

SADC Transfrontier Conservation Areas at the IUCN World Parks Congress

Sydney, Australia, 12-19 November 2014

Edition 7
18 November 2014

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Namibia's Khwe Community leaders Thaddeus Chadeu (left) and Alfred Chadeu (right) speaking during a discussion at the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014. Credit: Vusumuzi Sifile/IPS

Namibia's Khwe Urge IUCN Delegates to Adopt Their Ways To Protect Wildlife

By Vusumuzi Sifile

The use of indigenous knowledge systems could help Africa to stop wildlife crimes in Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs), two members of the Khwe, one of Namibia's indigenous tribes has said.

The Khwe are based in Namibia's Bwabwata National Park which borders with Botswana, Zambia and Angola, making it an essential link for transboundary movement of wildlife and people.

Like other indigenous communities in Africa, the Khwe are grossly marginalised, yet they hold what they believe to be sophisticated knowledge about biodiversity and ecosystems, which if used could solve most conservation challenges.

The two leaders, Alfred Chadeu and Thaddeus Chadeu are delegates at the IUCN World Parks Congress. Both called for the integration of indigenous

knowledge into the management of protected areas as an effective tool for sustainable benefits, ensuring that both people and the environment benefit.

"Most people in our community did not go to school, they cannot speak English, they cannot read or write but they have important knowledge about different animals and plants.

My school is in the bush. We have our own way of tracing animals. You do not eat if you do not know," said Thaddeus, a leader of the Khwe community.

The Chadeus gave an example of how they use traces on the ground to detect the possible direction and distance of an animal and said most latest technologies may not capture such information.

"Footprints or traces on the ground also provides-

information that you will not get through computers," says Alfred.

He told IPS that combining science with indigenous knowledge would strengthen conservation efforts.

"I think our children should go to school but also acquire this knowledge that we have," he said.

"As elders, we do not know the scientific names of species, but when our children go to school, they will help us to share that information and we will be able to share information on certain plants and animals, and also get information on what they are known as lsewhere."

Realizing the need to combine science and indigenous knowledge, the Khwe community have

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More Government Funding Needed to Sustain TFCAs in Southern Africa

By Marshall Patsanza

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) idea of Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) to help preserve wildlife in protected areas, may not be sustainable, say leading conservationists attending the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia

Kevan Zunckel, an independent consultant from the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, said that the way in which the TFCAs in Southern Africa were structured is not sustainable because they are dependent on external donor funds.

"Most of the initiatives, planning, management and setting up of the frameworks for the TFCAs in SADC would not have happened without donor funding," Zunckel said in an interview after his presentation on 'SADC's best practices for TFCAs management and implementation' at the congress.

SADC hired Zunckel to help develop the TFCAs guidelines.

"Without sufficient financial backing from governments, the burden of operating the TFCAs will be placed on donor funding, a model which is not sustainable considering that donors only fund a project for a set period of time," he added.

The SADC adopted TFCAs as one of the solutions to help improve the livelihood security and biodiversity conservation in southern Africa. The TFCAs in protected areas are also designed to uplift the economic status of communities.

German International Cooperation (GIZ) is currently funding the development and implementation of TFCAs in the region.

EUROPARC, a federation of European countries that supports and promotes protected areas in Europe, echoed Zunckel's fears saying that creating protected areas supported by outside assistance is not sustainable.

"Local communities, governments and civil societies should be in the fore front of financing the maintenance and development of protected areas. This allows them to have a sense of ownership of the land they are investing in," said Kari Lathi, a senior advisor for International Cooperation, a member of the EUROPARC federation.

In Europe, governments that share protected areas with their neighbouring countries develop memorandum of understandings which have financial commitments and this makes the local politicians actively involved in the management and conservation of the areas.

Lathi said that the financial commitment by

governments does not only support the management of the protected areas, but it also supports the promotion of environmental education in the surrounding schools as well as setting up initiatives for the local communities to benefit from the parks.

"Obtaining donor funding to run our protected areas has never been an option as the model is not sustainable and it limits local community involvement in the management of the areas," said Lathi.

