



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
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## SWM COMMUNITY CONSERVANCY PROJECT

KAZA SITES  
(BOTSWANA, NAMIBIA,  
ZAMBIA AND ZIMBABWE)

# newsletter

Issue 7 - March to August 2025

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## WELCOME

I am thrilled to share with you the latest edition of the Sustainable Wildlife Management (SWM) Community Conservancy Project newsletter.

Over the past six months, our field teams and partners in Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe have made considerable progress. At the national level, we submitted a review of Zambia's Wildlife Bill, hosted a parliamentary workshop in Zimbabwe, facilitated an SWM Legal Analysis Workshop in Namibia and launched the Botswana Legal Hub. Regionally, we published 19 practical factsheets on mitigating human-wildlife conflict ([click here](#)).

Looking ahead, we've been hard at work on the design of, as well as seeking funding for, an ambitious new four-year regional initiative: *Community Conservation Areas in Southern Africa (SWM CCASA)*. This proposal aims to strengthen biodiversity protection and community resilience across the region. Aligned with the European Union's NaturAfrica initiative, it also supports the goals of both the Kavango Zambezi (KAZA) Secretariat and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Inside this issue, you'll find country highlights, key regional updates, a preview of 2025 events, and an inspiring "SWM Talks" feature with Bennett Kahuure, Director of Parks and Wildlife at Namibia's Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism.

We hope you find this newsletter to be informative and inspiring, and we hope it will keep you connected to our shared mission.

**Hubert Boulet**  
SWM Programme coordinator

Supported by

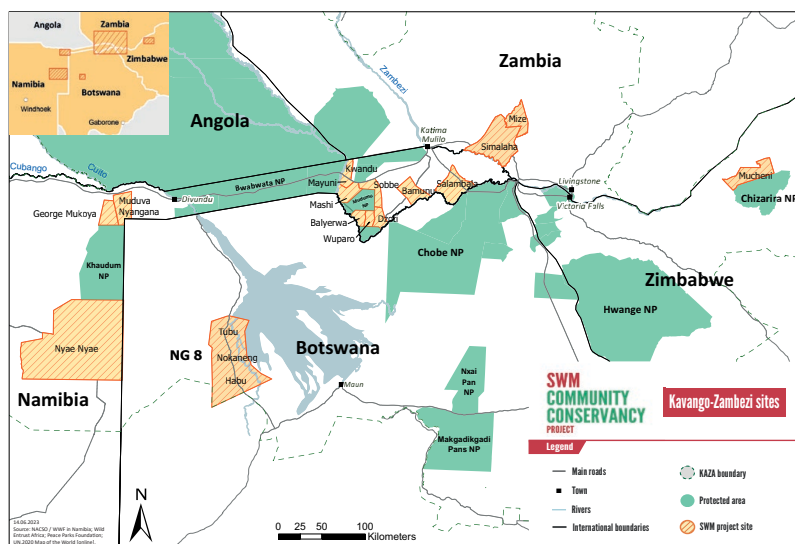


National partners



# HIGHLIGHTS

Summarized below are the highlights from the CC Project sites for the period March to August 2024. They build on the highlights in the [first](#), [second](#), [third](#), [fourth](#), [fifth](#) and [sixth](#) newsletters.



## Botswana



Delegates attending the SWM Programme Legal Hub launch in March 2025

On 11 March, the SWM Programme launched the Botswana Legal Hub in Gaborone, officiated by the Minister of Environment and Tourism, the Honourable Wynter Boipuso Mmolotsi. The Legal Hub serves as a free online “one-stop shop” for laws and policies on wildlife, hunting, land tenure and animal health. On 19 June, the SWM Programme organized a media tour to the Habu field site to highlight progress and offer a firsthand look at the conservancy. Journalists met with project staff and community scouts, and they visited key areas including the enterprise, butchery, slaughter facility, community garden and wildlife management site – showcasing the project’s integrated, community-based approach.

