the planet.

Plants range from terrestrial plants in coastal forests, and mangroves on estuaries, to plants on the ocean floor.

Geology of the East African coastal basin and Western Indian Ocean is characterised by features arising from tectonic activity. The oceans are covered with remnants of sedimentary rock from the African highlands. Some of the western Indian ocean islands such as Seychelles are made up of rocky outcrops with narrow strips of sandy beaches. This is different from Mauritius which is generally flat and also has large tracks of sugar cane farms, one of the environmental challenges of monoculture and associated agricultural practices.
The West Indian Ocean water is warm, with temperatures ranging between 22°C and exceeding 25°C degrees Celsius and generally clear water. The eastern African coast is generally cool and dry but detailed changes in the year are complicated by the influence of both the monsoon winds and the Inter-tropical convergence zone. Rainfall across the park is variable, and significantly influenced by monsoon winds and the El Nino complex.

Seascapes include both pelagic, benthic and abyssal zones, with pelagic zones playing host to a range of marine mammals, plankton, floating seaweed, and numrous fish species; the benthic zone offers a landscape of silt, sand and slowly decomposting organisms that is quite cold because of the lack of sunlight at these depths. The benthic zone contains few plants, and faunal life are mainly bottom feeders such as starfish, anemones, sponges, amongst others, as well as various micro-organisms. Abyssal zones are host to many species of invertebrates and deep sea fish including the coelacant, as well as species that glow in the dark; this zone is very cold, and highly pressurised. Its floor features vents formed by spreading tectonic plates, which release hydrogen sulfide and a range of other minerals consumed by bacteria, which are in turn consumed by micro-organisms, etc. all the way up the food change.

Animals are also varied, from those living on the coast and feeding from ocean resources such as crabs, penguins and birds to those living mostly in water such as turtles and water-living animals such as corals, whales and other oceanic mammals, various types of fish and echinoderms.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES
A diverse range of communities occur within this park, all of which have diverse needs and challenges, depending on their country contexts and ecosystem environments. One of the foci for conservators within many of these communities is the development of education programmes and resources that teach the importance of the marine park in relation to national economies and biodiversity conservation. A range of educational programmes for schools and communities, as well as information portals for tourists, already exist. In some areas, for example in Mauritius, work has begun to mobilise school children, teachers and women around coral health activities and other matters of importance.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES
Main marine park management priorities are for biodiversity conservation, tourism development and public education. Climate change mitigation and adaptation are also key priorities within the park.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES
The park continues to need more capacity for cross-border collaboration and communication, the sheer scope of the park and small size of many of it’s constituent countries means that some countries are slow at responding to calls for collaborative work. Not all countries joined the park at the same time, resulting in multiple levels of buy-in, and of course, not all countries share the same level of commitment to the goals of the park.

A booming tourism industry, on which many of the island states depend, is accompanied by escalating amounts of infrastructural development over limited island areas; impacts on fragile ecosystems and related faunal and floral life quickly take on negative proportions, and have resulted in a number of endangered species – especially amoung endemic species. This has led to a greater drive for the development of sustainable tourism initiatives by those engaged in work within the park.

Climate change is a serious concern within the park, with entire ecosystems and communities under threat due to rising ocean levels, ocean acidification and oceanic warming. Many coral areas are being bleached, and receding beaches are common within the park. Although some adaptation work is being done in some countries (beach monitoring in Seyshelles and Mauritius, climate change education in various countries, and a scheme of payment for ecosystem services in Madagascar) there is as yet, no coordinated park-level mitigation and adaptation strategy in place. Over-exploitation of marine resources occurs in varying scales, and is perpeturated by large scale finshing companies all the way through to sustainence communities.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES
International tourism is booming especially on the island states. There is a drive to promote indigenous tourism both for conservation purposes, and so that local communities begin to appreciate the wealth of natural resources this environment offers. Educational tourism is also being implemented across the area.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE
More work is required for enhancing capacity of the stakeholders in cross border collaboration and communication, knowledge, more sustainable practices and enhancing community participation. The formalising of an MOU between partner countries is a first step towards facilitating collaborative work.