Zunckel took a swipe at governments in the 14 member regional bloc saying that some have taken a back seat in the development of TFCAs.

"The problem we are having in southern Africa is that governments are seeing the developments of the TFCAs without their financial support and they are taking a back seat, but they do not seem to be concerned with what will happen when the donor funding runs out," Zunckel said.

But in an interview with some officials from two TFCAs in the SADC region who asked for anonymity, the two dismissed assertions that not all countries have taken a back seat to financing protected areas. They however, acknowledged that governments were not putting in enough funds into the support and development of protected areas and more need to be done.

"Although countries cannot at the moment increase their financial contributions to the management of conservation areas, there are efforts by different government organs to facilitate private sector involvement in the funding and management of protected areas," said the SADC TFCAs official.

Zunckel said protected areas are not only reserved for tourism purposes but that tourism is one of the many products that exist due to the conservation of these areas.

"There has been a complete disregard of the ecosystem which ideally has the most revenue generation potential," Zunckel added.

Ecosystems provide a great diversity of materials including wood, biofuels, and fibres from wild or cultivated plant and animal species.

Gary Tabor, from the Center for Large Landscape Conservation, said that the first step in establishing a transboundary management area plan is to actually raise awareness of all the benefits that are possessed by the land.

"By putting value to the land, local communities and governments can realize the diverse products that protected area can benefit them with," said Tabor.

The Khwe's Indigenous Ways To Protect Wildlife

Continued from page 1

embarked on a process to develop an indigenous knowledge based platform, where knowledge is orally transmitted from the elderly experienced trackers to youngsters, usually around a fire.

Speaking during a discussion on Indigenous People and their role in conservation, Friedrich Alpers from the Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation Trust said there was need to address the various issues hindering the use of indigenous knowledge.

"Western science seems to belittle indigenous knowledge. People who live with animals are viewed as poachers, not as sources of knowledge to provide more understanding about different species," said Alpers,

who is currently working with the Khwe community.

Nigel Crawhall, director of the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC) said in most cases, indigenous people seem to have more knowledge that some "experts".

"A lot of people who work in protected areas cannot tell one tree from another but the communities who have this knowledge are usually left out because they do not have any formal qualifications," said Crawhall.

According to Thadeus, the biggest challenge is that people do not normally want to take them seriously because "what we know is not in the computer".

"We need to start thinking about how we can tap into this knowledge in the communities. We can draw a lot of lessons from the Namibia case," said Patricia Mupeta a delegate from Zambia.

The Khwe believe their use of indigenous knowledge has reduced poaching and caused the wildlife population to increase. According to Alpers, the Bwabwata Territory currently has over 6,000 elephants, outnumbering the human population of 5,500 people in the reserve.

This presents challenges for the community members, especially where the elephants pounce on their crops and destroy food supplies for the whole year in one night.

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Independent media coverage of the IUCN World Parks Congress is commissioned by the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)-GIZ Transboundary Use and Protection of Natural Resources Project in partnership with Inter Press Service (IPS) Africa and is aimed at providing quality coverage of the Congress and issues relating to parks, wildlife and conservation in southern Africa and globally.

IPS-Inter Press Service is a global news agency that provides news features, analyses and commentaries on the events and processes affecting the development of peoples and nations.

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Rhino Poaching Cannot Be Allowed to Continue, Not on Our Watch - Molewa

“What we need are integrated strategies – inter country and internationally. This thing is quite complicated, quite complex. Without a real integrated strategy, we can talk and talk but nothing will change.”

Vusumuzi Sifile speaks to South Africa's Minister of Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa on rhino conservation, and their efforts to engage with the international community.



Minister, Edna Molewa
Credit: Vusumuzi Sifile/IPS

South Africa is one of the countries that has managed to successfully save and protect one of the planet's most endangered herbivores, the rhino. The country has over the years implemented a number of interventions to fight poaching and trade in rhino horns. South Africa's Minister of Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa speaks passionately about the success of their rhino conservation, and their efforts to engage with the international community.

