

insider update

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A North Atlantic right whale breaches.



Spring 2022
From the desk of Azzedine Downes, President and CEO



a message from IFAW

Dear Friends,

Climate change is having a dramatic impact on animals and people alike. It exacerbates the threats facing many species. Some have already gone extinct due to climate change and many more will follow. As many as one-third of animal species are facing extinction as a result of climate change unless action is taken.

Yet studies show nature conservation can provide approximately one-third of the carbon mitigation needed to meet the Paris Agreement. Animals can also play a role in fighting climate change in their natural ecosystems.

In this edition of Insider Update, we delve into the many ways species naturally alleviate effects of the global climate crisis and why IFAW believes that protecting the lives of all animals and giving them the space to roam freely, will give our planet the chance to restore its biodiversity and overall health.

When it comes to protecting wildlife, even the biggest animals need our help. Some of the world's largest animals — elephants, whales and sharks — are also some of the most vulnerable and are in need of our protection. Whether hunted intentionally — elephants for their ivory and sharks for their fins — or unintentionally — such as whales caught in fishing gear — many of these titans are considered keystone species in our conservation work. Their survival is crucial to keeping the natural balance for ecosystems and our planet.

Thanks to you, our most generous supporters, IFAW has been working to protect the lives of animals for over 50 years and we have no intention of slowing down.

IFAW will continue to engage the public and educate lawmakers and politicians about how the lives of animals are intrinsically linked with ours. I hope you will do the same by “recycling” this publication with your friends and family so that they, in turn, can be inspired by the work you are helping us achieve.

With sincere appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Azzedine Downes', written over a horizontal line.

Azzedine Downes
IFAW Chief Executive Officer



helping the North Atlantic Right Whale

Without immediate action, the North Atlantic Right Whale will go extinct and the heritage of New England lobster and crab fishing will be lost.

With fewer than **350 individuals left**, the North Atlantic Right Whale is **critically endangered**.

IFAW-led research revealed that between 2003 and 2018, 90% of known right whale deaths were caused by entanglement or vessel strikes. Without immediate action, the North Atlantic right whale will go extinct in our lifetime.

The North Atlantic Right Whale faces deadly threats, one being **entanglement** - whales face a maze of potentially deadly lobster and crab fishing gear as they swim, feed, and give birth. 85% of North Atlantic Right Whales show signs of being entangled at least once in their lifetime. Many die

from their wounds and suffer stress from their injuries.

Vessel strikes are also a huge threat to the species. With increasing boat traffic the threat of deadly vessel strikes in critical right whale habitats has grown exponentially. These collisions cause significant injury and often lead to slow death for whales, as well as catastrophic damage to vessels putting mariners at risk.

Climate change is also a huge contributor impacting on the species survival. The warming waters of the Atlantic are forcing right whales further north in search of food, extending their migration and putting them at increased risk of entanglements and vessel strikes. In 2017 alone there were 17 confirmed Right Whale deaths. The presumed death toll since then is upwards of 50 Right Whales.

With your support, IFAW is taking the steps below to save Right Whales.

- ▶ Research expeditions will allow us to fill critical research 'gaps' with the information governments need before they can significantly strengthen right whale protections through speed restrictions and other actions.
- ▶ Reduce entanglement by providing innovative fishing gear & secure funding to help fishermen convert to "whale safe" gear.
- ▶ Expand protected areas to include the entire migratory route of right whales.
- ▶ Launch of IFAW's Blue Speeds Campaign advocating for mandatory speed limits in critical areas. A 10% reduction in vessel speed results in a 50% reduction in vessel strike risk. Learn more here www.bluespeeds.org
- ▶ To learn more visit our website www.ifaw.org/au/programmes/marine-conservation or scan the QR code

Scan the QR code to learn more





Keepers with a herd of elephants at Lilayi Elephant Nursery prior to relocating the herd to the Wildlife Discovery Centre in Lusaka National Park.

a new home for orphaned elephants

Lusaka National Park is Zambia’s newest and most accessible park, which opened to the public in 2015. It has been home to more than 1,000 species, but one species of animal had been noticeably missing — until recently.

