

A close-up photograph of an elephant's face, focusing on its eye and the texture of its thick, wrinkled skin. A semi-transparent dark grey rectangular box is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing white text. The elephant's tusk is visible in the bottom left corner.

CONSERVATION HUNTING

A SAMPLING OF THE REMARKABLE BENEFITS
OF SAFARI HUNTING, AND HOW IT PROTECTS
MORE HABITAT THAN NATIONAL PARKS

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COVER PHOTO CREDITS: BRYAN WILSON

CONSERVATION BY OPERATORS

The safari hunting countries in southern and eastern Africa, particularly Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania represent the very best conservation success stories in the world. These seven countries are home to most of the world's megafauna and an immense biodiversity. They are also home to hundreds of millions of acres of habitat secured by hunting allowing the flora and fauna to flourish. It is no coincidence or mere correlation that these countries are the leaders of African conservation.

In fact, their unmatched conservation success stems from safari hunting. Allowing for the sustainable offtake of a few, mature, post or low breeding males provides an incredible amount of much-needed funds, which are dedicated to the conservation and protection of that species as a whole, as well as the entire ecosystem - and other species - around it. Hunting areas often serve as buffer zones around national protected areas, reducing human wildlife conflict with communities and significantly increasing the size of conserved areas. As a result, conserved areas in Southern Africa far exceed those of Europe or the United States. But conservation is costly, and without international conservation hunting these enormous tracts of land would be converted, degraded, divided and be subject to unregulated exploitation.

Most importantly, conservation hunting provides incentives for the people who live in day-to-day conflict with wildlife. The incentives brought by hunting, which include direct monies, jobs, health and education infrastructure, healthy protein, and more, help foster tolerance and stewardship. Hunting empowers communities to effectively manage, utilize, and protect wildlife, resulting in a more harmonious coexistence of people and wildlife. It is only through partnership with local people that wildlife will have a future. Conservation of wild places is an enormous undertaking, which requires a holistic approach.

Hunting operators are the unsung heroes on the front lines of conservation. They are the link between people and nature, ensuring both benefit sustainably. In managing the concessions of hunting areas obtained (leased) from Governments, their efforts extend far beyond the borders of their areas, securing the most habitat and the survival of the most species and empowering the region economically. The operators are responsible for habitat protection, poaching control, naturing the wildlife, and mitigating human wildlife and livestock conflict. They preserve and restore natural habitats and prevent encroachment, deforestation, and the effects of drought; create and operate benefit systems involving local communities so they become partners in wildlife protection; and minimize and compensate for human wildlife conflict, inspiring coexistence. All of this is paid for by hunters and hunting operators. This is conservation in action popularly called conservation hunting.

Hunting operators are at the heart of the conservation success of Southern Africa, but many of the benefits from their operations are not known or appreciated by the lay public and misinformed media. Hunting operators secure more habitat than national parks and are directly engaged with the local people in these rural areas and the governing authorities. Only by knowing their stewardship can one comprehend why Southern Africa excels in unmatched conservation. Most of the wild habitat is secured by the hunting operators.

This booklet highlights the conservation benefits of a representative sampling of two hunting operators from each of these seven featured countries. These operators are the real conservation heroes on the front line.

Please recognize the operators' service to society, nature and rural people.



John Alan Calkins



BOTSWANA

AFRICAN FIELD SPORTS

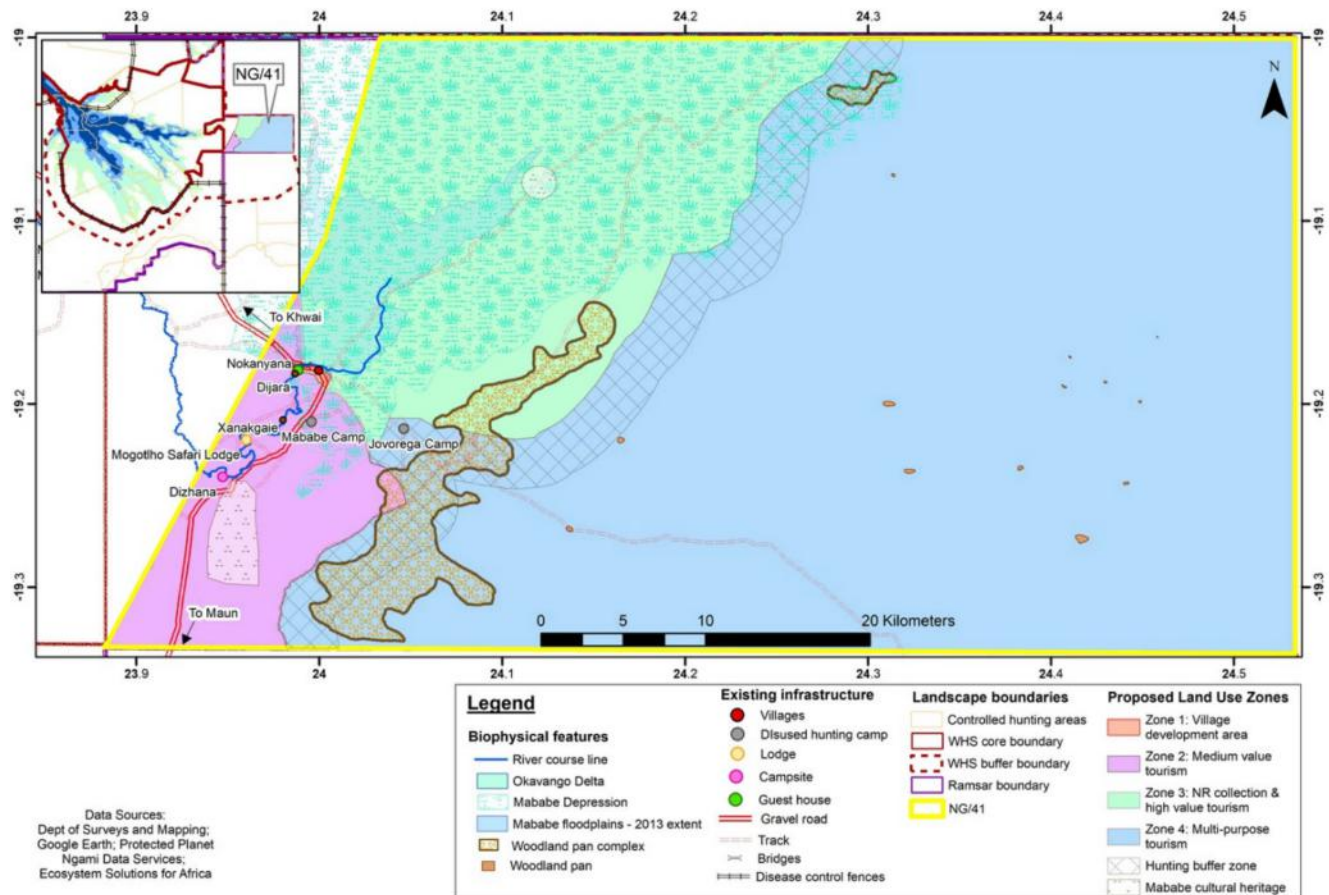
SETTING THE STANDARD FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Northern Botswana, known as Ngamiland, is comprised of game management areas, national parks, the world-famous Okavango Delta, and community areas. This is true wilderness, truly focused on conservation. As those living closest to the wildlife, the communities play a critical role through Botswana's Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) program. In 2002, the Mababe Community, custodians of the 2,210 km² (approximately 546,100 acres) land area known as NG41, forged a partnership with African Field Sports to develop both the hunting and photo tourism in their multiple use concession. Their agreement began as the first community in Botswana to be partners and stakeholders in a photographic tourism lodge and has grown to be a shining example of community empowerment and a proven conservation success.

WILDLIFE HABITAT AND THE SEARCH FOR WATER

The concession is situated between the Moremi Game Reserve and Chobe National Park. Fed by the Khwai River, the Mababe Depression is one of the only year-round water sources in northern Botswana. The rest of the area is grassland and Mopane bush. Water is life to the abundance of species living in the area, and the permanent water attracts a multitude of wildlife, particularly during the dry season. Due to this concentration, and based on intensive data collection, only a small portion of the concession is optimal for photographic tourism, illustrated by the map below. These areas are managed through the photographic lodge, and are complementary to the hunting area. African Field Sports brings an economic value through hunting to the remaining areas and ensures its conservation. Additionally, they have built and managed seven boreholes throughout for the benefit of the wildlife; this is a costly endeavor. Without hunting, the protection of the whole area - not just the optimal photo zone - would be impossible. This is the most responsible division of land use with the best results for the planet.

MAP FROM THE APPROVED LAND USE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR CONCESSION AREA CHA NG/41, 2021



COMMUNITY BENEFITS AND EMPOWERMENT

The Mababe Community of 200 households is totally dependent on tourism, most of all hunting. Botswana instituted a hunting moratorium from 2014-2019, which devastated their community and many others. As this is a wildlife conservation area, there is very little crop production and zero livestock. The community has the responsibility of custodianship for the wildlife and habitat, and also the legal - and moral - right to benefit economically from it. The

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community partnership includes investment by African Field Sports in the form of land rental, animal quota fees, support of the local football team, an elderly support fund, and support of the local culture and arts. 55 community members are employed through hunting, and 27 through the photo lodge. The other financial benefits are distributed by the board members of the Mababe Zokotsama Community Development Trust in a public meeting and include support for funerals, employing community escort guides, developing a public campsite for tourists, daily operation of the office, and more. This is run independently from the operator and demonstrates one of the best community success stories in southern Africa. In 2023 the land and quota fees equaled BWP4.3 million.

CONSERVING THE ELEPHANTS

A recent survey of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA) has shown that not only are elephants thriving in Botswana, but there is now an overabundance at approximately 130,000. This is a success that should be celebrated but presents a conservation problem to solve. Depending on the search for water and seasonal movements, elephant numbers are astounding, between 2,300 and 5,000 in NG41. This overconcentration is now posing a threat to long term habitat sustainability, overexploiting resources for elephants and putting the ecosystem, and other species dependent on it, at risk. Additionally, this manifests in human-wildlife conflict for the communities living with these beautiful, yet dangerous creatures. In areas where photo-tourism is not viable, a mitigating solution is the select hunting of a few, ancient elephant bulls for the survival of the whole - people, species, and wilderness. This reduces conflict; provides income, employment, and food security to the community; and helps ensure the sustainability of the ecosystem. Elephant conservation is complex but has found proven success with responsible operations and through a community benefits system. Communities have a right to keep their village safe and benefit from their natural resources. There is a stark contrast between the value to the community brought by hunting, which increases tolerance, and the devastation to the community brought by the hunting ban.

FOOD AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

Before the hunting moratorium, African Field Sports provided all meat from hunted animals - including transportation and processing costs - to the community. This accounted for 80% of the village's meat source, a critical resource to combat food insecurity. The hunting ban had devastating impacts which compounded during the COVID-19 pandemic. African Field Sports distributed food, particularly for the elderly, during the pandemic and honored its agreement with the community during the moratorium despite its loss of hunting quota. When hunting resumed in 2021, the meat of 20 elephants and 20 buffalo were made available to the community, which is largely preserved as a traditional dried meat called segwapa.



ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS

Anti-poaching and wildlife monitoring are the responsibility of the community. Ten community escort guides accompany each hunt in cooperation with the Department of Wildlife and National Parks. They provide weekly patrols and report observations on wildlife movement, habitat change, irregular human activity, and carcass sightings. This monitoring and protection ceased during the hunting moratorium - one of the many devastating impacts of the ban. Hunting puts boots on the ground and is inextricably linked to wildlife monitoring and anti-poaching efforts; and a thriving ecosystem.

THOLO & TLOU SAFARIS

PARTNERSHIP FOR CONSERVATION

The country of Botswana has conserved approximately 40% of its stunning landscapes, establishing itself as a leader in both southern Africa and the global conservation arena. This commitment to conservation has made Botswana a sanctuary for a diversity of wildlife and habitats, including a staggering percentage of the world's elephants. Central to this endeavor are the Conservation Hunting Areas (CHA) and dedicated hunting operations like Tholo and Tlou Safaris. These conservation hunting operators bring decades of experience and a deep-rooted dedication to protecting people, wildlife, and wild places. While they operate independently in various regions, together they focus on Botswana's expansive CT2 - a 3720 km² (approx. 919,230 acres) CHA in Botswana's central zone encompassing a rich tapestry of ecosystems bordering the Sibuyu forest. The local community, which includes the Nata, Maphosa, Manxotae, Sepako, and Gweta villages, play an integral role in this conservation story, showcasing the interconnectedness of people and nature and creating a sustainable model that benefits all. Through collaborative efforts, Tholo, Tlou, and the community protect CT2's incredible wildlife and inspire a global movement towards sustainable coexistence.