Q: South Africa has been taking a lead on rhino conservation. How successful has your country been on fighting poaching against rhino horn?

A: I would say we have been successful, although more still needs to be done. We have been able to bring back the rhino from the verge of extinction. As you may be aware, South Africa currently accounts for 80 percent of the world's rhinos that is both black and white rhinos. The reason that white rhino exist in the wild in Africa, is because of our good conservation efforts.

Q: As the IUCN World Parks Congress enters its final phase of dialogue, do you think South Africa's voice has been heard?

A: We have had the opportunity to engage with people from across the planet, and shared our views. I believe we have made our voice heard as South Africa, and after this congress we are expecting to collaborate more with different stakeholders.

Q: Has South Africa managed to demonstrate at this dialogue how TFCAs can contribute to improved livelihoods and biodiversity conservation? If it has, are there any examples?

A: Our interventions focus on creating an enabling environment that gives community members different economic choices. We are working with communities to help them appreciate that there is more value in a live rhino than a dead one, by providing them incentives to encourage the recognition of all the values of rhino. A good example we can give is that of the Mdluli Community, in the Kruger National park. The community is now part of a development partnership with the Kruger National Park. Under this partnership we have seen the community members being active in the viable management of wildlife populations.

Q: This year South Africa signed an MOU with Mozambique to stop wildlife crime. Can you elaborate more on the MOU?

A: As South Africa, we regard Mozambique as a key partner in our efforts to fight rhino poaching, and general wildlife crime. Mozambique is a key partner in our efforts to fight wildlife crime within the SADC region, especially rhino poaching in the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP).

Q: How about the countries where the rhino horns are allegedly sold, have you also engaged them?

A: Yes, we have so far signed MOUs with Vietnam and China,

and we are ready to sign another with Cambodia. We are engaging with different stakeholders at different levels to enhance the conservation of these species. Within the region, we are working with a number of countries.

Q: What do you see as the main challenges in the implementation of TFCAs in the region?

A: It is clear that rhino poaching is part of a multi-billion dollar worldwide illicit wildlife trade, which makes addressing the scourge not simple. To deal with illegal wildlife trade as a serious crime requires serious techniques and serious technologies. As South Africa we have tried our best to look at every area that requires attention. We have identified areas of legislation, and where there are loopholes we have taken steps to close those loopholes.

Q: What would be your message to representatives of SADC member states attending this conference?

A: What we need are integrated strategies inter country and internationally. This thing (rhino poaching) is quite complicated, quite complex. Without a real integrated strategy, we can talk and talk but nothing will change. As SADC countries, we need to work with communities. We need to have people who are within those communities feeling that they cannot be recruited easily into wildlife crime. South Africa is working with communities enabling them to derive real benefit from wildlife resource management...I call on fellow delegates from SADC to make a commitment that: "Not on Our Watch will rhino poaching be allowed to continue."

Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) TFCA

Brief Profile

AN OVERVIEW OF THE PARK

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

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

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

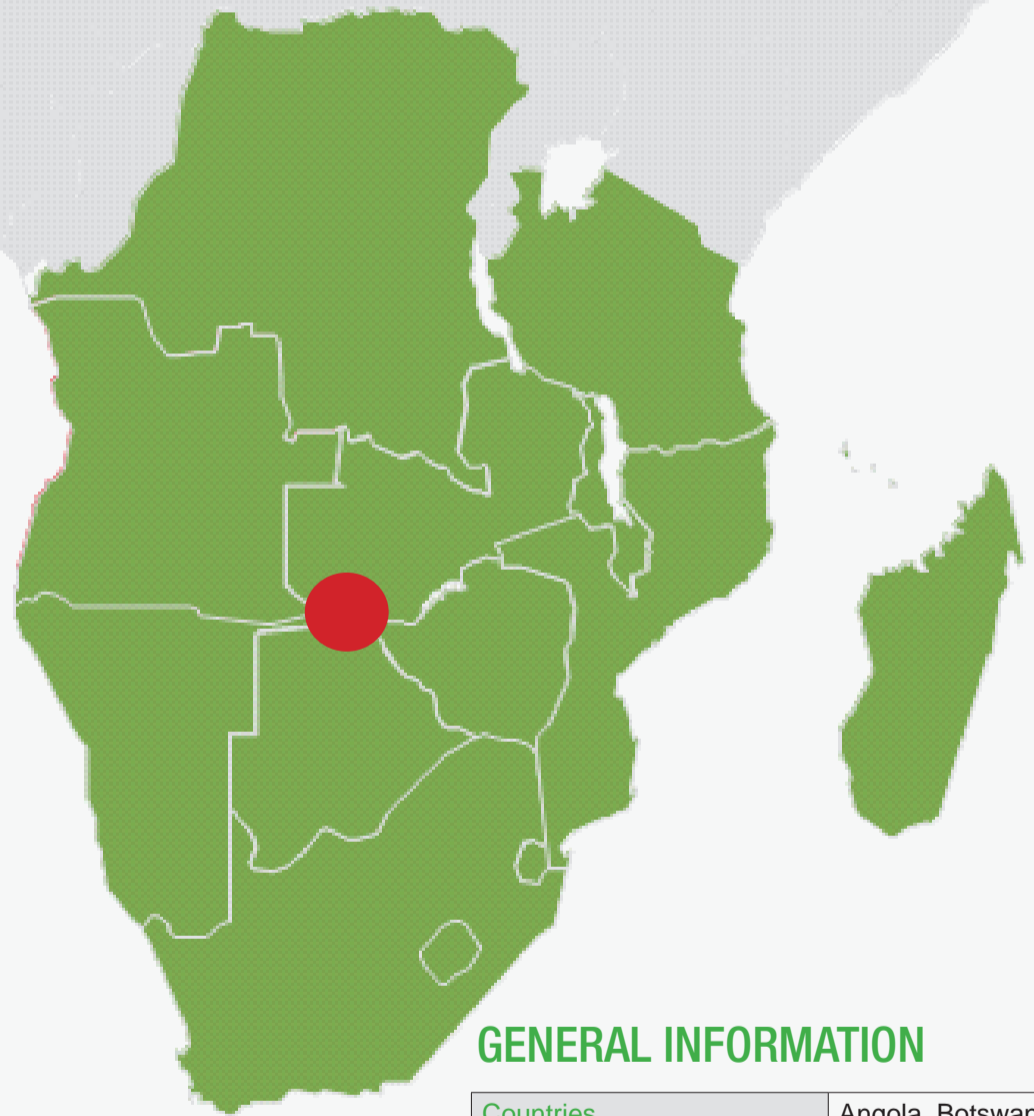
The park was declared in 2006, through the signing of an MOU between the five participating countries, followed by the signing of a treaty in 2011, through which the park was formally and legally established.

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

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

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

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



GENERAL INFORMATION

Countries	Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Area	520,000 km ²
Status	Category A: Treaty signed (18 August 2011)

NEWS IN BRIEF AT IUCN CONGRESS

New IUCN Study Shows Life-Supporting Role of Natural World Heritage

Natural World Heritage sites are not just iconic places with exceptional nature, they also provide benefits that contribute to economies, climate stability and human well-being, according to a new study by IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, released on Tuesday at the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia. The report highlights the economic benefits and cost-effectiveness of preserving the exceptional World Heritage values of UNESCO-listed natural areas. It also shows that the benefits provided by World Heritage sites decrease due to changes in

landscape, as well as overexploitation of resources.

Funded by Germany's Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, the study is the first assessment of the benefits and ecosystem services provided by the world's natural wonders. It also presents a global analysis of carbon storage and water provided by the sites, using latest data including remote sensing, compiled by the United Nations Environment Programme's World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). "The findings of this report show that natural World

Heritage is much more than a list of iconic sites with outstanding biodiversity and natural beauty," says Tim Badman, Director of IUCN World Heritage Programme. "Recognizing their crucial role in supporting our well-being reinforces the need to boost our efforts to conserve these places." Two-thirds of natural sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List are crucial sources of water and about half help prevent natural disasters such as floods or landslides, according to the report. Over 90% of listed natural sites provide income from tourism and recreation, and create jobs.

