



SWM
COMMUNITY
CONSERVANCY
PROJECT

newsletter

Issue 1 - April to October 2021

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WELCOME

We are pleased to release the first issue of the Sustainable Wildlife Management (SWM) Community Conservancy (CC) Project newsletter. Under the SWM Programme, this new Project, funded by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and co-funded by the European Union (EU), will extend implementation of the SWM Programme to two new sites: Botswana and Namibia.

We are working together with communities across the Kavango-Zambezi (KaZa) region in North-East Namibia and Northern Botswana, promoting the CC model to achieve coexistence between people, livestock and wildlife in this biodiversity-rich landscape. This model builds on the Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) approach implemented by the SWM Programme in Zambia and Zimbabwe. This includes several initiatives, such as building partnerships with the private sector, which redirect the flow of socio-economic benefits to local communities. This approach will also benefit conservation by reducing unsustainable hunting for wild meat and mitigating human-wildlife conflict. A strong network of CCs will enhance connectivity between habitats in the KaZa landscape and contribute to conservation efforts in this unique region.

We are proud to be partnering with Wild Entrust Africa (WEA) in Botswana and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in Namibia, as well as with the respective Governments, to enhance synergies between wildlife conservation and community well-being.

Jean-Claude Urvoy
Project Coordinator

Supported by



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HIGHLIGHTS

In each country, we are working closely with national authorities and local institutions. We would like to thank all our partners for their involvement and support!

Botswana - Habu



Our initial focus in Botswana is to formalise the set-up of the proposed Habu Wildlife CC, the first of its kind in Botswana, including its governance structure and how community representatives will guide the management of land and natural resources. The Project also supports efforts by the Habu Community Scouts to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts, monitor wildlife populations and perform regular anti-poaching patrols.

With the dry season now in full swing in Northern Botswana, fires have started flaring up in the Ngamiland region. Responding to one such fire last month, more than 50 people from the Habu community came out to fight the flames, to control its rapidly growing spread. Under the scouts' leadership, they were able to quickly put out the fire. Thanks to the quick mobilisation of community members and the existing rangeland management practices in the proposed Habu CC, fire damage in the area has been minimal during such dry weather spells.

Namibia - North-East region

Building on the existing CBNRM programme in Namibia, the Project will focus on 13 CCs, located in key wildlife migratory corridors within the KaZa landscape. Working from these strategic locations has important implications for our efforts to preserve and re-establish wildlife migration routes and generally improve the ecological connectivity within this region.



There is a lot to learn from Namibia's experience in developing and supporting CCs over the past three decades, lessons which this Project aims to share, not only in Botswana but across the KaZa landscape and further, across the whole of Southern Africa. A first virtual exchange was organised at the end of June, during which the SWM CC Project teams in Namibia and Botswana shared their respective knowledge and experience on community-led conservation and wildlife management. In the future, more exchange visits and study tours will be organised to encourage learning and exchange of best community-led practices across the region.

SPECIAL FOCUS - 30 YEARS OF CBNRM IN NAMIBIA

The history of community-led conservation in Namibia goes back to the early 1980s, with the establishment of a community game guard scheme to address poaching and the threats to large mammals, particularly Black Rhinos and African Savannah Elephants.

In the following years, a series of community surveys provided information on the local challenges for wildlife conservation and the development opportunities. This culminated in the first draft policy on the establishment of communal conservancies in 1992, which was formalised and enacted four years later by the 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act. The first four conservancies were gazetted in 1998, the same year conservation and rural development actors in Namibia joined forces under the Namibian Association for CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO).

Nowadays, more than twenty years later, Namibia has an impressive network of 86 CCs - home to more than 230 000 people across the nation.



REGIONAL NEWS - KaZa TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREA (TFCA)

The KaZa Secretariat organised an inaugural roundtable meeting of donors and development partners last month ([click here](#)). More than 60 actors from across Southern Africa convened to discuss their priorities and long-term objectives for this unique landscape. To achieve the common vision of human-wildlife coexistence across the KaZa TFCA, partners insisted on the need to coordinate institutional efforts, whether technical or financial, and collaborate to share best practices and lessons among stakeholders.

“It is crucial for all those working on development and conservation issues in the KaZa landscape to work hand in hand towards the same goal of preserving this unique landscape and improving coexistence between people and wildlife,” explains Manon Mispiratcegy, Assistant Field Coordinator for the SWM CC Project.



FACTS AND FIGURES

The KaZa landscape is the **largest transboundary conservation area in the world**, covering nearly **520 000 km²**. It is divided between Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Once vetted and officially declared by the Government of Botswana, Habu will become the **first CC in the country**.

Namibia's **community conservation programme** is a key development strategy for the country's rural areas, generating millions of dollars in revenue annually and employing more than **5 000 people** across **86 CCs**.

EVENTS CORNER

SWM CC Project launch in Namibia

12 May 2021, Windhoek, Namibia

The official launch of the SWM CC Project in Namibia was held in Windhoek, gathering over 50 stakeholders including government officials, community chairpersons, as well as representatives from FAO, NACSO member organisations, the AFD and the EU.



SWM CC Project launch in Botswana

21 June 2021, Habu Village, Botswana

The SWM CC Project in Botswana was officially launched in Habu Village, in northern Ngamiland, with 50 stakeholders. Government officials and community leaders came together to discuss their common vision for the creation of Botswana's first proposed CC.



FROM THE FIELD



Field visit to the Habu Community Conservancy, Botswana, with Wild Entrust Africa and FAO.

NEWSROOM

Recent news items include:

- World Wildlife Day (3 March) SWM Twitter messages from FAO Botswana ([click here](#))
- New project to boost sustainable wildlife management and food security in Southern Africa. FAO Press release ([click here](#))
- New sustainable wildlife management project to boost wildlife conservancies ([click here](#))
- New project to boost wildlife management in Southern Africa. AFD Press Release ([click here](#))
- New project seeks to support development of local community conservancies. Namibian economist ([click here](#))
- New Project to boost Sustainable Wildlife Management and Community Conservation in Botswana. Okavango Express ([click here](#))

WHAT'S COMING UP?

- [2021 Conference on Land Policy in Africa](#) (2-4 November 2021)
- [International Congress for Conservation Biology](#) (13-17 December 2021)

National partners



Technical partners



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SWM TALKS

Dr Gilles Kleiz,

Director of the Department of Ecological Transitions and Natural Resources, Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

It is an honour to contribute to the first edition of this Newsletter. Protecting biodiversity is central to AFD's mission. To halt the loss of biodiversity and protect ecosystems, we are committed to the restoration and sustainable management of natural areas, with and for the benefit of local populations. AFD devoted EUR 565 million to biodiversity protection in 2020, and this will increase to EUR 1 billion annually by 2025.



Our involvement in the SWM Programme, through our support for the Project in Botswana and Namibia, is one of our flagship initiatives. Promoting win-win interactions between human well-being and nature is at the core of our biodiversity activities. We strongly support models, such as the CBNRM, that devolve to local communities the right to use, and benefit from, natural resources in a sustainable way. Furthermore, to prevent outbreaks of new animal-borne diseases, such as COVID-19, AFD is increasingly supporting One Health approaches. This project will help communities to develop alternative sources of protein from domesticated animals, reduce demand for wild meat to sustainable levels and, by limiting contacts between humans and wildlife, decrease the risk of zoonotic spillover and human-wildlife conflict. This will foster sustainable land use and co-existence among people, livestock and wildlife, as well as enhancing food security for the targeted communities.



SWM-programme@fao.org
www.swm-programme.org