SPECIAL ELEPHANT QUOTAS

Botswana has taken a pioneering approach to elephant conservation and community empowerment through its community-led Special Elephant Quota areas. Each year, these quotas are auctioned to hunting operators, granting them a five-year lease for a limited number of elephant permits. These areas have very high rates of human-wildlife conflict, where wildlife attacks on communities leads to resentment, negative attitudes towards conservation, and increased poaching. In contrast, conservation hunting in direct partnership with the community fosters positive community engagement and support for wildlife protection. In 2022, the operator purchased CT2's elephant quota for the year, ten permits at a total of approximately \$580,000. These funds are channeled directly to the government's Conservation Trust Fund, supporting vital initiatives such as community projects, employment opportunities, and elephant management efforts, including aerial surveys, ground monitoring, and anti-poaching activities. The operators voluntarily support an array of projects, such as infrastructure

improvements, development of roads, and maintaining boreholes and equipment. However, the real potential for communities and conservation lies in a longer-term partnership. Recognizing this, Tlou was assigned a five-year lease for the area beginning in 2023, allowing for more effective management and conservation strategies. With this new lease framework, Tlou and Tholo can expand conservation projects, create more jobs within the community, and enhance wildlife protection and habitat management. This collaborative model not only strengthens community ties to conservation but paves the way for a sustainable coexistence between people and elephants.

BOTSWANA'S ELEPHANTS

The recent elephant survey of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA) reveals that this region is home to 50% of the world's elephants, with Botswana home to an impressive 58% of KAZA's elephant population, estimated at around 130,000. This is a documented overconcentration of elephants, as they are now beyond carrying capacity in Botswana and causing destruction to critical habitat, and by extension, wildlife that depends on it. This significant concentration underscores the importance of effective management strategies to maintain ecological balance, habitat sustainability, and coexistence of people and wildlife. Elephant conservation hunting programs play a crucial role in this effort, generating revenue for habitat protection and ecological management while providing local communities with employment, meat, and other vital benefits. Notably, these programs serve as the first line of defense against poaching, driven by the illicit ivory trade. In CT2 alone, elephants number at approximately 2,000, and likely increasing. Legal, regulated hunting of 10 elephants in CT2 is about 0.5% of the total population in the area. Hunting a very selective few, old males outside of the breeding pool, brings in boots on the ground for anti-poaching

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and critical revenue for conservation - benefitting elephants and wildlife as a whole. Since Tholo and Tlou began operations, the area has had zero elephant poaching incidents. These efforts highlight the necessity of comprehensive management strategies, demonstrating that legal hunting can benefit communities, mitigate human-elephant conflict, maintain balance, and ultimately preserve both wildlife and their habitats.

MEAT DISTRIBUTION

Tholo and Tlou support local communities around CT2 by voluntarily donating elephant carcasses to the villages, a process carefully coordinated between the company manager and local village development committees. From just ten elephants, approximately 3,500 tonnes of meat are distributed, providing a significant source of critical protein worth tens of thousands of dollars. In fact, one elephant bull is the equivalent of about 35 oxen, underscoring just how impactful this resource is. The meat is dried into segwapa, which can also be sold commercially, offering an important source of additional household income. In areas with food scarcity and high unemployment, the immense benefits that meat donations bring to the community's food security and economic well-being cannot be brushed aside or ignored.

COMMUNITY ESCORT GUIDES

Community Escort Guides (CEGs) play an essential role in every hunt within the CHA, working alongside the operator, hunter, and Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP). They are present on every elephant hunt and meticulously record ecological and wildlife movement data for DWNP. While the DWNP and the Botswana Defense Force are responsible for anti-poaching efforts, CEGs monitor these activities and follow up with the DWNP. The CEG submits a detailed Hunt Report upon conclusion of each hunt documenting wildlife movement, habitat changes, irregular human activity, and any carcass sightings. Recruited by the Community Trust and trained by the DWNP, CEGs also report poaching incidents to the relevant authorities, particularly if poachers are still in the vicinity. Lovemore, one dedicated CEG in CT2, details that these reports exemplify the commitment to transparency in the conservation hunting industry. He emphasizes that stakeholders ensure hunting is conducted sustainably, benefiting local communities. CEGs are critical for ensuring safety, leading tours, hunting within boundaries, and enforcing wildlife protection laws. The Hunt Reports detail any problems that arose, and the approach to fixing them. CEGs maintain community leadership and investment in conservation by the community.

REBUILDING FROM THE HUNTING MORATORIUM

The hunting ban by the Botswana Government from 2014 to 2019, effectively ending in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, had devastating consequences for CT2, which was left unoccupied during this period. CT2 is not suitable for photographic tourism, and had no economic alternative during the hunting moratorium. With no villages or operators in the area, infrastructure was difficult to maintain, especially water boreholes to support wildlife. The previous operator maintained these at personal cost

for two years, and although the government intended to maintain the boreholes and manage the areas, they lacked the necessary resources to do so. As a result, unmaintained boreholes drove wildlife into surrounding regions in search of water, leading to increased human-wildlife conflict, particularly with elephants. Furthermore, the absence of regular patrols by government anti-poaching teams allowed ivory poaching to soar, a fact well-known locally despite the lack of hard data during this time, due to the abandoned nature of the area. The reintroduction of conservation hunting has since stopped illegal poaching and exploitation, including local subsistence practices. Since the return of hunting, effective management, active human engagement, and a commitment to conservation that works for people, wild life, and wild places has led to the success of CT2. Tholo and Tlou are committed to this sustainable conservation, and will continue to strive for a harmonious balance between upliftment of communities and balance of nature.







MOZAMBIQUE

MCDONALD SAFARIS

VISION AND COMMITMENT TO CONSERVATION

Over twenty years ago, three friends with a shared vision - Øyvind Christensen, Sandy McDonald, and Fernando Chicolowe - recognized the wilderness potential of a 388 km² (approx. 95,880 acres) area on the Mozambique-South Africa border. They poured in a considerable investment, personal sacrifice, and long-term commitment to return a wartorn, exploited wasteland to a thriving ecosystem. Mozambique has an abundance of natural potential, bountiful resources, and areas recognized for exceptional environmental, social, and or cultural values. But after decades of war, the area was stripped of its wildlife and its resources - ivory from poached elephants was used to buy weapons; animals were poached to feed soldiers; and other resources were decimated from illegal mining and logging. This area, which became the Sabié Game Park (SGP), runs for 47 kilometers along the world-famous Kruger National Park in South Africa - 25% of the total border of the park with Mozambique. It is a partner in the Greater Lebombo Transfrontier Conservation Area, an initiative of the Peace Parks Foundation and conservation operators to support large, connected expanses of protected habitat. SGP has worked to build and maintain a natural haven, and the proof is in the rewilding, protection of wildlife, and upliftment of local communities. SGP has been transformed from conservation disaster to conservation leader, becoming one of Africa's most established protected areas. A 2019 report on "Wildlife management and conservation in hunting areas in the Greater Lebombo Conservancy - Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA) - Mozambique" illustrates this success.

REWILDING, AND ESTABLISHING A BUFFER ZONE

Rewilding involves restoring an ecosystem to its former natural state by creating conditions for wildlife and habitats to thrive, and safeguarding the natural processes that support this resurgence. SGP's vision was to take the area from desolation to abundance, structured to benefit people and wildlife. Their approach began by establishing a fence, electrified via solar panels, between the park and the community areas, to both protect the wildlife from poaching and the people from wildlife attacks. They constructed necessary buildings, a safari tourist camp, water resources for wildlife, and an anti-poaching operations center. Most importantly, they established dedicated relationships with local governments, other parks, neighboring countries, and stakeholders, such as the Mozambique Wildlife Alliance and South African National Parks. They focused on protecting habitat, which promotes biodiversity, combatting the ever present threat of habitat loss, human encroachment, and poaching. They have also partnered with resource management experts to optimize habitat health and support threatened and endangered species. Importantly, the fence exists between the reserve and the communities, but not between the reserve and Kruger - so wildlife are free to roam in a much larger area, and it is now a protected buffer zone, separating the high-poaching areas from the wildlife of Kruger. It is the only



true Big 5 reserve in Mozambique, meaning it is home to buffalo, elephant, leopard, lion, and black and white rhino. Both White and Black Rhinos in SGP in particular have an extraordinary story of recovery - while Kruger has the greatest populations of White rhino in southern Africa, in the recent past any rhinos crossing into Mozambique would be killed within one day. As such, rhinos were extinct in Mozambique until 2013, when SGP established a resident population, and rhinos now move freely between the countries. SGP is the only rhino stronghold and the only area with both black and white rhinos in Mozambique.

COMMUNITY BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Communities bear the responsibility and risks of living near wildlife, which is often overlooked by the Western world. Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) presents a solution to this reality, changing the human-wildlife situation from dangerous and resentful to protective custodianship. CBNRM brings the community into wildlife management as a power broker, leading to collective support and distributed benefits. SGP knew this was absolutely critical, and embraced the shared role of the Mangalane Community, which consists of five villages and 415 households. In establishing a CBNRM program with WWF-South Africa and the Southern African Wildlife College, they forged a shared vision of prosperity that unlocked the value of wildlife and fostered a system of economic growth and social equity reliant on wildlife success. CBNRM incorporates traditional knowledge and practices into a modern economical

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conservation structure. Authority and benefits are shared in a fair and transparent manner, and led by the communities. SGP, through the revenues from direct investment and bolstered by conservation hunting, built houses, clinics, boreholes, and wells; provides materials, furniture, equipment, and maintenance to schools and clinics; and established programs to care for the community's most vulnerable. Annually, 20% of hunting license fees is shared with the community and they receive 12 tons of hunted meat. This both combats food scarcity and is used in traditional practices - which, in turn, reduces illegal meat poaching. A Work for Food program helps ensure that no one has to turn to crime to eat. There are now safe wildlife zones, volunteer patrolling systems, and community scouts to aid in tracking and arresting poachers. Vast improvements in education, skills, job opportunities, and reduction of extreme poverty have fought deforestation, overfishing, poaching, and overall biodiversity loss. The model of conservation hunting has returned work, security, and dignity to a forgotten people, and wildlife is much better for it.

ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS

Rampant overhunting by Europeans decimated rhino numbers, leading to a crisis by the 1950s that necessitated urgent protection for the dwindling population. Collective protections have increased and stabilized the white rhino population at approximately 17,500 across Africa (2024 State of the Rhino report. <https://rhinos.org/about-rhinos/state-of-the-rhino/>), but rhinos are the top target of poachers. Rhino horn on the black market in Asia is valued more than platinum, gold, or cocaine. Poaching bands to fuel this illicit trade are militarized, well-equipped, and lethal. Criminal syndicates exploit desperate situations and recruit from villages in Mozambique, to cross into Kruger to illegally poach. Most areas are dependent on subsistence farming, and when human-wildlife conflict occurs, villages have no incentive to protect it and engage in poaching out of desperation - either to protect what they own or to scrape a living together. SGP, in addition to the wildlife fence, success as a buffer zone, and community governance structures, has developed a large, armed, and trained anti-poaching unit, regular air and ground patrols, a daily monitoring system, canine units, vehicle supports, and optimal habitat to protect wildlife. A few years ago, SGP received a grant from the Rhino Recovery Fund to dehorn the rhino population, to further protect it from poachers. In coordination with the German Zoological Society, they have undertaken research and development projects such as tagging and monitoring of individual rhinos. Thanks to these efforts, there are now more white and black rhinos per square kilometer than Kruger National Park, with zero poaching incidents. These protections extend to all other wildlife in the area, creating a true sanctuary.