NASA, WCS Scientists Spotlight Top Conservation for Satellite Technology

Scientists from the WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society), NASA, and other organizations have partnered to focus global attention on the contribution of satellites to biodiversity conservation in a recently released study entitled "Ten Ways Remote Sensing Can Contribute to Conservation," featured in the latest edition of the scientific journal *Conservation Biology*. Addressing global questions requires global datasets that are enabled by satellite remote sensing; this paper highlights the way in which continuous observations of the Earth's surface and atmosphere can advance our understanding of how and why the Earth is changing and inform actions that can be taken to halt the degradation of planet's natural systems.

The findings of the paper will inform discussions on improving protected area management that are underway at the IUCN World Parks Congress, an event held every 10 years by the global conservation community. Established in many cases to conserve wildlife and the ecosystems they inhabit, protected areas still fall short of protecting species and their ecological needs. In many instances, protected areas such as Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park in The Republic of Congo do not cover the full range of species such as elephants. Remote sensing can be used to gather information needed for managing landscapes beyond protected area networks.

"Remote sensing data from orbiting satellites have been used to measure, understand, and predict environmental changes since the 1970s, but technology that subsequently became available can now be applied much more widely on a whole range of conservation issues," said WCS Conservation Support scientist Dr. Robert Rose, the lead author of the study. "To that end, we sought out the top thought leaders in conservation and the remote sensing community to identify the best conservation applications of these data."

World Heritage Sites Must be Fully Protected, says Wildlife Conservation Society

The Wildlife Conservation Society and eight leading international conservation organizations (African Wildlife Foundation, Fauna & Flora International, Frankfurt Zoological Society, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, The Nature Conservancy, The WILD Foundation, WWF, and the Zoological Society of London) have called for governments to ensure they do not allow commercial extractive activities – including oil and gas extraction and mining—in World Heritage Natural Sites. World Heritage natural sites are facing multiple threats, including from commercial extractive activities (mining, gas and oil exploration). The resulting environmental impacts, which include wildlife population declines, deforestation, topsoil contamination and water pollution, may lead to loss of status as a World Heritage site, and more importantly, potentially irreversible habitat and species losses that will have wide-ranging repercussions.

"We need to join together to ensure the integrity of World Heritage Sites. These sites are 'the jewel in the crown' of parks on a global scale. We need to celebrate the amazing biological diversity and ecological integrity of these special places. At the World Parks Congress this week, one of the key issues is the undisputable value of parks, which include World Heritage Sites," said Dr. Susan Lieberman, WCS Vice President, International Policy.

"The government Parties to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention have agreed that these special places are of outstanding universal value, and these extractive industries are incompatible with World Heritage status. At WCS, we know from our work on-the-ground in 32 World Heritage Sites around the world, assisting our government partners, that the World Heritage Convention is one of our best tools to help ensure the protection of our planet's flora, fauna and ecosystems."

SADC delegates share their impressions about the World Parks Congress

By *Usumuzi Sifile*



Albertina Mogotsi,
Botswana

I came here to learn, and this congress has exposed me to a lot of information and knowledge about issues of conservation. As someone who is currently studying biodiversity, this congress has been a good platform for me to talk to different people from across the world.



Ralava Beboarimisa,
Madagascar

We came here with a delegation of 45 people from Madagascar to learn and also to share with the rest of the world what we are doing as a country to conserve different species. I am glad to say that this congress has achieved our expectations. It has exposed us to people from other parts of the world who are also working on similar issues as us.



Lemson Maluleke,
South Africa

I am coming from the Makuleke Community in South Africa. The whole period I have been here has been so fascinating. I have learnt a lot, especially that there are a lot of communities around the world who are doing the same programmes like us, and I believe that the fact that we got connected with them, we will be able to take home what they are doing.