IFAW partners with Game Rangers International (GRI) to support the Lilayi Elephant Orphanage Project – the first elephant orphanage in Southern Africa and the second on the continent focusing on returning elephants to the wild. On July 12, 2022, GRI moved its entire nursery of six young elephants from its existing location to Lusaka National Park in preparation for the opening of the immersive Wildlife Discovery Centre. The relocation of the herd was a milestone for both the park and GRI.

The Wildlife Discovery Centre, which opened August 8, 2022, plans to welcome an estimated 40,000 local and international visitors and to offer

free conservation education to 5,000 local school children each year. Through interactive displays and exhibits that highlight conservation issues and efforts to resolve them, GRI, with the support of IFAW and partners, hopes to foster a connection between the people of Zambia and its wildlife, increasing environmental awareness and inspiring greater conservation stewardship.

As for the six elephants, the process of caring for them, and eventually integrating them with wild elephants and building their independence to thrive in the wild, could take over ten years. All of us at IFAW are ready to watch these little ones grow and thrive in their new home.

Scan the QR code to watch how elephant keeper Elvis spends a typical day.





Elephant herd at sunset in Amboseli National Park, Kenya.

why elephants?

Our planet is home to many iconic species, each facing their own challenges for survival. So why does IFAW focus on elephants in many of our projects and partnerships?

Elephants are outstanding ambassadors for large-scale landscape conservation efforts, and therefore, our flagship species. Elephant populations keep savanna ecosystems intact. When they graze, they disperse seeds, clear vegetation and fertilise the soil, which helps build more complex and more resilient ecosystems. These activities can maintain and increase carbon stocks in the soil, roots and above-ground parts of plants, helping to reduce CO₂ in the atmosphere. Savannas are biodiversity hotspots and key for many species' survival. Elephants drive savanna dynamics and their presence creates habitats and opportunities for other species.

Elephants act as the earth's personal ecosystem engineers. As elephants move and feed, they create new clearings and access to light which gives other species a chance to bloom and breed. As they move and create pathways, they break

down branches, helping to bring food sources closer to the ground for animals that are too small to reach the upper branches in the trees. Their feet, trunks and tusks create holes deep enough to tap into underground water sources, creating watering holes from which other animals may drink. These natural actions all 'engineer' the world around them.

A global extinction crisis is currently underway. We know that elephants create countless benefits for our ecosystems. At IFAW, we believe that elephants have intrinsic value — each and every individual. Furthermore, given the impact on various local economies — including ecotourism, farming, ranger job creation and more — it is also clear that the value of an elephant is economically higher when the animal is alive than when killed for its parts. It is therefore critical that we ensure that elephant species have the space they need to live, roam and thrive.



The 17 Sustainable Development Goals developed by the United Nations.

animals and their habitats: a critical part of a sustainable future

In 2015 the 193 supporter states of the United Nations (UN) developed a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that would serve as a guiding framework for policy and funding provided by the UN — and encourage better informed and coordinated action by governments, nonprofits and the private sector.

However, few of the SDGs directly reference animals, ecosystems or the natural world — despite the important role they play in building a healthy, prosperous and sustainable future.

Thriving Together: The Critical Role of Animals in Achieving the SDGs, released by IFAW in June 2022

is designed to demonstrate to policy makers and their constituencies the critical role of animal welfare and wildlife conservation in achieving the SDGs.

At IFAW, we strive for a world of peaceful coexistence between humans and the natural environment and a world where animals are both respected and protected. We have taken steps to integrate our projects into the communities that live closest to wildlife, creating a cycle in which the communities benefit, leading to more successful conservation outcomes and, ultimately, producing long-term benefits for the community.



Jenga Mama participants practice hairdressing and giving manicures.