## Namibia



SWM Programme filming of the Devil's Claw value chain at the EcoSo Dynamics processing plant

The SWM Programme’s technical partner in Namibia, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), advanced work plans supporting 12 communal conservancies in the Zambezi Region. In May, the SWM Programme hosted a workshop to discuss the legal analysis work for validation and publication on the Namibia Legal Hub. On 6 June, the Site Review Committee met in Windhoek to assess progress, budgets and to plan next steps. In June, a successful filming mission documented stories on human–wildlife conflict mitigation, Devil's Claw supply chains, wildlife corridors and key success factors for conservancy development.

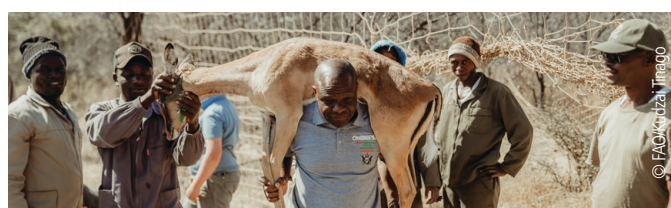
## Zambia



Launch of a newly constructed spray race on 3 July in the Nyawa Chiefdom, Zambia.

In the Nyawa Chiefdom, the SWM Programme helped build three community-run spray races that can be used to fight tick-borne diseases that harm livestock and livelihoods. Communities provided materials and formed committees to manage the process. Launched on 3 July, the spray races are already improving cattle health and reducing household losses, and strengthening food security near the Sichifulo Game Management Area. At the same time, training continued for the Mize Community Conservancy Board, a key player in local governance and conservation. These efforts show the SWM Programme’s continued support for community-driven solutions that promote sustainable development and resilience.

## Zimbabwe



Translocation of impala to Mucheni Community Conservancy with Binga Rural District Council and ZimParks

The SWM Programme continues to engage with the Zimbabwe Parliamentary Committee on Environment and Climate in advancing community-focused conservation through the Parks and Wildlife Amendment Bill. In July, the team partnered with Binga Rural District Council and ZimParks to translocate 90 animals (impalas, kudus and zebras) from Rosslyn Safaris to Mucheni Community Conservancy, enhancing biodiversity and promoting community stewardship. To support local livelihoods, the SWM Programme provided the Business and Markets Initiatives Training for beekeeping, livestock and non-timber forest products. Participants gained skills in business development, financial management and marketing, which are the tools they need to grow sustainable, nature-based enterprises.

## REGIONAL NEWS

From 19–23 May 2025, the Southern African Development Community marked 25 years of Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) with a landmark International Conference and Summit in Harare, Zimbabwe. Under the theme “Transfrontier Conservation Areas: 25 Years of Cooperation for Regional Integration and Sustainable Development,” the event reaffirmed regional commitment to biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and cross-border collaboration. Supported by key partners including the European Union and Germany, more than 500 delegates came together at the conference to explore such themes as political commitment, sustainable investment and community engagement.

The SWM Programme actively participated in the event to promote the Community Conservancy model, to network and to highlight the achievements made in biodiversity and community development in the KAZA region. Through exhibits, panel discussions and media outreach, the team emphasized the importance of inclusive governance, gender equity and youth empowerment in conservation.

The event concluded with a historic summit of Heads of State and Government, signalling renewed high-level support for TFCA development. The conference served as a catalyst for scaling community-led approaches and reinforcing the ecological and socioeconomic future of the region.

Key insights from the conference stemming from 25 years of TFCA development in SADC underscore two core SWM principles which include the requisite for community rights-based approaches and innovative sustainable financing models”, explained Dr. Ben Cooper Heermans, the SWM Community Conservancy Project Regional Coordinator.

## THE SWM PROGRAMME IS CONTRIBUTING TO COMMUNITY CONSERVANCIES BY:

1. Working with **governments** on devolving land and natural resources rights to communities.
2. Strengthening **community governance** and leadership.
3. Assisting communities in their **land-use planning**.
4. Supporting ecological **surveys** and monitoring **patrols**.
5. Increasing wildlife populations through **restocking** and **ecological restoration**.
6. Reducing **human–wildlife conflict** with better livestock enclosures and land-use planning.
7. Building viable **nature-based businesses**.
8. Providing clean and reliable **water** for both people and wildlife.
9. Improving **small-scale poultry, goat, cattle** and **fish** farming.
10. Organizing **exchange visits** to share experiences between countries.