SUCCESS OF SABIÉ GAME PARK

Since Kenya banned hunting in the 1970s, the country lost approximately 70% of its wildlife (Ogutu et al 2016. <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0163249>) The exact opposite has played out in SGP, due to the sustainable-use model of wildlife management. SGP is host to hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and scientific research, all of which are conducted with the ultimate goal of conservation. SGP is a safe haven for 140 species of wildlife and 500 species of birds naturally occurring in Kruger. A testament to this success, and commitment to rewilding, has been donation of animals to other areas, including the donation of 99 buffalo and 5 spotted hyena to Maputo National Park; a donation of four spotted hyenas to the Peace Parks Foundation as a starter population in Zinave National Park; and a donation of two male lions to the Zambezi Delta. Unfortunately, many in the Western world continue to push anti-hunting values on African wildlife management, without understanding the realities on the ground or conservation successes. This is a condescending, preservationist approach, which is costly and does not benefit communities as true partners in conservation. A far better solution is a power sharing partnership, with the needs of people, wild life, and wild places balanced. Establishing and maintaining SGP would not be possible without the initial and continuing investments, political will, revenue from hunting, strong relationships, and community involvement. From exploited to unspoiled, SGP is now a pearl of conservation, with people brought to the heart and a love for the wild of Africa at its center.



WESTERN SAFARIS



A BRIEF HISTORY OF OFFICIAL COUTADA 9

Western Safaris is a family owned and operated company founded in Zimbabwe in 1979, and is one of the oldest safari companies in Africa. They have earned a reputation for ethics and honesty with a deep commitment to conservation and sustainability. Western Safaris was approached to join Mozambique's safari industry, and in 2009 acquired a 34,67% share in Rio Save Safaris, which operates in Official Coutada 9. The Official Coutadas were established in 1959 as National Conservation Areas for sustainable utilisation of natural resources through conservation hunting, ecotourism, and the protection of fauna and flora. Coutada 9 has a total area of 4,333 km² (approx. 1,070,700 Acres) in central Mozambique. In 1973, with Mozambique's struggle for independence, also came the end of the safari conservation industry. The ensuing civil war from 1977-1992 resulted in total disregard for wildlife regulations, and Mozambique's conservation areas were open to poaching, logging, and agricultural encroachment, creating a saddening situation for wildlife. With the return of peace, conservation hunting was reopened and Rio Save Safaris acquired the lease for Coutada 9. The realities of 20 years of conflict, compounded by the effects of devastating drought, led to the near-eradication of wildlife. Major rehabilitation operations were required to restore the wildlife and habitat.

THE NATURAL ECOSYSTEM

Broadly classified as woodland savanna, Coutada 9 includes the globally important miombo woodland, large tracts of Combretum woodland on loam soils, Mimosa (previously Acacia) woodland, riparian and afro-mountain forest patches, and stands of Panga-Panga Forest. Dotting the landscape are ancient Baobab and magnificent specimens of Mozambique's variety of hardwoods. Grasslands are ideal for supporting large populations of herbivores and as a result, there is a rich diversity of wildlife including globally significant species such as elephant, African wild dog, pangolin, lion, leopard, and five species of primates. There is also an outstanding diversity of bird species, including endangered vultures and eagles. This is untamed wild Africa, and decidedly worth protecting. As such, it has required a massive investment of resources to lift into ecosystemic and economic viability. Without the custodianship of the operator, and revenue support from client-hunters, this remote area would be abandoned to exploitation and destruction - echoing its recent devastating past.

A REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNITY APPROACH

Rio Save Safaris realized a pioneering approach was needed to return the Coutada back to its former conservation state. Through rigorous consultation with the local communities and government, three zones were established within the Coutada: the "Conservation Zone", for wildlife to be conserved and utilized by the operators; the "Buffer Zone", managed by the local communities for sustainable natural resource use by the communities and operator, and the "Residential Zone", for the communities to live and carry out agricultural activities. They were the first operator in Mozambique to revolutionize a community benefit sharing agreement. The community receives 25% of the net hunted animal fee within the core conservation area and 75% of the fee within the buffer and residential zones. Communities receive 20% of the government tag fee from the government, so these additional percentages from Rio Save Safaris far exceed the Mozambique standard. These funds have supported numerous projects, including clinics, hospitals, schools, and water boreholes. 95% of all staff are hired from the local community, making the operators the largest employer in the area. Meat is donated to the community and government organisations, and tourists donate children's toys, school supplies, sporting equipment, and clothing. This community involvement, well defined partnership, power sharing, and receipt of tangible benefits encourages active protection of wildlife and conservation.

MOZAMBIQUE

FIGHTING ILLEGAL POACHING

Poaching is pervasive and indiscriminate, and manifests in both bushmeat and ivory poaching. Meat poachers use cruel homemade gin traps or snares; once caught, the animal will drag the trap for several days until the poachers catch up and kill it with an axe or spear or they leave them for weeks to die from starvation or infection. Ivory poachers are normally armed with AK47s or modern bolt action rifles, creating extremely dangerous situations. To combat this, Western Safaris employs 25 game scouts that conduct patrols year-round, with the goal of 50 scouts and 10 patrols a week. Scouting units are armed only with an axe and carry out foot patrols, search for any sign of illegal activity, and try to arrest poachers or at least capture their equipment. They also frequently encounter illegal gold panning, logging, mining, and agriculture. Scouts have removed over 300 gin traps and numerous muzzleloading guns and wire snares and caught on average 20 poachers, 100 illegal miners, and 20 illegal loggers per year. This is a true war to protect an ecosystem, and one which requires constant vigilance. It is far from over, and without hunting operations the habitat will be hopelessly lost.



RESTORING BALANCE TO THE ECOSYSTEM

The ecosystem lacks natural surface water, particularly in the dry season. Historical migration routes are no longer open, and most of the natural permanent water sources are outside the Core Conservation Area. As such, animals move outside of the operator's protection where more vulnerable to poaching and human-wildlife conflict. The operator has constructed several dams and boreholes to guarantee water availability, distribute grazing patterns, and protect wildlife. A balance of grazing species is needed to maintain ecosystem health. Diminished numbers of bulk grazers leads to buildup of moribund grass, which acts as fuel to wildfires that harm woodlands. Coutada 9 needed bulk grazers, such as cape buffalo and waterbuck, to solve this problem and create ripple benefits to the ecosystem. The operator undertook a groundbreaking buffalo relocation project from the Zambezi Delta to Coutada 9, with the first capture of 50 buffalo in 2015. Since the successful relocation, 200 additional buffalo were moved in 2017 with additional plans for a total of 1000. A thriving and sustainable population of buffalo is essential for ecological success, as well as important for conservation tourism and economic benefit to the community and stakeholders. To further support the ecosystem, the operator exchanged eland and rare Crawshay's zebra for waterbuck from Gorongosa National Park. As with many species in the area, lions, an apex predator, were nearly extirpated. Reintroducing lions remains a priority to restore the natural balance, and relocation efforts have achieved astounding success. Through re-introduction, dedicated anti-poaching, and vigilant management, they have restored critical species to healthy and continually increasing populations. These efforts have significant ripple effects, with leopard increasing, the return of jackal and hyena, and the abundance of all prey species, with unique animals such as oribi, suni antelope, Natal red duiker, Sharpe's grysbok and many, many more.

STEWARDS OF WILDLIFE

The operators are true custodians of this wildlife, and navigate the balance of stewardship. As the ecosystem becomes more bountiful, they are able to harness revenue from hunters and channel it back to conservation and anti-poaching projects. This journey has been nothing short of extraordinary, from rebuilding shattered landscapes to forging a flourishing wilderness for generations to come. It also stands as a stark reminder of the realities of conservation, and what can be lost so quickly should history repeat itself. Coutada 9 continues to require massive investment. Without the custodianship of the operator, and revenue support from hunters, this remote area would be abandoned to exploitation and destruction - echoing its recent past.





NAMIBIA

ARU GAME LODGES

DEDICATION TO CONSERVATION

At the heart of ARU Game Lodges lies an unwavering passion for conservation, brought to life through the profound and natural experience of hunting. ARU is owned and operated by Danene and Gysbert van der Westhuyzen, and under their family's custodianship they protect approximately 530 km² of pristine wilderness. They host a myriad of activities, including hunting, to invite, inspire, and offer a true connection to wilderness, and exemplify sustainable-use conservation. The experience of visitors solidifies an understanding of conservation in Africa and an inspiration to protect it. To maintain natural places, there must be an interaction and coexistence between people and wildlife - they cannot exclude each other, and the most effective and proven model is to use natural resources in a manner which enhances and promotes their long-term protection. Sustainable use ensures a brighter and more successful future - leaving our world better than we found it. Through the establishment of the ARU Conservation Trust, supported by passionate hunters and generous donors, they actively fund and support ongoing conservation efforts in Namibia. ARU employs 60 employees, including previously disadvantaged Namibians, empowering and supporting their families and sharing custodianship of the reserves. They continually strive for authentic conservation, which requires adaptation to the needs of the habitat and wildlife to achieve harmony and cohesion with the natural world - for generations to come.



COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL HUNTING

At ARU, conservation is achieved through ethical conservation hunting, with an emphasis on fair chase and fair range. These practices ensure that the animals' habitat is larger than their natural range; breeding is natural and relies on survival of the fittest; and the highest standards of ethical hunting are applied, inspiring the most authentic interaction between humans and wildlife. Fair range and fair chase hunting allows an animal the opportunity to survive in its habitat for the duration of its lifespan, where it was born and raised. The revenue from this selective and principled hunting generates the needed resources to protect these wide expanses of habitat and its wildlife. The operation boasts thriving numbers of plains game species, as well as a variety of several carnivore species. Among these are cheetah, whose natural range in Africa has diminished, leading to their classification as vulnerable. Yet Namibia stands as a vital stronghold for the remaining populations, and ARU's successful conservation model has fostered a flourishing population. Maintaining a robust population of cheetah relies on maintaining a healthy habitat and abundant populations of prey species; in optimal conditions, cheetah can pursue and kill an animal every single day. This reality underscores the holistic success of the entire ecosystem in supporting not only cheetahs but also other carnivores. Furthermore, it highlights the essential need for management and thorough monitoring of the ecosystem, along with the role of hunting in maintaining ecological balance. Conservation hunting, to support these efforts, is the pursuit of the most basic human experience, preserved in the modern age.

PROTECTING THE RHINO

ARU is also a sanctuary for increasing populations of both white and black rhinos, contributing to the remarkable rebound of Namibia's rhino populations. This success in Namibia is the result of dedicated landowners and the vital revenue generated through conservation hunting, which supports habitat protection. In fact, the Namibian government owns every black rhino in the country - ARU and other operators across the country have taken it upon themselves to provide habitat, protection, and all costs incurred from providing a sanctuary to black rhinos. This is driven solely by the intrinsic value of conservation. The cost of protection is considerable, requiring forceful anti-poaching efforts, as well as the incurred cost of housing black rhinos - often



NAMIBIA

dangerous and aggressive, and damaging to infrastructure, vehicles, and other equipment. Unfortunately, the war against poachers is far from over, as rhinos continue to be the top target due to the value of their horn on the illicit black market. To combat this threat, ARU has established a robust and dedicated anti-poaching operation, including daily patrols and constant monitoring, daily patrols along the entire perimeter on horseback, and a trained anti-poaching force. In a difficult but necessary measure, they have dehorned the entire rhino population as a deterrent to poachers. This is the tragic reality of protecting rhinos from extinction; it is far from natural to remove the horn from a wild animal. Critically, however, it buys time for the population, and helps protect the future of the species. It is also a very intensive and costly procedure, and only with the revenue from hunting other animals on the reserve could it be accomplished. Rhinos are currently not hunted at ARU, and the considerable resources dedicated to their preservation are wholly for the purpose of long term conservation. This would be impossible without the revenue from conservation hunting, and the rhino numbers would dwindle until they are gone. Landowners are truly the heroes of rhino conservation in Namibia, and they are the experts; they have built a sustainable use conservation model that protects rhinos, all other species, and critical habitat.



WILD GAME AND FARM TO TABLE

At ARU, ethical hunting goes beyond the hunt itself; it embodies a deep commitment to sustainability and community. Each animal is respectfully pursued, with its meat not only enjoyed by the operator and hunting clients but also transformed into a true farm-to-table experience. This practice enriches the lives of tourists seeking an authentic Namibian adventure while providing for local communities through regular donations of meat to nearby schools. ARU proudly features one of the best butcheries in Namibia, distributing free-range, wild venison to bolster the local economy. Adding to this vibrant tapestry, Danene's award-winning cookbook, *From the Veld*, showcases the natural bounty and wholesome nourishment of their homeland, inspiring others to appreciate the rich resources and tradition that Namibia has to offer.