IFAW has partnered with Margarete-Breuer Stiftung to finance the Jenga Mama (which translates to “Empower Woman”) Project, providing vocational training for women which will create work opportunities and fuel economic growth. The project reduces their dependency and interactions with nature, giving wildlife room to roam in their habitat and creating peaceful coexistence between people and wildlife.

Room to Roam is our visionary approach to conservation in Africa. Creating secure habitats, leading to greater biodiversity doesn’t only help elephants and other wildlife — it also opens new opportunities for local communities to enhance

their well-being and coexist with wildlife. When we engage communities in natural resource management — whether for ecosystem health and/or as an economic driver — they can be directly involved in planning and implementing long-term solutions.

Policy makers must integrate the welfare of animals and conservation of wildlife when considering the implementation of the SDGs. Failure to do so not only ignores the intrinsic value of animals but also endangers the prospect of a healthy planet for future generations. When animals and their habitats are healthy and cared for, everyone benefits.

Scan the QR code to access the full report.





IFAW Global Projects Vice President Jimmiel Mandima, Friends of the Koala Nursery Manager Mark Wilson, IFAW Landscape Conservation Director Phillip Kuvawoga and IFAW Landscape Conservation Officer Wendy Simpson talking about the habitat restoration work being done in the New South Wales Northern Rivers region

restoring to connect, and connecting to restore koala habitat in Australia

By IFAW Vice President for Global Programs Jimmiel Mandima

Two continents. Many thousands of kilometers apart, both facing a crisis: how do people and wildlife coexist and thrive amidst a changing climate?

It was my first time in Australia. My mission was two-pronged: firstly, to spend time with the IFAW Oceania team visiting their wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, and restoration partners and projects. Secondly, to contribute to a meeting of minds at the Connecting People, Connecting Nature conference (www.ger.org.au/2022) hosted by our partner the Great Eastern Ranges (GER). Both goals represent the ethos of our Room to Roam initiative: the visionary approach to protect and secure a connected network of key savannah elephant habitats in East and Southern Africa to ensure resilience for populations.

With strong parallels to this work in Africa, our Australian team has been restoring and connecting critical wildlife habitats along Australia's east coast. This has become more important than ever with an increase and intensity of disasters further fragmenting and destroying habitats already broken by land clearing and development.

Just as elephants are the icon of Africa, koalas are the icon of Australia. Both are at a tipping point and risk of extinction as humans encroach on their habitats.

In both parts of the world, we work to create safe passages for these animals to coexist harmoniously with people.

the impacts of habitat loss and fragmentation

Elephant and koala populations are effectively becoming stuck in fragmented habitats, which has severe impacts on both species.

Similar to landscapes in Africa, koala habitats are dwindling due to development and increased instances of extreme weather events including bushfires, leaving koala populations increasingly with nowhere to go. IFAW's vet team at Friends of the Koala in the New South Wales (NSW) Northern Rivers are seeing a significant increase in koalas coming into their hospital because of car hits – a direct result of urbanisation.

In order to thrive in the wild, koalas need safe places to feed, breed and move through the



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Habitat Innovation and Management Director Carl Tippler uses a pole camera to see if any animal has taken up residence in the nest box while IFAW Global Projects Vice President Jimmiel Mandima watches on

landscape. That's where our work with local groups such as Bangalow Koalas comes in.

Through our partnership, we are working with landholders, local government and the local community, to plant thousands of trees which are an integral part of connecting a vital corridor for koalas and other native wildlife to use. Since 2019, IFAW and Bangalow Koalas have planted more than 22,000 trees to revegetate approximately 14 hectares across five properties in this local wildlife corridor. 'It was truly inspirational to see the growth of trees planted just three years ago; they are thriving and already being used by koalas in the area'.

community collaboration is key

Just as Room to Roam isn't something we can do alone, our rescue and restoration work in Australia relies on collaboration with communities, Indigenous groups, governments, the private sector and other NGOs.