The Conference provided a valuable platform for exchanging knowledge and showcasing innovations in transboundary conservation

## EVENTS CORNER

### Media tour of the SWM Programme field site

19 June 2025, Habu, Botswana

The SWM Programme in Botswana hosted a media tour of the Habu Conservancy, offering journalists a firsthand look at the landscape and an opportunity to hear about insights from the community scouts and project teams that are driving local wildlife conservation.



Journalists interviewing Kavenauua Muatjitjeja, Habu Deputy Village Chief

### Zambia Celebrates International Day of Forests

21 March 2025, Choma, Zambia

At the International Day of Forests 2025 in Choma, Zambia, Southern Province Deputy Permanent Secretary Yolanta Malunga visited the SWM stand, where the Programme showcased how initiatives like the Mize Community Conservancy are linking forest conservation with food security, biodiversity and community resilience through innovations like fish farming and beekeeping.

### Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF)

21–26 April 2025, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

The SWM Programme joined #TeamEurope at ZITF 2025, championing sustainable wildlife value chains and inclusive economic growth in line with the theme “Industrialisation: Crafting an Integrated Economic Landscape.”



High-level delegates, including the European Union Ambassador Jobst von Kirchmann who visited the SWM Programme stand

## FROM THE FIELD



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Zebra and other plains game were successfully translocated to Mucheni Community Conservancy in July 2025

## NEWSROOM

- **CIRAD News**, *Empowering communities: leadership training in the Mucheni Community Conservancy* ([click here](#))
- **CIRAD News**, *CIRAD in Zimbabwe Celebrates World Wildlife Day 2025, Strengthens Networks and Collaboration* ([click here](#))
- **FAO News**, *Botswana launches SWM Legal Hub to strengthen wildlife conservation and management* ([click here](#))
- **FAO YouTube**, *Interview with the Evans Muhanga, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Zambia* ([click here](#))
- **FAO YouTube**, *Interview with Wynter Boipuso Mmolotsi, Minister of Environment and Tourism, Botswana* ([click here](#))
- **African News Agency (ANA)**, *Botswana launches legal hub on sustainable wildlife management* ([click here](#))
- **ForestNews Blog**, *Zambian Chieftom is taking livestock health into its own hands* ([click here](#))

## WHAT'S COMING UP?

- **The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress** (Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. 9–15 October 2025) ([click here](#))
- **Agreement on the Conservation of African–Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) MOP-9** (Gaborone, Botswana. 10–14 November 2025) ([click here](#))

## SWM TALKS

### Bennett Kahuure

Director of Parks and Wildlife  
Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism,  
Namibia



Since the introduction of communal conservancies in 1996, Namibia has made considerable progress in linking conservation and community development. Today, 86 communal conservancies engage over 240 000 members, contributing to wildlife recovery, rural employment, local development and the national gross domestic product.

Through joint ventures in tourism and conservation hunting, communities benefit from revenue and jobs. A lodge typically employs 30 to 50 local staff. Wildlife numbers have also increased significantly over the past two decades, thanks in large part to improved local stewardship. Despite challenges, our journey shows what is possible when communities have ownership and benefit directly from sustainable wildlife management.

But wildlife and people do not stop at borders. In the Kavango Zambezi (KAZA) landscape, rivers, wildlife and communities are always moving. That's why transboundary collaboration is critical – wildlife corridors and conservation plans must be regional to be effective.

The SWM Programme helps us move this forward. It provides technical and legal support, including through the innovative SWM Legal Hub, that contributes to strengthening community rights and governance in line with regional standards. We fully support the proposed four-year regional initiative – SWM CCASA – that aims to enhance biodiversity and resilience across the landscape. Continued support and funding will be essential to make this a reality.



## FIND OUT MORE

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### Technical partners



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