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The practice of conservation hunting at ARU serves as a global model for modern conservation. Danene is an internationally acclaimed conservationist, inspiring global efforts as attacks on hunting - and by extension, conservation - become more prevalent. She was the first woman in Namibia to achieve dangerous game professional hunting qualifications and served as President of the Namibian Professional Hunters Association, the first woman to hold a position of leadership like this in the hunting industry. She is currently the CEO of the Operators and Professional Hunting Associations of Africa (OPHAA), an organization uniting conservation hunting associations committed to the highest standards of ethics. She is a trustee of Hunters United Against Poaching; a board member of The Nature Conservation Board of Namibia; a member of the Dallas Safari Club Conservation Advisory Board; a member of the Conservation Force Board, member of Safari Club International Foundation's Conservation Committee; and African Advisor for the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC). She is the recipient of several conservation awards and honors, regularly leads at international conferences, and is a true leader for conservation in Namibia, southern Africa, and around the world. ARU exemplifies ethical hunting and conservation, inspiring hunters and conservationists to embrace sustainable practices that protect our precious wildlife and wild places.

"It is humble and magnificent at the same time, and it is natural. When hunting, we become animal, and it occurs in a realm where death has a different consequence. The greatest thing hunting gifts is the ability to look past what is obvious, to value landscapes for what is not easily seen, for potential, and for the promise of surprise. We explore the marvelous reality of life and the unapologetic chances that we are not meant to fear, but bravely embrace. We see a world full of undiscovered trails and expeditions. We're happiest when we're deep in the bush, walking at dawn to catch first light and surrounding ourselves with wild animals..."

Danene van der Westhuyzen



JAN OELOFSE HUNTING SAFARIS



ACTIVE CONSERVATION SUPPORTED BY HUNTING

Since 1975, the Oelofse family has stewarded the Okonjati Wildlife area. Formerly private cattle ranches, they have grown the property to 350 km² (approx. 86,490 acres) and wholly dedicated it to wildlife conservation. The landscape spans mountains, riverines, bushveld, savannah, plains, and kopjies - rocky outcrops from the surrounding plains. They have cultivated the wildlife and habitat to beautiful abundance and sustainable health with the utmost care for the natural world. This conservation success is in partnership with the local community of 200 people who call the property home, enhancing livelihoods and empowering success. The family operates both eco-tourism and hunting safaris, as well as wildlife rehabilitation and protection of endangered species. These efforts are costly and supported by - and would be impossible without - hunting; one hunter, leaving the environmental footprint of one, generates the same profit as 70 eco-tourists.

WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP

The family and community hold sincere and heartfelt care - and utmost responsibility - for the wildlife entrusted to their guardianship. In addition to the regular observations and monitoring as part of standard operations, they conduct aerial surveys for many species. These data sources combined show thriving populations of elephant, lion, leopard, black and white rhino, springbuck, common impala, steenbuck, duiker, warthog, hartmann zebra, burchell zebra, waterbuck, kudu, damaraland dik-dik, eland, giraffe, sable, roan antelope, lechwe, gemsbuck, hartebeest, blue wildebeest, blesbuck, klipspringer, ostrich, black wildebeest, and nyala as well as rarer species such as cheetah and hippo. Each of these species are increasing and flourishing. They provide a healthy bird habitat and sustain rare and endangered species, such as pangolin. They have raised and rewilded 15 black and white rhinos from across the country. And their successful management has enabled them to increase species' range by relocating elephants and other animals in Namibia and to other parks in Africa.



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ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS

15 anti-poaching rangers operate daily patrols, every month of the year. 12% of the hunted animal fees are dedicated to anti-poaching and the protection of all species. By the numbers, in the period from 2018-2020, this totalled an expenditure of N\$5,550,000. This includes payment of salaries, vehicles, and equipment. They have adopted modern solutions to fight the war for wildlife, including regular surveillance by helicopter and drones and advanced rhino tracking systems. Over this same three-year period, there were zero poaching incidents due to the committed and effective anti-poaching efforts.



EMPOWERING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The community of 200 plays an integral role and is supported by the 100 people directly employed. The operation has built a school building which provides housing and free education for all local children from kindergarten to grade seven. A doctor visits monthly and provides medical care for community members and families. This includes payment for equipment and salaries. Additionally, they have a scholarship program which pays full university fees for children who qualify. From hunting in the same three-year period, 4 tons of game meat was provided - a value of N\$ 140 000 and a crucial source of protein in a country where meat is often scarce. The operation partners with a company that brings in volunteers to conduct anti-poaching courses, patrol work, and spotting work. This addresses human-wildlife conflict, and the highly sophisticated patrolling is so effective that next to no damage occurs to those living closest to wildlife, or their livelihoods.

ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

To maintain healthy populations of all species and a flourishing habitat, management and human intervention is needed. Constant monitoring, maintenance of water sources and boreholes, particularly during droughts, and mitigation of natural disasters are costly operations and are enabled by the constant dedication of the whole team. Hunting plays a critical role in this and ensures the survival of all. Only mature male animals, which have contributed over their lifetimes to the genetic pool, are hunted and there is



absolute focus on hunting the oldest rather than the biggest. Hunting is a piece of the puzzle, where the imperative is conservation and it is a consistent operation to expand the habitat, increase the carrying capacity of animals, and support endangered species.





SOUTH AFRICA

COENRAAD VERMAAK SAFARIS

OVER 50 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

Coenraad Vermaak Safaris conducts safaris on a private reserve called Khamab Kalahari Reserve which is the largest continuous privately owned reserve in South Africa. Coenraad Vermaak Safaris is the oldest safari company in South Africa and was founded by Coenraad Vermaak in 1970. The 900 square kilometres (approximately 220,400 acres) reserve comprises vast arid savanna in a pristine environment, supporting a diversity of wildlife, including increasing elephant and lion populations and a diversity of plains game. It is also home to endangered, iconic species such as wild dog, cheetah, both rhino species, and pangolin. Conservation on this massive landscape is accomplished through devoted guardianship and active management by the operation and supported by the employment of 35 local people. Hunting revenue goes directly to conservation of the



species and the ecosystem, and over the many years Coenraad Vermaak safaris has built and earned their ironclad reputation for ethical, fair chase hunting combined with a deep respect for nature. To reinforce this commitment, Coenraad Vermaak was a founding member of the Professional Hunting Association of South Africa (PHASA); Coenraad and Hans Vermaak both served as Vice Presidents of the International Professional Hunters Association (IPHA); and Coenraad and Hans are founding members of the Custodians of Professional Hunting & Conservation South Africa, which is an organization dedicated to the highest standards of ethical and responsible hunting. Additionally, their dedication to conservation and the natural world goes beyond organisational leadership and the boundaries of the areas which they hunt.

CONNECTION TO THE ENVIRONMENT

The dedicated Khamab Kalahari Reserve management team is attuned to the natural life of the reserve, knowing the animals and natural order. They pay meticulous attention to wildlife data counts and the supporting habitat, as active management and protection of so large an area requires in-depth knowledge and experience. For example, in the arid landscape, water must be provided so animals can live. They create and operate water boreholes throughout the property to ensure the wildlife habitat is sufficiently supportive. They are on the ground and in the field continuously, with combined decades of experience, and this profound connection to the land and its wildlife inspires a need for protection. As the Coenraad Vermaak Safaris professional hunters guide hunts in this reserve, they are totally dedicated to abiding by the reserves complex and time manufactured ecological management plan. The PHs must be members of Custodians of Hunting and Conservation SA, mentioned above, which is opposed to captive bred lion breeding and hunting and unethical hunting practices. Age requirements extend to all hunted species, and they consciously try to avoid hunting any males from breeding herds, in particular hartebeest and buffalo. Lion hunting, which provides critical revenue, promotes healthy ecological balance, and provides significant conservation benefits, is rigorously structured



with strict requirements to ensure it is conservation-focused. Through a cellular tracking system, the operation records details and comments of hunted animals. They submit logs of rare game sightings, and submit in-depth data on rare species such as white rhino, lion, leopard, cheetah, elephant, pangolin, and more. In particular, they track and monitor rarer black rhino and can identify individuals by ear notches and catalog their locations. By studying the landscape and wildlife, they have an informed view for wildlife management and conservation.

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ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS

The reserve employs 8 staff for anti-poaching efforts. These efforts are always on the go, operating patrols every day of every month of the year for 24 hours a day. Successful conservation and thriving wildlife populations unfortunately also means the area is always under the potential threat from poachers, who especially target rhinos. However, the active operation has achieved astounding success, discovering just a few poaching incidents in a three-year period – this would unquestionably be higher without the dedication of the safari operation which plays a role in funding the anti-poaching teams and their equipment. These men are the rhinos' last line of defence. These anti-poaching efforts cost approximately \$130,000 per year, with 40% of the hunted animal fees appropriated to it. These huge expenses, which pay for salaries, equipment, vehicles, fuel, information rewards, and more, would not be feasible without hunting; for context, just 2 lions hunted in 2019 brought in \$120,000 and all hunted-species over the same three-year period brought in \$600,000 for conservation.

PROTECTING THE FUTURE OF WILDLIFE

Coenraad Vermaak Safaris is dedicated to cultivating optimized habitat for wildlife to thrive. The ethical hunting of a few old males helps to provide for the entirety of that species and all the rest, providing a haven for species to flourish. Their support of wildlife protection programs in this reserve have been so successful that the reserve has been able to donate endangered wild dogs several times as part of the National Wild Dog metapopulation. A recent example was in 2019, where they donated a pack of 16 wild dogs for translocation to Gorongosa National Park in Mozambique. They have also donated lions to other reserves in South Africa, as well as to the 24 Lions Project in Gorongosa National Park. Additionally, the dedicated reserve management team reintegrated a previously captured elephant herd used in elephant back safaris back to the wild with the Elephant Reintegration Trust. Khamab Kalahari Reserve is a member of the Wild dog Advisory Group of South Africa; the Wild dog metapopulation project of the Endangered Wildlife trust of South Africa; the Lion Management Forum of South Africa; and the Cheetah metapopulation project of the Endangered Wildlife Trust of South Africa.



SUPPORTING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Khamab Kalahari Reserve has participated in and provided the opportunity for several research projects on the wildlife and habitat. With more planned for the future, these include:

- The ecology, diet, habitat preference of giraffe in the Kalahari – PhD study F. Deacon – University of the Free State
- Evaluation of restoration and management actions in the Molopo savanna of South Africa: and integrative Perspective – MSc study C.J. Harmse – Northwest University
- Broad-and fine-scale spatial variation in the impacts of disturbances caused by burrowing mammals on soil and vegetation – MSc study M.A. Louw – University of Pretoria
- The effect of fire on savanna vegetation dynamics in the semi-arid Molopo Bushveld region of the North-West Province, South Africa – MSC study A. Esterhuizen – Northwest University
- Selective foraging strategies on multiple nutrient resources by African elephant (*Loxodonta Africana*) across a seasonal and rainfall gradient
- MSc study H. van Leyveld – University of Pretoria (not completed)
- Developing Welfare Parameters for African Elephants (*Loxodonta Africana*) in Fenced Reserves in South Africa – Scientific article by Marion Garai et. Al. (in preparation)

Coenraad Vermaak Safaris is extremely proud of their association with Khamab Kalahari Reserve where they have conducted safaris for over 13 years and made a significant financial contribution and thus played a role in many of the reserve's success stories.



GARRY KELLY SAFARIS

FIVE DECADES OF CONSERVATION

For over 50 years, Garry Kelly of Garry Kelly Safaris has been dedicated to conservation deeply rooted in the heart of South Africa. As one of the oldest continually operating safari companies in South Africa, their legacy is etched in the landscape and spans numerous private conservancies, totalling 500 km² (approx. 123,550 acres) in Northern Zululand and is also in partnership on a community concession, Mkuze Falls Game Reserve, which consists over 140 km² and varies from thornveld to grassland to aquatic ecosystems. These iconic African habitats are home to a vast diversity of species, including elephant, lion, leopard, buffalo, rhino, and plains game. The revenue from the operation, predominantly from hunting supplemented by ecotourism, generates crucial funds to support their tireless efforts in habitat protection and wildlife conservation. Their dedication extends beyond the boundaries of the reserves, where they embrace community empowerment and collaboration. The operation spearheads initiatives in anti-poaching, community investment, community employment, and annual reporting - all done voluntarily without requirement and without government aid. The Garry Kelly Conservation fund was formed to conduct projects in this region, including funding for anti-poaching efforts, food for communities, and critical support to save wildlife from poaching incidents. Every footprint left by a visitor is sustainable and contributes to conservation for generations to come.



SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The safari operation currently employs local community members, which extends a myriad of benefits to their families and a ripple effect through the community fabric. These benefits include the receiving of game meat from hunted animals, direct payments, food for the local school, funeral costs, water infrastructure, firewood, sports team sponsorships, livestock compensation, and many more projects and resources. In a pioneering move towards strengthening the local community, the community is a 50% shareholder of the company in the Mkuze Falls Game Reserve and receives a conservation levy in their successful partnership. These benefits are critical to supporting the surrounding community and creating a thriving ecotourism model where the wildlife is protected. The impact of these initiatives cannot be overstated, especially in the region where the unemployment rate is significant. The hunting model is symbiotic with these initiatives, where the revenue from the ethical hunting of a few animals creates a system where the conservation of wildlife goes hand in hand with the prosperity of local residents.



SOUTH AFRICA

ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS

Over 10 dedicated anti-poaching staff conduct patrols every single day of the year. Their diligence has yielded a staggering achievement: almost zero poaching incidents, a testament to their tireless efforts. However, underlying this success is a sombre reality. In South Africa, rhinos are relentlessly targeted by poachers for their horns for sale on the illegal black market. Criminal syndicates exploit the vulnerability of struggling communities by offering a small pay out to poachers for the rhino horn they illegally sell, for a huge profit. This perpetuates a cycle of exploitation and environmental degradation. In response to this crisis, one anti-poaching operation Garry Kelly Safaris routinely undertakes, is dehorning the entire rhino population on its property. This is a necessary measure to deter poachers and buy time for the rhino population. This is an immense physical and financial undertaking, which is funded by the sustainable hunting in the reserves. A trained veterinarian darts and tranquilizes the rhino from a helicopter, removes the horn, ensures the health of the animal, and then revives it, ensuring minimal stress. This physical poaching deterrent works in tandem with the community benefits system, anti-poaching patrols, and local stewardship. When communities are thriving, they are disincentivized from poaching and see the wildlife as a valuable resource. All of this is made possible through hunting, and is a proven method of sustainable conservation in the modern age.



STEWARDS OF THE WILDLIFE

Elephant, lion, leopard, and prey species live in healthy populations that are stable or increasing in this thriving ecosystem. A percentage of funds from the hunting are reinvested into the wildlife management and security efforts on the concessions. The operation has reintroduced cheetah to their natural habitat in the reserve as part of their dedication to promoting the natural ecology of the area. Within this conservation framework, they have also prioritized the vitality of lion populations. Since their reintroduction from wild populations in 2004, the lions have flourished, boosted by the introduction of additional wild individuals to enhance genetic diversity. These lions now play a crucial role in supporting the broader metapopulation across the province. Their lion management plan is dedicated to protecting the future of the species and fostering an environment where wildlife exists in its natural state. The operation further promotes the conservation of all species by protecting habitat and implementing sustainable management practices.

HUNTING VERSUS ECOTOURISM

Garry Kelly Safaris also operates a five star ecotourism lodge in the reserve to welcome more tourists to their pristine areas. The phenomenal wildlife encounters that these clients experience is protected and enhanced from the hunting operation. This revenue is essential to fund their extensive wildlife and ecosystem protection initiatives. With the ever-increasing cost of protecting wild animals and wild places, the continued presence of conservation hunting is essential to conserve these areas as sanctuaries for their beautiful and abundant wildlife.







TANZANIA

BUSHMAN SAFARI TRACKERS LTD

AN ICONIC NATURAL STAGE

Bushman Safari Trackers Limited has operated for nearly 30 years in Tanzania's wilderness. They are responsible for the conservation of the Maswa North Game Reserve, which is approximately 1,945 km² (480,620 acres) in the heart of the greater Serengeti ecoregion. Maswa North shares 77 kilometers of border with the world renowned Serengeti National Park, one of the largest and most iconic national parks in Africa. The Serengeti ecosystem also includes the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, the Grumeti Reserve, the controlled Ikorongo Area, the controlled Loliondo Area, and the Masai Mara National Reserve in Kenya. The volcanic grasslands of the Serengeti are the world's stage for the migration of millions of animals each year, particularly wildebeest, zebra, and Thomson's Gazelles. The cyclical seasons of grass and water availability trigger these historic wildlife migrations in the area, which is home to some of the most fantastic wonders of the natural world. Maswa North is a game reserve for the sole purpose of conservation, through consumptive and non-consumptive wildlife utilisation. The operation, through the indispensable revenue from conservation hunting, is able to focus on reducing domestic livestock and increasing wildlife populations; improving patrolling and anti-poaching efforts; empowering communities as the first line of defense for wildlife; partnering hand in hand with Tanzanian government authorities; and conducting ecological data management and analysis. This is all done with the highest commitment to ethical and legal standards, and with a fundamental guiding principle of conservation.



WILDLIFE AND HABITAT OF MASWA NORTH

Maswa North is situated in the great Acacia Savannah Belt, varying from "mbuga", to wooded acacia grassland, to riverine forest, to rocky hills and kopjes. This is home to a variety of acacia and Commiphora woodland, high densities of buffalo, cheetah, hippo, crocodile, elephant, lion, and leopard, as well as several rare black rhinos. This diversity of wildlife has a stronghold at Maswa North, and is one of the last remaining examples of a large mammal-dominated ecosystem, present since the Pleistocene Era. This includes 50 species of large mammals - 24 ungulates, 19 carnivores, four rodents, and three primates; 200 birds, including the endemic grey-breasted francolin, 34 species of raptors, and 6 species of vultures; and is the only remaining refuge for roan antelope in this ecosystem. The operation has compiled a rigorous data collection since 2006, and has conducted in-depth analysis in particular for elephant, leopard, and lion. This leads to informed management, promotes transparency in the hunting industry, and creates an informed basis for conservation hunting; the data unequivocally points to hunting as a sustainable method of conservation for the benefit of wildlife, habitat, and communities.

BUFFER ZONES - THE KEY TO SUSTAINABLE CONSERVATION

Tanzania and many countries in southern Africa stand out as global leaders in conservation, protecting and conserving significant portions of their total land mass. Their conservation is critical to achieving global conservation goals, and their sustainable model deserves both commendation and support. National parks are prime examples of this success; however, parks are costly for governments to maintain and to protect from poachers and other threats. Rural communities often live near park boundaries, and wildlife ignores these man-made borders. Buffer zones offer a proven solution, significantly expanding conserved landscapes. Maswa North is one such buffer zone, which adds 751 square miles of protected land to the border of the park. Acting as a crucial buffer between the villages to the west and the park to the east, it serves as one of the most critical safeguards defending the future of wildlife. By increasing available land, food, water, and resources, these zones enhance the sustainability of the whole ecosystem. Wildlife is free to roam in a larger area, and as such, has more resources from the operator to protect it. For instance, reintroduced black rhinos in Serengeti National Park roam to Maswa North, and receive extended protection in a larger expanse. Simply put, buffer zones increase the size and cohesiveness of protected areas, for the betterment of wildlife. They serve as a separation between human communities and wildlife areas, which decreases poaching and human wildlife conflict. This also reduces habitat degradation from agriculture and other uses, while providing economic use and food production for

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communities. Buffer zones bridge the gap between national protected wilderness and wildlife, and the people who live closest to it. The hunting conservation model creates an economic system that makes it possible to safeguard these additional vast landscapes in ecologically vital areas.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS

It is proven that anti-poaching efforts are most successful when the community is engaged in benefit-sharing agreements and the decision-making process. Seven villages border Maswa North; the Kilima, Kisesa, Bariadi, Nyakabindi, Lalogo, Mbogo, and Somanda communities. While these communities live in one of the world's most resource rich and most iconic landscapes, they are sadly victims of food insecurity and poverty. Bushman Safari Trackers is committed to the upliftment and empowerment of these communities, and is invested in their right to benefit from their natural resources. As such, revenues from the conservation hunting operation are reinvested into the community, building yearly projects, sharing critical protein, and supporting medical needs. The operator distributes 70% of the game meat harvested to the villages, totaling a value of tens of thousands of dollars. This sustains them for months and alleviates food shortages from agricultural drought, and critically, reduces bushmeat poaching, which many feel forced to engage in. As another example, the operation has financially supported surgeries and medical costs for disabled children. When the community benefits from wildlife, they will fight to protect its future. Communities often suffer the harsh reality of living with wildlife - elephants destroy crops, homes, food stores, and more. When communities suffer devastating consequences of living near wildlife, and have no economic incentive to protect it, they often turn to bushmeat and illegal trade poaching. Poachers don't just target animals, either; the operation fights illegal charcoal and logging operations, unauthorized cattle grazing, and other illicit activities. The conservation hunting model brings this balance to the community, and is directly linked to anti-poaching efforts. This supports their boots on the ground operation, which conducts 5-6 patrols every month of the year - a costly undertaking with sophisticated communication devices, camera



trap surveillance, patrolling vehicles, supplying boots, uniforms, and rations, and more. Approximately ten percent of the fees from hunted animals are directed to anti-poaching. The intense anti-poaching efforts and increased consequences have forced poachers to stop targeting larger animals and set smaller snares for bushmeat poaching; while the war is far from over, this is a win in a battle for wildlife. Due to their vigilance, poaching incidents remain relatively low - but they cannot let it slip.

CONSERVATION HUNTING FOR THE FUTURE OF WILDLIFE

Bushman Safari Trackers invests robust dollars in government collaboration and directly to communities. These direct partnerships create a sustainable future for wildlife. With the human population continuing to boom in Tanzania, it is imperative to build a coexistence of humans and wildlife to uplift communities and protect these vital conservation areas. The operation has gone above and beyond to achieve their part in global conservation goals, and it is possible only with the contributions of hunting. This is held to the highest ethical standard; for example, they have created "resting areas" for wildlife in the concession and expanded zones along water and national park boundaries where there is no hunting. Hunting is conducted for the betterment of wildlife; as just one example, they only hunt solitary, non-breeding buffalo bulls; this keeps breeding bulls with herds and reduces pressure on breeding herds, both benefiting the health of the species. This, in turn, has bolstered the lion population, which depends on buffalo for a food source. Hunting unequivocally provides the revenue needed to protect these vast landscapes. The full picture of conservation is complex, interdependent, and requires investment and management. Bushman Safari Trackers has created a sustainable haven for wildlife, promising a thriving and sustainable future for Tanzanian conservation - all through conservation hunting.

RUNGWA SAFARIS

PROTECTING A TRUE WILDERNESS



Rungwa Game Safaris operates in several areas across Tanzania totalling nearly 4,700 km² (1,161,400 acres) of truly wild Africa. Their mission is simple: to protect some of our planet's last remaining wild places. They are committed to an approach in which "ethical animal selection, aggressive anti-poaching, and empowered communities are the key to effective conservation." The picturesque areas span critical miombo woodland, grassland savannahs, and sprawling rivers. These boast a diverse array of wildlife, including elephant, lion, buffalo, leopard, and lesser known roan, eland, topi, Grant's gazelle, Coke's hartebeest, and many, many more. Wild Africa does not have to be a thing of the nostalgic past; through sustainable conservation, it will not be lost. Rungwa Game Safaris are true custodians of the land and its wildlife, ensuring it will be protected.

CONSERVATION THROUGH LOCAL PROJECTS

A holistic approach to conservation means protection of the great and small, engagement at the local level, and addressing the root issues facing wildlife. As such, the operation has significant investment well beyond what's required in the local community as stewards of wildlife and the future generation of conservationists. They work closely with schools to implement conservation education; sponsor local students in higher education; pay for school fees; and support school nutrition programs. They furnish medicine and medical supplies to the local clinic to ensure the communities have health care needs covered. The operation has also started unique, local empowerment projects. They pioneered a women and girls education initiative beyond local school support to ensure girls receive a quality education. It is well documented that girls' education is critical to socioeconomic development, and these projects are tackling geopolitical issues locally, where they matter most. Additionally, they have a sustainable beekeeping and honey initiative, where 1,000 managed hives support native bee populations, with ripple effects for the natural ecosystem. They sustainably harvest a small amount of honey to support local economies. Their women's empowerment project also focuses on apiculture, where they train Maasai women on sustainable beekeeping and supply hives to them. This provides successful income for these women and their families, and engages the community in protection of the ecosystem. Whenever possible, the operation sources goods from local producers and businesses, supporting community economies and indirect jobs, and ultimately providing economic alternatives to illegal bushmeat poaching or other resource extraction. They pay herders full reimbursement for cattle killed by lions or other predators to support wildlife tolerance in the community, and as a result has stopped retaliatory poisonings and killings. Additionally, the operation employs many community members and brings in the community as stakeholders in conservation. These local initiatives break cycles of poverty. They are critical to sustainable development as they empower communities to live sustainably with the land as past generations did, while being economically empowered in the modern world. This has the ultimate effect of keeping the wild landscape wild.