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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK
The Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Zambia (ZIMOZA) TFP is an initiative for managing shared natural resources based on common principles among the three countries. It is made up of the Zumbo and Magoe districts in eastern Mozambique, Luangwa in southern Zambia and Guruve in northern Zimbabwe. The TFP is still at a formulation stage although the process began in 2002. Departing from previous processes of developing TFCAs, it was decided that ZIMOZA would be established under an agreement, rather than an MOU; this draft agreement has been approved by both Mozambique and Zambia, while awaiting Zimbabwe’s approval for signing.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
The establishment process of this ZIMOZA TFP was first spearheaded and facilitated by IUCN from 2002 to 2003 and then later in 2008 by the African Wildlife Foundation in conjunction with the Zambia Wildlife Authority. A draft agreement was finalized and scheduled for signing in 2010; with the Ministry of Justice of Zambia providing legal comments on the draft document.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE
The area is characterized by dry and moist woodland and Afro-montane forest and grassland with low rainfall (650mm of rainfall per annum on average). Major rivers found in ZIMOZA TFP include the Zambezi River, which forms the boundary of Zimbabwe and Zambia, the Luwangwa River, which forms the boundary of Zambia and Mozambique, the Hunyani and Angwa Rivers, which flow through Zimbabwe and Mozambique, and the Maonde River.

The TFP is characterized by diverse tree species mostly dominated by grasslands, open forest and closed forest. The forests include Miombo, Mopane, and Combretum species. Elephant, buffalo, lion, kudu and hippo are iconic mammals found in the area.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES
In the TFP, there is a strong focus on local communities, as indicated in the management priorities section below. Communities around this newly established park are separated by borders but not by culture, history or the natural environment on which they flourish.

Studies indicate that populations in the ZIMOZA TFCA area are heavily dependent on natural resources such as water, fish, wildlife, forests and others for livelihood. One of the park’s primary aims is to enhance community livelihoods through community-ecosystem based adaptations, mitigation and land-use planning. With funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the IUCN has undertaken a study to assist in clearly defining ownership of resources and who is entitled to benefit from accrued benefits; this will inform future beneficiation strategies and policies. To date, Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) is implemented on the Zambian side, while the CAMPFIRE program is run in Zimbabwe. To accurately inform management decisions and strategic planning, there is a need for the TFP to engage communities in risk and vulnerability assessments around a host of human-environment relationships.
Poverty levels in the surrounding communities are a concern, both because of the compound impact of poverty of people, and on the resource dependence such economic challenges cause within protected areas.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

The ZIMOZA TFP has several management priorities. One priority is to secure and guarantee the long-term sustainable management and utilization of the environment and the natural resources in the area and to maintain its ecosystems. It also aims to develop biodiversity conservation measures as well as to encourage realization of the economic potential of the area, which will bring economic benefits to the different stakeholders and especially to the local communities.

Promoting and encouraging participatory management of the environment and natural resources is another management priority, as is restoring damaged ecosystems and promoting biological and cultural diversity as well as enhanced opportunities for sustainable development.

Drawing on its peace-building imperative, ZIMOZA seeks to also contribute to conflict prevention and resolution, the building of trust, confidence and security and providing a tool for the peaceful settlement of disputes affecting border areas.

To support these primary mandates, the TFP has prioritized the sharing and pooling of expertise, experience and information-sharing among parties, local communities, community-based organizations, NGOs and the private sector in order to promote the conservation of the environment and sustainable utilization of natural resources.

The ZIMOZA TFP endeavors to enhance the area’s tourism industry by increasing the local and international profile of the area as well as developing joint promotional campaigns that will stimulate the three-way flow of tourists and freedom of movement of people in the area. With a goal to encourage and promote cross-border co-operation at the community level in order to enhance trade, investment, social, cultural and economic development of the area, establishing communication channels and Integrated Development Plans are priorities for the park.

Complying with regional and international agreements, protocols and conventions regarding conservation of the environment and sustainable utilization of natural resources (including the SADC Treaty and relevant protocols) underlies all of these priorities, and provides a strategic point of engagement between partner countries.