This is a key component of our partnership with GER. Together, we're helping to promote community collaboration in landscape

conservation by restoring habitats and creating wildlife corridors across 3,600 kilometres of Australia's east coast.

We're putting this into practice at Ngunya Jagoon Indigenous Protected Area, where we are leaning on the expert knowledge of the Jali rangers who are stewards of this biodiversity and cultural hotspot in Wardell, NSW. This landscape was significantly impacted by the Black Summer bushfires and subsequent catastrophic floods.

Partnering with local rangers is another common thread with the work we do across all the Room to Roam landscapes where local rangers are on the frontlines, promoting citizen science and sustainability.

finding innovative solutions and building resilience

At times, we need to explore different, innovative ways to help our wildlife and the places they call home.

I saw this in action at Two Thumbs Wildlife Trust Sanctuary near Cooma in southern NSW. This once biodiverse hotspot was severely destroyed by the Black Summer bushfires, the devastation of which can still be seen on the property.

Many hollow-dependent animals that once called this 700-plus-hectare property home, now have nowhere to go. I learned that natural hollows for smaller animals take up to 100 years to develop in a eucalypt tree, while hollows for larger animals like greater gliders take up to 200 years or more to form. That's where our work with Habitat Innovation and Management comes in. Their Habitech nest boxes are specifically designed to mimic natural hollows found in trees and provide a ready-to-move-in home for animals including the endangered greater glider and endangered gang-gang cockatoo.

coexistence relies on connectivity

IFAW was proud to sponsor the GER Conference, where I spoke to the topic of 'taking inspiration from others'. Nothing could be more true about the similarities between Room to Roam and our Australian work and how we can learn from both to do more.

The conference brought together like-minded people to discuss the biggest challenges facing our planet and the solutions we are collectively implementing across the world. Most importantly, we spoke of the need to protect, connect, and adapt now.

The need to protect endangered wildlife and their surrounding landscapes are paramount across both Africa and Australia. In both these regions we're working with local communities and governments to secure protected land that will ensure both elephants and koalas are able to thrive in the wild. These two different species have the same need: room to roam.



A thresher shark that suffered a propeller strike injury.

snapping back at the shark trade industry

International demand for shark fin and meat has led to the species' global decline. Today, there are 71% percent fewer sharks in the open ocean than there were 50 years ago.

This past year IFAW released an eye-opening report (*supply and demand: the EU's role in the global shark trade*) citing the European Union as a lead producer in shark-fin related exports. We were therefore pleased to learn of the EU's decision to co-sponsor a significant proposal to limit shark trade during this year's Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) meeting. IFAW is looking to take these measures one step further, by applying science-backed data to help further regulate shark catch and trade limitations outlined by CITES.

We are encouraging countries to develop their own Non-Detrimental Findings (NDFs), research and data collection on a species to determine whether its export will be harmful to its habitat. Sharks are vital to ocean health. Diversity in shark species — and thus in their varied diets — helps to balance

the underwater ecosystem. Sharks also help combat global warming. Their bodies are 10-15% carbon, and when they die naturally, their bodies sink — along with that carbon — to the depths of the ocean. When sharks are killed and fished out of the water that carbon is released back into our atmosphere.

A groundbreaking decision has been taken by world governments at the 19th Conference of the Parties (CoP19) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) this November.

IFAW welcomed the decision by governments at CoP19 in Panama City, Panama who voted overwhelmingly in favor of listing all 54 species of the requiem shark family, six additional hammerhead shark species, and 37 guitarfish (shark-like species of rays) on CITES Appendix II. This decision is a pivotal moment in shark conservation, creating sustainability requirements for the trade in most species for the first time ever.





Environmental stewards at Thokhozane Primary School

creating a future for children and animals in Zimbabwe

Hwange National Park (HNP) managed by Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks), is the largest park in Zimbabwe and home to the second largest elephant population at approximately 45,000. With schools surrounding the park and local communities living in the buffer areas, IFAW and ZimParks came together and signed a memorandum of understanding in 2019 to support the greater IFAW vision - where animals and people thrive together.