TANZANIA



PROTECTING ICONIC WILDLIFE

Protecting the wildlife in these pristine areas requires thorough monitoring and rigorous anti-poaching efforts. This is done in coordination with the community, government wildlife agencies, and the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute. Iconic species such as elephant and lion have substantial, increasing populations. The anti-poaching operation provides dedicated protection from poachers and prevention efforts every day of the year. This is dangerous work as they confront poachers, remove snares, rescue trapped animals, demolish poaching camps, burn illegal fishing nets, destroy muzzleloaders, apprehend illegal transports, protect wildlife from poisoning, and stop illegal deforestation and grazing. They employ sophisticated technology such as drones, camera traps, and satellite imagery. This technological work is done in tandem with wildlife officials and surrounding concessions to fight poaching in the larger area and more effectively stamp out illegal activity. The root cause of many poaching issues is community members who must provide for their families and feel they have no alternative. To address this, the operation focuses on hiring local rangers and staff and supporting the economy; paying informants for poaching information and arrests; and even hiring former poachers as anti-poaching rangers. This benefits the individuals, providing legal, meaningful work. The operation benefits from the former poachers' knowledge of the area and poaching activities. They also pay the allowances for government game scouts, working hand in hand with officials. While the war against poaching is never won, their operation has successfully kept threats from poaching to a minimum due to their constant and dedicated effort.



A COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL HUNTING

The successful anti-poaching operation is funded by conservation hunting. There is a direct line from hunters to wildlife protection - these are costly ventures, that cannot be continued on their own. This is sustainable tourism, where the revenue from the hunter is reinvested into community empowerment and wildlife protection. The operation abides by the highest ethical standards, and hunts the minimum number of animals each year following stringent age and species requirements. Harpreet Brar, the founder of Rungwa Game Safaris, holds leadership positions in hunting operator organizations, such as the Tanzania Hunting Operators Association, which focus on hunting as a tool for conservation and the long-term protection of wildlife and habitat. Like many operators, they go above and beyond legal requirements and truly focus on conservation - it is much more than just a hunt. It must be understood: without the revenue from hunters, there would be no anti-poaching, little community employment or empowerment, and a bleak future for the remaining wilds of Africa. Rungwa Game Safaris is ensuring a flourishing coexistence between the wildlife, the people, and the land.



PHOTO CREDITS: BRYAN WILSON



ZAMBIA

MAKASA SAFARIS

REVITALISING A FORSAKEN AREA

The Norton family has been a leader in Zambia's wildlife industry since the 1940s, passing on their dedication to conservation from generation to generation. The family realizes the imperative at stake - if Zambia's wilderness is not protected now, it will be lost forever. As human populations expand it is necessary to create an abundant coexistence for humans and the environment. The Lower Luano Game Management Area, a 5,000 km² (1,235,530 acres) wilderness, has been left totally unmanaged for 16 years with decades of poor management besides. It is a historic link in the wildlife corridor between the Luangwa and Zambezi systems and the northern Zimbabwe wildlife management system, and thus important for metapopulations and preserving natural wildlife ranges. Devastatingly, the wildlife and habitat were decimated by poaching and overexploitation, and the local Shikabeta community was impoverished and suffering. In 2013, the Chieftess approached Makasa Safaris for environmental and economic revitalization, to create a partnership for the benefit of people and wildlife, with the agreement signed in 2015.



ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RIGHTING THE WRONGS

The first step to protecting wildlife is to empower the people living with it. After entering into the partnership with the community, Makasa Safaris aided in reinstating the Community Resource Board, a leadership structure to make development decisions on behalf of the community. The problem was circular; because there was no wildlife, there was no tourism and no income for the community; and because there was no income, community members engaged in illegal poaching, leading to decimation of wildlife. It was a very impoverished area afflicted by alcoholism, underage marriages, no jobs, food and water scarcity, and little access to education or healthcare. They developed the clinic and medical care, built schools, drilled boreholes for water, and provided many jobs connected to revitalisation projects. This has provided fulfillment and countered plagues such as alcohol abuse, thus strengthening families. They sponsor the annual Nkombalyanga Traditional Ceremony to ensure their heritage is never forgotten. Makasa Safaris also led an innovative approach to shift local mindsets surrounding wildlife. They increased conservation awareness and education, entrusted each community member to steward wildlife like village scouts, taught conservation in schools, and created successful, locally managed programs to address food insecurity, including agricultural endeavors and fisheries. In these local ventures, they encouraged economic ownership and maximum participation to ensure the vitality of the community and to address the underlying issues plaguing the wildlife. They have empowered the community by bringing back purpose, value, and meaning.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF WILDLIFE

As mentioned before, the area had no management or protection of any kind. The bush was littered with snares, and gunshots were heard daily; the situation was so desperate and horrifying that the Nortons wondered "how it is even possible for there to have been anything left alive." But wildlife is resilient, and given the chance it will thrive. They conducted extensive research to determine the health of wildlife populations, how to help them rebound, and the extent of the poaching crisis.



ZAMBIA

ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS

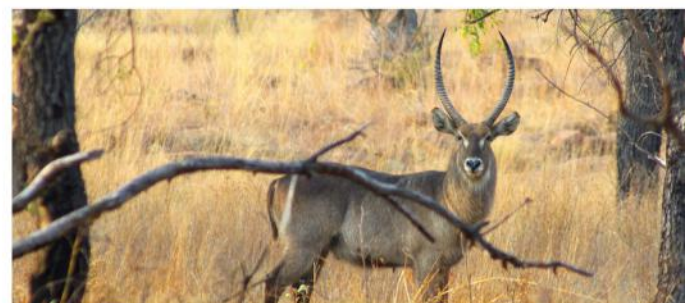
Tackling the poaching crisis was paramount, and they needed as many scouts as possible. The area had 8 scouts, but they were not empowered to protect so large an area. They quickly expanded to 30 and created another pioneering anti-poaching system; Makasa Safaris employed previous and current poachers as anti-poaching rangers. They had taken to poaching due to hunger and desperation; once shown how a wildlife system that supports wildlife and sustainably uses its natural resources can bring prosperity to an area, these former poachers became stewards of wildlife. They were trained as anti-poaching rangers by the wildlife department and have run a dedicated and effective operation since. The operation also started a financial reward system, without convictions, for snares, firearms, and poaching information. To date, they have collected over 17,000 snares and 126 firearms, and counting. Starting from nothing, they now have multiple vehicles, an advanced communications system, 10 patrol units, and 2 management centers on opposite sides of the area. Getting the poaching emergency under control has been successful due to the local involvement, and has established a baseline for the protection of wildlife. They have accomplished an astounding feat - they have curtailed poaching by 80% and are resolutely committed to intensifying their efforts.

REBOUNDED WILDLIFE

A few years into their conservation efforts, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife conducted a game count in the area. Impressed by the rebound of the wildlife, they gave Makasa Safaris a small conservation hunting quota to bring in tourists and much needed revenue. The operation has developed a 5-year general management plan with goals for the continued revival of nature. The wildlife has achieved astounding, measurable success; there are abundant populations of kudu, impala, grysbok, bushbuck, warthog, bushpig, waterbuck, klipspringer, and crocodile. Leopard numbers have thrived due to the increase in prey populations. There is now a large pride of 9 lions and several smaller prides; hippo have moved up into the area and increased from 38 to over 115; roan were previously sighted only as individuals and now live in herds of 12-15; zebra numbers are rebounding; and where there used to be no elephant, there are now regular sightings. The natural balance has been restored and wildlife is beginning to flourish. This also indicates the restoration of natural corridors, facilitating genetic diversity among wildlife and ensuring the preservation of their natural habitats and range.

THE FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE

The magnitude of the task entrusted to them cannot be overstated, nor can the remarkable distance that Makasa Safaris and the Shikabeta Community have covered in achieving it. They are dedicated to amplifying their efforts and strengthening the progress they've made. Continuing projects for the community include finishing the church, building local shops, and finishing clinic refurbishment. For the wildlife, they are going to begin patrolling the rivers, hire more rangers and scouts, and develop new anti-poaching camps in strategic locations. Some wildlife numbers are still below viability and will need to be reintroduced; historically, cape buffalo, puku, and sable antelope were abundant but are now in very low numbers or gone. They have agreed that the wildlife department will supply the wildlife for reintroduction and Makasa Safaris will cover the capture, translocation, and veterinary fees to restore their natural plenitude. These costly projects and many more will be supported by the revenue from sustainable conservation hunting - a proven method of conservation for the wildlife and people of the Lower Luano. Additionally, funds donated through Conservation Force greatly assist in their recovery program. This project, the profound stories of the people, and the vision of conservation is explored in depth in the documentary *Killing the Shepherd*.



MUCHINGA ADVENTURES

A MULTILATERAL PARTNERSHIP FOR CONSERVATION

Muchinga Adventures began operating in the Chifunda Game Management Area (GMA) in 2015, with the owners John and Laura du Plooy having more than 22 years of prior industry experience in Zambia. The concession ran for seven years under a true partnership between Muchinga Adventures, the Chifunda Community Resource Board, and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife. Additionally, a longstanding collaboration saw the Frankfurt Zoological Society protecting the rhino in the neighboring North Luangwa National Park. These partnerships are providing robust anti-poaching efforts, mitigating human wildlife conflict, and sustainably conserving valuable landscapes. Muchinga Adventures has always exceeded in its commitments to anti-poaching and community support, a testament to their true alliance with every stakeholder in the region. They have embraced a holistic approach to conservation built on respect and long-term sustainability.



THE WILDLIFE AND ITS HOME

The concession is approximately 4,900 km² (1,210,820 acres) and is home to baboon, buffalo, chobe bushbuck, common duiker, crocodile, grysbok, hippo, hyena, cookson wildebeest, zebra, kudu, impala, puku, wild dog, elephant, leopard, lion, and various other plains game and carnivores. This concession and others like it are critical to overall land - and wildlife - conservation in Zambia. Having these concessions as buffer zones to national parks distills impressive benefits: the total landmass conserved is many multiple times larger, preserving natural landscapes and wildlife range; anti-poaching efforts for the entire area are much more effective, protecting species in the GMA, national park, and beyond; communities are economically and socially uplifted; and the surrounding hunting areas make conservation an economically viable land use. Otherwise, there would not be sufficient resources for habitat and wildlife protection.

BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

The community partnership is fundamental to conservation of the area, and Muchinga Adventures ensures the community sustainably benefits from the natural resources. Through the operator agreement, the community receives 50% of the trophy fee and 20% of the concession fee, as well as an annual payment to use in development projects for community welfare, wildlife conservation, education, and medical care. Economically, the operator has facilitated the growth of community businesses, notably a successful tourist camp generating long term financial returns and mentoring a new Zambian indigenous owned safari company. The operator employs more than 235 people directly or indirectly, including anti-poaching scouts and teachers; supports community improvement projects and the labor for these jobs; bored clean water wells; and built two community schools that are educating over 500 community children annually,



many of whom have lost one or both of their parents. The hunting operation is essential for food security as they have established fishing zones, donated more than 50% of edible hunted meat, and contributed the meat from all elephants, providing a valuable protein source to some of the most vulnerable community members. Beyond meeting basic needs, they champion local leadership by sponsoring community meetings, a soccer league, and educating the community about conservation and wildlife protection. Muchinga Adventures also patrons traditional ceremonies to preserve Zambia's cultural heritage, while also investing in

ZAMBIA

Zambia's future by encouraging ingenuity and providing scholarships for students. Through these empowerment efforts, many in the community have achieved a significantly higher standard of living; the fundamental outcome being that the community values the wildlife, and in turn, protects it.