In order to implement the agreement, the TFP seeks to harmonize policies, legislation and practices of the parties relating to the sustainable management and utilization of the environment and natural resources, customs, trade and investment, immigration, tourism and such related issues. ZIMOZA also plans to integrate, as far as possible, the managerial, conservation, research, marketing and other systems of the area into the national plans, policies and programs of the parties respectively. Broadly, the TFP hopes to achieve sustainable ecological and socio-economic development across international boundaries.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

A threat to biodiversity is one of the primary challenges to ZIMOZA TFP. This is due to several factors such as decreasing rainfall and surface water availability as well as increased drought and flood occurrences (due to climate change); increased wildlife poaching due to economic hardships in Zimbabwe; population pressure; poorly defined land use plans and habitat fragmentation due to human settlement in wildlife corridors. Speaking to the challenge of infrastructure, a Zambian chief argues, “The real challenges are, however, to build things like infrastructure for the areas to become serious tourism hubs”, in an effort to strategically divert economic development strategies towards nature-based sustainable livelihoods practices such as tourism.

As with other TFPs and TFCA, team co-ordination and communication is a challenge for ZIMOZA; the park is still in its initial stages of development, and management teams and their governments have yet to formalize and begin implementation of integrated management systems.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

The IUCN undertook studies to profile the ZIMOZA area for its tourism potential that includes land, wildlife, rivers such as the Zambezi, natural forests, a variety of vegetation types, beautiful panoramic views and human resources. Tourism development and management plans for the entire ZIMOZA TFP are currently being drawn up. The focus of governments is to ensure that tourism benefits communities and contributes to poverty eradication across the area. An example of a community initiative is a cultural village in Zambia where a local community showcase their traditional way of life and is now bearing fruit with tourists paying to visit the village. A local chief comments: “Communities, even those marginalised, have the knowledge of making use of their natural resources but they need financial support to realise their dreams”.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

There is a great deal to achieve in supporting the TFP to become fully operational, as well as a great deal of potential towards strengthening human-environment interactions in the areas, while creating a biodiversity-rich protected area. Currently, partner countries are working on refining their agreement, and on developing strategic policy frameworks that will support the implementation of integrated management into the area. There are already plans to address the challenge of declining rainfall and deforestation through promoting alternative livelihood options, such as bee keeping.

9. CONTACT DETAILS

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Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area

A place of towering sandstone, regal baobabs, and majestic stretches of savannah, echoing with the voices of civilizations long gone and promising an adventure through time – timeless in its vitality and kinship to the people of Southern Africa; Mapungubwe, the ‘hill of jackals’, was the centre of civilization in the south in its past life. Now it lives as a testament to the past, a complex arena for wildlife-people relationships in the present, and a promise for greater harmony and peace into our future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe</th>
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<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>5,909 km²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
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1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK
Situated at the confluence of the Shashe and Limpopo Rivers, the Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area measures 5,909km² and encompasses areas in Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Because of the rich history of the area, the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape was proclaimed a World Heritage Site in 2003. An MOU towards the establishment of the TFCA was signed in 2006, and an interim coordinator appointed. The reserve adopted its official name in 2009, changing from Limpopo/Shashe to the Greater Mapungubwe TFCA.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
The area has a long history of conservation, dating back to an initiative by General J. C. Smuts who, in 1922, decreed that selected farms along the banks of the Limpopo River be set-aside for the Dongola Botanical Reserve. A first attempt at creating a transfrontier park linking to similar conservation areas in what was then the Bechuanaland Protectorate and Southern Rhodesia was mooted at the time, only to be revisited again in 2000.

Containing some of the oldest examples of the start of the Iron Age, and evidence of complex societies dating back 1,000 years, as well as rock paintings of more than 10,000 years, the TFCA makes a significant cultural historical contribution to Southern Africa.

Artefacts discovered in the area attest to Iron Age settlements of around 1200AD, and the resemblance of excavated items at multiple sites across the modern international borders of the three countries attest to the cultural affinity of those who lived in the area historically. Evidence indicates traces of a highly sophisticated civilisation that traded with Egypt, India, China and Arabia.

A number of well-preserved fossils, including flowering plants as well as whole-bodied insects, were also recovered from the fine-grained mudstones, as have dinosaur footprints and fossilized termite mounds.

3. NATURAL HERITAGE
The park is situated in a savannah biome. This TFCA is found at the nexus of a unique combination of geology, climate and vegetation. The constituent areas share patterns of low, erratic rainfall (an average of 350 - 400mm or 10 inch per annum), which, combined with frequent drought cycles and poor soils, contributes to making the area extremely marginal for agricultural crop production.

