

Peace Parks Foundation

“Let me congratulate the leadership and management of the Peace Parks Foundation for the great work they are doing to fulfil the noble task of coordinating, facilitating and driving the process of establishing and funding the transfrontier conservation areas. Those of you who have visited some of the areas have seen new developments in rural infrastructure, with improved roads, power lines, telecommunication systems, water supply sources, education, health facilities, magnificent new lodges and hundreds of new jobs created.” *Joaquim Chissano (Board member: Mozambique)*

DELIVERING THE DREAM

The peace parks concept is not unique to Africa, but it is in Africa that it is truly being brought to life. In Southern Africa, vast and vital transfrontier conservation areas (‘TFCAs’), or peace parks, are being actively developed under the auspices of regional protocols. The sovereign partners in the region have formalised their cooperation to the extent necessary for Peace Parks Foundation to make real advances in cross-border eco-tourism; a source of substantive benefit flows in restoring ecological integrity and driving local economic development.

The Foundation’s development strategy has been formulated in partnership with governments, implementing agents and local communities. Its twin objectives are to showcase the ten magnificent peace parks in the region and to put the necessary structures in place to offer visitors a unique African experience unbounded by national borders. Across the region, steady progress is being made in developing the region’s peace parks, as illustrated below.

A captivating example of the vast potential of regional partnerships, underpinned by the work of the Foundation, is the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park between Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Great Limpopo currently straddles some 35 000 km² of conservation estate (roughly the size of the Netherlands). Plans are well advanced to add public and private conservation areas to the park, widening its extent to a breathtaking 100 000 km². This will create the greatest animal kingdom on earth and an immeasurably important legacy for future generations.

An integral endeavour in the development of Africa’s peace parks is to ensure that sustainable benefit accrues to the communities living in and adjacent to the parks. Kavango-Zambezi, or KAZA, the largest of the TFCAs at 287 132 km² (rivaling Italy in landmass), is a case in point. It has many distinguishing features of global importance, among them the largest contiguous population of African elephant on the continent, numbering a quarter of a million animals. Of significant benefit to both the local communities and this huge elephant population is the establishment of Zambia’s first conservancy, the Simalaha Community Conservancy. This wildlife recovery area will ultimately link Chobe National Park in Botswana to Kafue National Park in Zambia.

Also in KAZA, the integrated development plans for the Angola, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe components of the TFCA are nearing completion. Once finalised, an overarching plan for the sustainable development, utilisation and management of the TFCA will be formulated. Given the success of this process, it is being replicated in the other peace parks in Southern Africa.

Peace Parks Foundation is involved in forest assessment in Western Zambia, leading to recommendations on sustainable forest management. Forests contribute significantly to the national economy of Zambia in general and the Western Province in particular, where teak forests predominate. Contributing an average of 21 % of total household income, forest products are vital to rural livelihoods in this area. Besides alleviating poverty, forests provide important mitigation against environmental disasters, such as floods, resulting from climate change.

Development partners Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency, the University of Pretoria and Peace Parks Foundation opened The Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station in August 2010. The Research Station provides a dedicated platform for local and international researchers to conduct experimental work focused on animal diseases and related issues at the transfrontier interface between people, livestock and wildlife. The research will assist to entrench Southern Africa’s competitive advantage in eco-tourism.



Turtle monitoring in Mozambique



The class of 2010

A stride forward was taken in September 2010 in developing the Maputo Special Reserve in the Lubombo TFCA with the first ever wildlife translocation from game reserves in South Africa. The government of Mozambique is preparing to extend the Maputo Special Reserve, linking it with Tembe Elephant Park in South Africa through the Futi Corridor. This will reunite the last naturally occurring coastal elephant population in Southern Africa, which historically moved freely along the Futi River and Rio Maputo floodplains. The ultimate aim is to remove the electrified border fence to allow the elephants and other wildlife to re-establish their ancient migration patterns. Conservation areas along the Futi River will enable communities to become shareholders in conservation and eco-tourism businesses, creating a viable land use option in the region.

Developing the Lubombo TFCA involved the proclamation of Mozambique's Ponta do Ouro Partial Marine Reserve in 2009, which protects 678 km² of coast and extends three nautical miles into the Indian Ocean. Recent studies have shown that around 77 % of marine turtles that nest along the extensive Mozambican coastline do so in the newly proclaimed Marine Reserve. Local community members and landowners contribute to protecting this endangered species through monitoring, which together with the recently completed marine headquarters and ranger stations, improve the efficacy of this conservation effort.

The colleges supported by Peace Parks Foundation contribute extensively to sustainable community and conservation development. Every year the Southern African Wildlife College in the Kruger National Park trains students from across Africa in the essential skills of managing parks and conservation areas. Its graduates take up senior positions in many of Southern Africa's most prominent wildlife areas. The SA College for Tourism in the

Karoo region of South Africa trains marginalised women in hospitality services, enabling them to work in the fast growing tourism industry in Southern Africa. An exciting development in 2010 was the opening of the SA College for Tourism Tracker Academy, which aims to preserve age-old tracking skills. Sixteen trainees, at least half of whom will be women, will be trained annually at the Academy as of 2011.

AN INVITATION TO LEAVE A LIVING LEGACY

Peace Parks Foundation deeply appreciates the many dedicated people the world over who support its work as patrons, directors, advisors and employees. Richemont, a major supporter, is a prominent member of Club 21, which comprises individuals, families and companies who have donated US\$ 1 million or more to the Foundation's work. Many others have enrolled as corporate Peace Parks Club members, donating US\$ 50 000 every ten years, or individual Peace Parks Club members, donating US\$ 5 000 every ten years.

With the support of international public funders and financial institutions, listed companies, family foundations and individuals, Peace Parks Foundation gives donors the opportunity to invest in a brighter future for Africa and in sustainable conservation solutions with global relevance. We invite you to become a protagonist in this story of hope and progress. We welcome your call, email or visit to our website to find out how you can support the work of Peace Parks Foundation.

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