MITIGATING HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT

Human-wildlife conflict is easy to dismiss from the comforts of the Western world, but presents a very real and dangerous existence in Zambia. In these truly wild areas, it is critical to strike a balance whereby the community benefits from wildlife and is incentivized to tolerate the negative impacts of animal violence and resource destruction. People are frequently attacked and even killed by lion, leopard, elephant, and buffalo; carnivores regularly attack livestock; and elephants destroy crops and fields overnight. Lives, and livelihoods, are always at risk. The operator takes every effort possible to mitigate the negative effects of living with wildlife; in one of many examples, paying compensation to farmers who lost livestock to a leopard with cubs. Legally, this leopard could have been put down as a problem animal, but thanks to the compensation from the hunting operator, it was not.

COMBATTING THE THREAT OF POACHING

Anti-poaching efforts are a two-pronged approach: rectifying the needs of the community, and conducting organized patrols. The communities' tangible benefits and direct connection between wildlife conservation and community well-being are the most important factor in anti-poaching success. Communities not only willingly participate in anti-poaching efforts, but also are not driven to poaching by food or economic imperatives. When they started operating in Chifunda GMA, Muchinga Adventures quickly developed a coordinated anti-poaching effort including patrols 365 days a year; 4 long patrols and 6 short patrols per month; funding of scout food, vehicles and fuel, village sweeps, education, legal training, and rewards for information and poaching tools seizures. These expenditures total approximately \$100,000 annually. Following an influx of outsiders to the area, they expanded anti-poaching efforts outside of the hunting area - outside the area of their responsibility - to protect the whole ecosystem. This has impeded poachers and led to a highly successful operation. Their outstanding commitment to go above and beyond for the wildlife and habitat guarantees the preservation of the area.

PROTECTION THROUGH HUNTING

The operation's ethical hunting commitment significantly contributes to the long-term sustainability of iconic species and all species in the Luangwa region, which is home to dense populations of elephant, lion, leopard, and prey species such as buffalo, all of which are stable or increasing. The quotas allotted for hunting are a requirement to ensure species populations are maintained at sustainable levels. Elephant hunting is absolutely necessary to protect the habitat from overexploitation, and by extension, the population of elephants as a whole. Maintaining lion and leopard populations mitigates human wildlife conflict and ensures stability of prey

populations. The revenue from lion hunting directly benefits community projects that would otherwise be unaffordable, such as teachers' salaries, scholarships, and increased anti-poaching efforts. Additionally, the operation has undertaken robust scientific studies and data collection on lion and leopard to enhance knowledge. Lion and elephant hunting account for 50% of income, and conservation would not be possible without it. Chifunda GMA is a resource-rich area, but the community decided not to conduct logging or mining operations for revenue while they benefit from hunting. Similarly, without the benefits of hunting, they would have no choice but to clear the land for agriculture and other economic uses, and thus imperil the wildlife and habitat. Hunting emerges as a resilient, sustainable conservation strategy to protect the wildlife and habitat and its custodians. With a holistic approach to community engagement, robust anti-poaching measures, and a comprehensive approach to conservation and human wildlife conflict, Muchinga Adventures will continue to leverage their extensive experience and proven strategies to ensure the same dedication and effectiveness as they embark on a new lease agreement in Upper Lupande GMA, working hand in hand with the Department of Natural Parks and Wildlife and three communities - Nsefu, Mnkhanya, and Jumbe.







ZIMBABWE

CHARLTON MCCALLUM SAFARIS



REVIVING WILDLIFE THROUGH ANTI-POACHING

Charlton McCallum safaris operates in some of the most renowned hunting areas in the world, one of them being a 2,023 km² (500,000 acres) stretch called Dande in the famed Zambezi valley. When Buzz Charlton and Myles McCallum received the rights to the area in 2010, they undertook a comprehensive analysis of the area. Unfortunately, the area had been grossly neglected, particularly in Dande East, and animal populations had suffered the most. The community didn't value wildlife, as it provided no benefits to them. While the area is very poor for agriculture and photo safaris due to dense vegetation and unreliable seasonal rainfall, it is the perfect conditions for wildlife, should it be given the chance to thrive. Dande is also critical for migration corridors and sustaining wildlife populations and ranges in the surrounding safari areas and national parks. They realized that without protection, the wildlife would quickly be lost forever. And so a journey was born; Charlton McCallum Safaris is a hunting operator, but first and foremost they have built a fierce anti-poaching force. The Dande Anti-Poaching Unit (DAPU), officially established in 2014, is their highest priority.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Wildlife protection begins with the community, as communities play a crucial role in anti-poaching and wildlife conservation. Communities must benefit from wildlife to be incentivized to conserve it; otherwise, animals are merely vessels of conflict and destruction with no benefit other than an (in their eyes, diminishing) intrinsic value. Every year, 6-7 people are killed by lions, crocodiles, and hippos; predators attack livestock; and elephants destroy subsistence agriculture. The DAPU realizes that empowering communities, creating pathways to economic success, and giving wildlife an extrinsic value is just as valuable an anti-poaching tool as snare removal and catching poachers. They have proven that involving the community as stewards of their wildlife is the best tool to reduce poaching. As such, the operation has built schools, established food security, and provided much needed employment. Charlton McCallum Safaris also established a revolutionary partnership, where the community receives 50% of revenue. In the schools, they have established a grassroots environmental education program to teach the next generation of conservationists. These benefits create a cycle of sustainability. When these community benefits are combined with other anti-poaching efforts, they enhance wildlife populations, which enable conservation hunting. The economic benefits from hunting support wildlife populations and raise the standard of living for communities; which in turn, incentivize protection and further anti-poaching efforts.

CONSERVATION HUNTING VS. POACHING

Conservation hunting is a legal, ethical, and regulated conservation method that seeks to offtake a select few animals for the betterment of the whole. As seen across southern Africa, the economic benefits ensure community stability and the protection of wild tracts of land, often off the beaten path. In many areas, it is the best hope for wildlife. It is also an important force against one of the biggest threats to hunting - illegal poaching. At Charlton McCallum Safaris, every hunter is required to donate to the anti-poaching efforts; hunters cover more area and provide visibility on poaching



ZIMBABWE

activity; and the revenue keeps the costly operation running. The DAPU has nearly ended elephant poaching in the area - supported by the revenue from very select hunting of elephants and other species. Many international groups and governing bodies are starkly opposed to hunting, without realizing its necessity. In fact, when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service banned the import of elephants from Zimbabwe, it had a direct impact on elephant conservation: fewer elephants were hunted by tourists, more were illegally poached, human wildlife conflict in the community escalated, and the likelihood of long term elephant success diminished. While it may seem contradictory to hunt wildlife to save it, Charlton McCallum Safaris is dedicated to ensuring this wildlife remains on the landscape for generations to come. And their success has been astounding.



ANTI-POACHING EFFORTS

Unfortunately, global inflation and Zimbabwe's unstable financial system have led to a saddening rise in poverty. This increases pressure from subsistence poaching, commercial poaching, and illegal gold panning. In years with poor rain, there is no harvest with nothing to eat or sell, and many feel left with no alternative. When the operation began their anti-poaching efforts, they found that underpaid and under-resourced rangers were facing violent, well armed poaching gangs - these are poachers for international illicit trade on the black market. Poaching threatens habitat too; gold panning is environmentally damaging and brings in criminals and other crimes; people will burn down thousands of mopane trees for charcoal; honey poachers set fires; huge trees are felled for the canoe trade; and the rivers are illegally fished. The DAPU, from 5 base camps throughout the concession, is able to closely monitor, and in close coordination with ZimParks, stop poaching and arrest offenders. They also contribute petrol to reduce illegal fishing and netting, which has a ripple effect as many illegal fishermen are also elephant ivory poachers. The battle against snares is constant, with approximately 700 collected in the first half of 2024 alone. In one instance overnight, a Chinese business moved in to illegally machine excavate in the Angwa river, which they immediately stopped. They offer rewards to community members for information and assistance. This is only a brief snapshot of the constant anti-poaching work, which has resulted in a thriving ecosystem and refuge for wildlife.

ANTI-POACHING STATISTICS

DAPU had a formidable task facing them. In 2010, there were 40 elephants poached. Through their dedicated efforts, in 2011 they lowered it to 36; in 2012, 16, in 2013, 4, and so on down to 2024, where it remains at near none if not zero. Additionally, the elephants they observe have not suffered shots from attempted poaching, as they frequently saw in the past. Carcasses found in more recent years had ivory in tact, due in large part to the severe government dealings. This is remarkable. Since 2010, DAPU has spent \$1,198,026; collected nearly 12,300 snares, had 255 meat poachers and 26 elephant poachers convicted, and 225 weapons and tools retrieved. The work is far from over, and without operations like Charlton McCallum and DAPU, Africa's wildlife and wild places could be lost forever.



NUANETSI RANCH

A WILDLIFE SANCTUARY IN ZIMBABWE'S SOUTH-EASTERN LOWVELD

Nuanetsi Ranch, managed by Zimbabwe Bio-Energy (Private) Ltd. (ZBE), is a 1500 km² (360,660 acres) private ranch in the southeastern lowveld of Zimbabwe, a region characterised by a hot and dry climate. The property is relatively flat, with low-lying areas associated with two major river systems, the Bubyne and the Mwenezi. Prominent landscape features include the Matengeni range and Zauwe hill. Nuanetsi Ranch is a fenced sanctuary for wildlife in an area removed from large wildlife areas and surrounded by agriculture. Formerly a cattle ranch, it has been reinvigorated to its natural state and supports a wide diversity of iconic wildlife, all of which are stable or increasing. Their dedicated management of the ranch is supported by a comprehensive and detailed scientific approach, which has led to a vibrant and sustainable ecosystem - in stark contrast to its agricultural past.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The operation is dedicated to providing economic and social empowerment to the surrounding communities. As just a few examples, ZBE have established a clinic at the ranch headquarters with which they supply medication and other medical equipment to treat all staff and their family members. Other projects include refurbishing rural roads, providing support to neighbouring farmers by developing irrigation schemes and supplying essential agricultural equipment. A current project is the building of a double-classroom block at a local school who is in dire need of assistance (left). This block will also be furnished and essential stationery and equipment will be provided.

Perhaps most importantly, over 200 individuals are employed from local communities, with 72 of these working in the anti-poaching force. The fence surrounding the wildlife area, which is patrolled continuously over a 24-hour schedule, protects the community from wildlife and reduces human-wildlife conflict; it also helps protect the wildlife from the threat of poaching. In 2018 ZBE instituted a rapid response anti-poaching unit, which has led to an astounding 84% decrease in poaching in 4 years. This is a highly successful operation with very few poaching incidents and near zero poached animals due to their diligence. The primary concern now is wire stolen for snares, as well as snare and trap removal. Anti-poaching is most successful when coordinated with the community; the operation frequently donates meat to the community and assists nearby farmers with anti-poaching efforts in areas outside the property. An example of the intersection between supporting the community and protecting the wildlife was in 2018, when a crocodile was terrorizing humans and killing livestock in the Matibi community. To stop the human-wildlife conflict, the crocodile was rescued and released into the Mwenezi River on Nuanetsi Ranch. Not only did this protect the community and their resources, but also the crocodile from a retaliatory killing.

WILDLIFE REINTRODUCTION

In converting the property back to a natural wildlife area, reintroduction of key species was required to bolster populations. The operation translocated 39 elephants from a conservancy in Zimbabwe in 2012. Whilst still a young population, elephants have increased to over 250 individuals, and the population continues to grow exponentially. During the days of cattle ranching, lions were actively sought out and killed. In 2021, to support the natural cycle between predator and prey, 8 lions were translocated. The lion population is now solidly established with over 30 individuals. They are closely monitored with satellite collars and camera traps, as the population can grow rapidly beyond carrying capacity to the detriment of the ecosystem at large. Other translocations include over 1,610 buffalo from Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park and other private game reserves over the last 12 years. In an area largely devoid of protected wildlife areas, these efforts represent a profound commitment to rewilding and a noteworthy achievement in natural conservation. The property was able to assist in the re-wilding of other wildlife areas, sending several plains game species to these areas, including giraffe, wildebeest, eland, zebra, impala, warthog, nyala and waterbuck.