Vegetation in the area is typically short dense grown of shrubby Mopane trees within shrub and tufted grasslands. The park includes riparian vegetation significant in its importance to conservation due to extensive cultivation elsewhere along the river.

Elephant, giraffe, white rhino, eland, gemsbok and numerous other antelope species occur naturally in the area, as do a range of predators including lions, leopards and hyenas, as well as a range of smaller game species. Pythons and black mambas
are among the varied reptile fauna found in the area. Birders can currently tick off more than 400 species, with numbers still growing as more of the park is being explored.

Insect and other arthropod life, too, are diverse. The Mopane Moth is in evidence between November and March; moth larvae are a valuable food source. At least nine scorpion species have also been identified.

4. PARKS AND COMMUNITIES

Surrounding communities rely on livestock rearing and rain-fed agriculture for their livelihoods. Compounding climate change impacts have resulted in significant decreases in crop yields and available grazing areas for livestock, linked to decreasing rainfall. Competition between game and livestock has increased, contributing to enlarged numbers of game encroaching on fields and contributing to growing occurrences of human-wildlife conflicts. The area is also affected by diseases such as malaria and foot-and-mouth disease, which are further stressing lifestyles in the area.

Transboundary community engagement is done through an institutional arrangement through which community workshops, consultations and communications are managed. The committee works with communities in different ways. For example, as with other reserves in South Africa, a land claim has been made on one portion of the park by the Machetes and Lishebas and been validated. Negotiations are still underway to determine restitution, and are being facilitated through the committee.

In Zimbabwe, there is strong school-based community engagement through the participation of the Beitbridge Rural District Council and Gwanda Rural District Council; there is an emerging trend of eco-schools growing from this project.

Communities and the park are working together to establish and promote alternative livelihood options in the facing of increasing environmental instability in the area; ecotourism is seen as a key alternative, and beneficiation options are being considered in the various countries.

5. TFCA MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

The TFCAs resource management committee was formed to deal with cross-border challenges at an operational level. Area managers are now directly able to attend to cross-border or international matters and joint management matters.

The park’s Integrated Development Plan indicates that conservation of biodiversity and community beneficiation are management priorities; the plan fails to mention climate change as a significant challenge in the area.

Reducing human-wildlife conflict is another priority, and work around climate change adaptation and developing infrastructure to protect croplands have been key areas of focus. The development of proper zoning areas to reduce dry land cropping in sensitive wildlife areas is part of this process.

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

Mining: The Mapungubwe area rests on a coal seam, and is under increasing threat from mining companies which have submitted a grant application for mining rights in the area. The proposal includes plans for a coal-fired power station that would also threaten the eco-tourism value of the area. Currently, an international campaign is underway to counter this threat.

Climate change impacts: Decreasing rainfall and persistent drought are increasingly prevalent challenges in and around the park. While community-based education and sustainable agriculture practices are being introduced, more rapid planning and implementation are required to meet the needs of park and people. Collaborative climate change initiatives employing alternative ways of diversifying the local economy are needed across all three areas. Currently, Botswana is implementing eco-tourism, Zimbabwe is doing intercropping and South Africa is focusing on irrigation.

Human-wildlife conflicts: With increasing effects of drought and scarcity of grazing resources, human-wildlife conflicts are on the rise. While fencing and zoning policies are being implemented, underlying challenges of livelihoods and water scarcity require more focused attention to resolve competition over resources.

7. TOURISM INITIATIVES

The park boasts a range of cultural and natural history activities. Cultural history activities include The Lost City at Mapungubwe Hill, a range of Heritage Tours, an interpretation centre and a number of heritage routes and trails.

Wildlife tourism includes game drives, a number of tented, caravan and bush camps, as well as picnic sites across the park. Adventure tourism activities are also being introduced, including the annual Tour de Tuli, which is attended by cyclists from across the world, and offering participants a chance to visit all three countries while cycling through wild areas.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Climate change adaptation work is underway in all three countries. Strategic plans to better integrate adaptation work are currently being developed, and include plans for the introduction of a Children in the Wilderness programme into the park.

A Disaster Management Plan is being drafted, providing a framework for managing climate-related disasters. Stakeholder feedback is underway to take this forward.

Integration of the Masego Community in Botswana and Vele Coal Mine in South Africa are also underway; this inclusion will result in an increase in park area of over 53,000 ha.

9. CONTACT DETAILS

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