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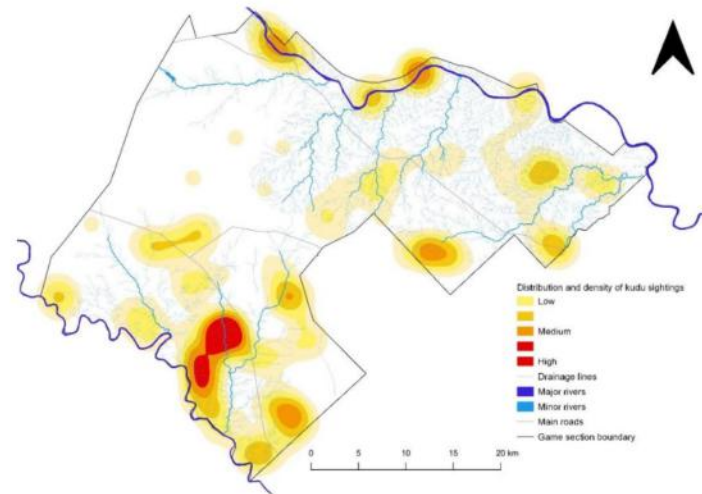
SCIENTIFIC MONITORING AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Aerial wildlife counts have been conducted annually since 2015 in a fixed wing aircraft, but low precision hampered interpretation of the results. In 2022 a new approach using a helicopter was initiated, one which uses different counting methods for different species. The census is important as it allows the operation to closely monitor trends in the populations of all large herbivores and their distribution across both space and time. The new approach has allowed for higher precision and accuracy in estimating the abundance of large herbivores, providing a comprehensive baseline for wildlife and habitat management. Using a helicopter to conduct the count has also

enabled the incorporation of aerial photography which aids in identifying the age and sex structure of key populations. In a protected environment, elephant populations increase rapidly. Due to their size, range, and nutritional requirements, an overabundant elephant population can have a negative impact on the environment, reducing resources for other species and causing ecological damage. For example, elephant bulls have greater daily food needs than elephant cows, and as grazing sources diminish, they will turn to browsing on trees. Elephant browsing pressure can cause damage to woody plants, which can then in turn reduce the availability of vulture nesting sites through a reduction of trees; vultures play a critical role in the environment by consuming carrion and reducing the spread of disease. The wilds of Africa depend on a delicate balance, which when disturbed has cascading effects. Monitoring of tree species vulnerable to elephant impact is ongoing to measure the rate of loss. The operation has invested heavily in understanding the leopard population on the property, with an annual baited camera trap survey that provides a density estimate as well as home ranges for individual animals. This data is rigorously collected and analysed with state-of-the-art methodology and technology. This comprehensive understanding of the natural balance has fostered a flourishing natural world on the ranch.

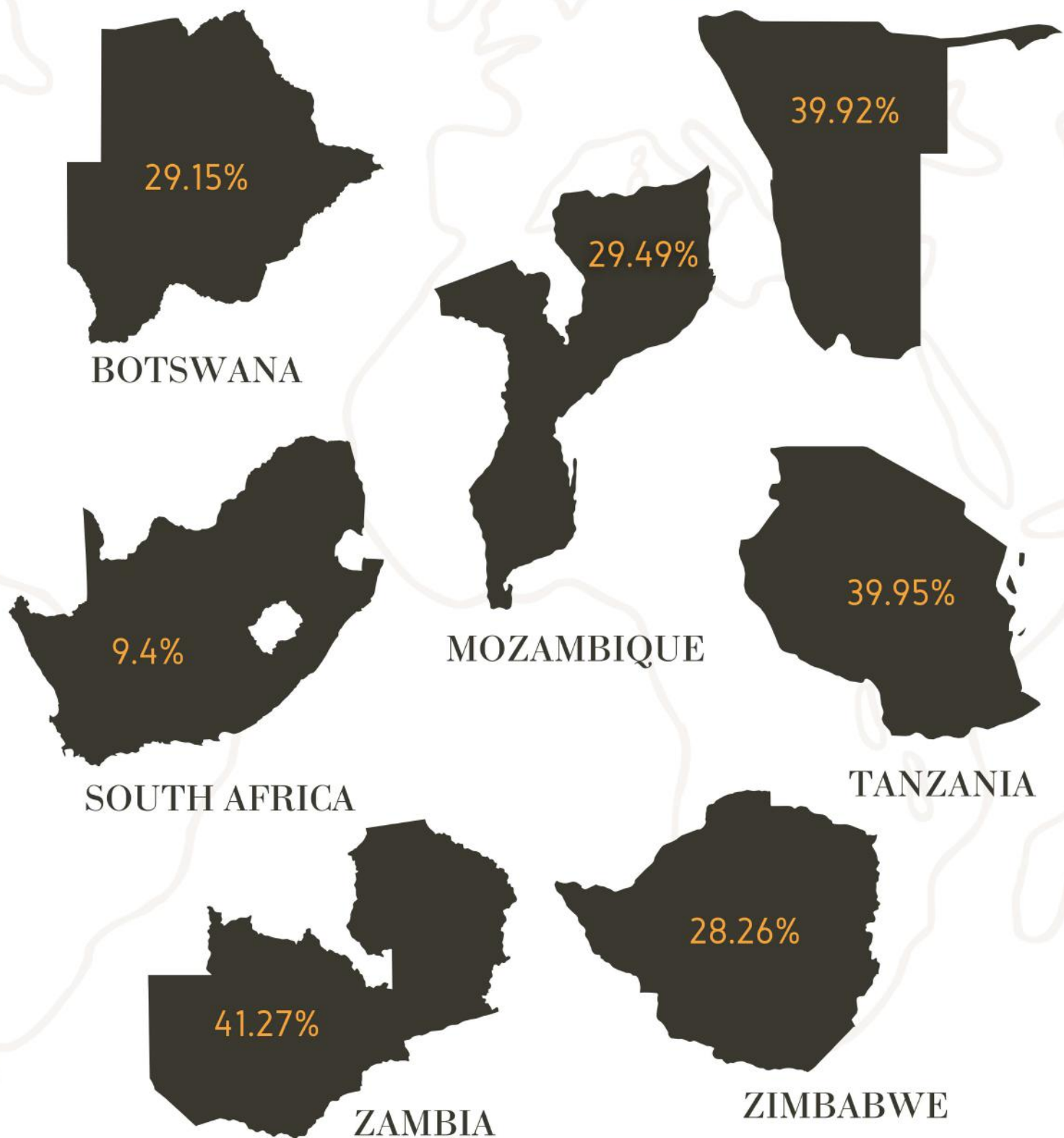
UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING THE NATURAL ECOSYSTEM

As closely as they monitor wildlife populations, the operation monitors habitat and rangeland health, trends, and relationship with wildlife. They collect comprehensive data on vegetation, study its relationship with herbivores and the impact on habitat throughout the year, and determine feeding and habitat distributions on the landscape. The vegetation map completed in 2023 showcases the types of vegetative cover and is supported by soil sampling to understand the intricate relationship between soil, vegetation, and wildlife. They will regularly re-evaluate and collect new data to determine macro-changes over time, as well as undergo necessary management operations, such as prescribed burns and distributed water points, to support optimal habitat health. With this data, they are able to determine the long term carrying capacity of animals and determine scientifically based hunting quotas. Hunting is conducted to support the ecosystem, inextricably linking hunting with enduring conservation. This sustainable-use conservation supports the protection of the landscape and wildlife, while remaining economically viable and preventing conversion to other uses such as mining or agriculture. This is a true success story of rewilding and sustainable conservation for generations to come.



MEETING GLOBAL 30X30 CONSERVATION GOALS

Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (<https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets>) seeks to conserve 30% of lands and waters by 2030. This 30X30 goal has already been achieved with astounding success in southern African countries - due in large part to their successful conservation hunting programs. Averaged, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe have successfully protected over 31% of their land. The land conserved by hunting operations far exceeds nationally protected parks - and without hunting and community partnerships, global 30x30 goals would be severely compromised.



WHAT IS AT STAKE

Conservation in Africa, extended to global conservation goals, depends on these featured operators and operators across Southern Africa. Millions of acres of habitat, an immensity of biodiversity, and critical conservation projects are funded, managed, and protected - but without conservation hunting operations will be put at perilous risk. Import bans and other restrictions by Western governments, regardless of how well-intentioned they may be, directly and negatively impact the conservation of wildlife and wild places and their custodians. Hunting provides critical funds for conservation, anti-poaching, community resources, and wildlife management. It protects millions of acres outside of protected parks, creates successful habitat buffer zones, and enhances the survival of hunted, non-hunted, and threatened and endangered species. The model of conservation hunting is a proven, scientifically based method, working in tandem with other conservation tourism. This is comprehensive, sustainable conservation that preserves the beauty, magic, and wild of Africa. These operators, hunters, and hunting conservation organizations have an unrivaled passion and history of success to protect and ensure a resilient future for Africa's natural heritage.

FURTHER RESOURCES

- The Rhino Hunter | Radiolab Podcast | <https://radiolab.org/podcast/rhino-hunter>
- Informing Decisions on Trophy Hunting | CITES CoP17 Document | <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/cop/17/InfDocs/E-CoP17-Inf-60.pdf>
- Why trophy hunting helps protect animals | The Economist | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9y7YFjisSTg>
- How Hunters Keep Elephants Alive | Daily Caller | <https://dailycaller.com/2016/08/12/how-hunters-keep-elephants-alive/>
- In Tanzania, Can Cattle And Wildlife Coexist? | Forbes | <https://www.forbes.com/sites/chrisdorsej/2023/07/10/in-tanzania-can-cattle-and-wildlife-coexist/#>
- Economic Contributions of Hunting-Related Tourism in Eastern and Southern Africa | <https://www.southwickassociates.com/economic-contributions-of-hunting-related-tourism-in-eastern-and-southern-africa/>
- Loved to Death? The Risks of Simplistic Campaigning for Wildlife Conservation | The Equation | <https://blog.ucsusa.org/science-blogger/loved-to-death-the-risks-of-simplistic-campaigning-for-wildlife-conservation/>
- Custodians of Wilderness: Zambezi Valley, Zimbabwe | The Conservation Imperative | <https://vimeo.com/165256789>
- Effects of the safari hunting tourism ban on rural livelihoods and wildlife conservation in Northern Botswana | Joseph Mbaiwa, University of Botswana | https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315588293_Effects_of_the_safari_hunting_tourism_ban_on_rural_livelihoods_and_wildlife_conservation_in_Northern_Botswana
- Community conservation in Southern Africa: Rightsbased natural resource management | Brian Child | https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285773067_Community_conservation_in_Southern_Africa_Rightsbased_natural_resource_management
- Report on the Hunting Trophies (Import Prohibition) Bill debated in the UK House of Commons | <https://www.resourceafrica.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/trophy-hunting-report.pdf>
- Botswana Elephant Management and Action Plan 2021-2026 | <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/documents/E-CoP19-Inf-102.pdf>
- Botswana Elephant NDF 2021 and 2024 Addendum - <https://cites.org/eng/virtual-college/non-detriment-findings-loxodonta-africana-african-elephant-controlled-hunting>
- Tanzania Elephant Management and Action Plan 2023-2033 - https://www.tawiri.or.tz/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/TANZANIA-ELEPHANT-MGT-PLAN_FINAL_WMM.pdf



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CONSERVATION FORCE

DSC



SUPPORTED BY CONSERVATION FORCE, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DALLAS SAFARI CLUB

Conservation Force is a non-profit organization that stands for three forces. First, that hunters and anglers are an indispensable and essential force for wildlife conservation. Second, that Conservation Force is a collaborative effort combining forces of a consortium of organizations. And third, that Conservation Force itself is a proactive force with a long record of conservation successes.

Our purpose is to expand and secure conservation of wildlife and wild places. This includes supporting community based natural resource management (CBNRM), supporting conservation hunting operators, and supporting global projects to protect wildlife and habitat and empower its stewards. The operators featured here are partners of Conservation Force and represent the ethical commitment of hunters to conservation. Many of the community and conservation projects featured herein are supported by Conservation Force and our organizational partners.

Conservation Force has officially partnered with Dallas Safari Club to further our shared engagement in wildlife conservation. Dallas Safari Club's mission is to ensure the conservation of wildlife through public engagement, education and advocacy for well-regulated hunting and sustainable use. A member of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), DSC is a mission-focused conservation organization, funded by hunters from around the world.

Through the Conservation Force and Dallas Safari Club organizations, hunters and hunting operators fund and promote the protection of wild life, wild places, and the communities living alongside them. We have sponsored the creation of this booklet because these are the stories of the unsung heroes of conservation that need to be told.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT CF@CONSERVATIONFORCE.ORG