Since 2018, ZimParks identified an opportunity for conservation sustainability via the engagement of children living near HNP, and launched a programme targeting schools and youths (8-13 years of age) with the aim of integrating conservation principles with national education curriculum, to build young champions and conservation heroes across the landscape.

Children residing near the Park are naturally inclined and disadvantaged in their education due to human-wildlife conflict, wildlife crime, poverty, food insecurity, inadequate education infrastructure, and limited teacher capacity to deliver on educational needs. The Park however, is high in biodiversity and pristine habitat constituting important wildlife corridors and these young children are important for the sustainable development and preservation of wildlife and the place they too call home.

In 2021, the programme gained the attention of an Australian donor, The Phillips Foundation, who made it possible for us to review and transform the programme and promote access to decent education and enhance achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). The Foundations' generosity had an immediate and

lasting impact for this programme and enabled us to purchase new textbooks, uniforms, generators, laptops and class projectors. The children were also able to participate in conservation regeneration and waste management activities such as tree plantings and gully recovery, and had the opportunity to visit the Park via educational field trips that included science and conservation lessons and learning vital skills in tracking and identifying wildlife foot prints.

We calling on our major supporters and their networks to invest in this life-changing programme so we are able to sustain it now and well into the future, along with adding in additional projects such as; provide access to safe drinking water, implement school gardens and nurseries project to support enhanced climate resilience & smart agriculture practices, conduct educational music and poetry lessons, establish environmental and girls clubs at schools and implement a teacher engagement strategy so teachers want to take part in the programme and see the benefits of doing so.

- ▶ youth form more than 55% of the current population in Zimbabwe
- ▶ we need to instill a sense of environmental stewardship and we do this by catching them young
- ▶ we need to fight for our planet, the next generation will be responsible for it

Scan the
QR code
to learn more





In honour of Tom Kirsop AM

remembering a hero for animals and the environment

“An unforgettable memory” Tom said with a smile on his face as he told the story of when he and late wife Margaret were charged by a large elephant in Namibia when celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary.

Tom had a special connection with African wildlife, especially elephants as he said they are “a magnificent animal and important for the landscape”.

Tom became an IFAW supporter in 2019 and showed his support for elephants over the years by contributing to IFAW’s most ambitious project, Room to Roam – helping address the core threats to elephants & their habitats throughout the African landscapes – and the Elephant Orphanage Project in Zambia, which supports the Lilayi Elephant Nursery - helping defenceless young elephant calves by rescuing them, rehabilitating them back to health and give them the support they need, and then releasing them back into the wild where they are integrated into wild elephant populations.

Tom loved Australia as a country, loved being in nature (particularly the surf) and took a stand to help animals the environment far beyond supporting IFAW. He was awarded an OAM in 2011 for service to conservation and the environment through the Surfrider Foundation Australia, followed by an AM in 2016 for significant service to the environment through advocacy roles. The local community described Tom as a ‘giant’ in coastal conservation for over half a century, he was Chairman of the Myall Lakes National Parks committee, which was instrumental in getting the Myall lakes area declared a National Park.

Tom’s passion and legacy for animals and the environment will live on as he so generously left a gift in his Will to IFAW, which will help rescue, rehabilitate and release animals into the wild for future generations. IFAW will honour Tom by placing a plaque at the Elephant Orphanage in Zambia for his contributions in the name ‘Tom & Margaret Kirsop’.

Thank you Tom, you were an amazing man who did so much for animals and people. We are forever grateful for your support, contributions and passion for making the world a better place for wildlife and their habitats – you were truly a hero for the animals during your lifetime and your legacy for protecting animals will continue through your incredible gift in your Will.

1 in 5 animals we rescue and protect are thanks to wonderful supporters who have chosen to leave their lasting legacy to safeguard the future for animals through a gift in their Will. If you would like to learn more about how you can protect animals well into the future, beyond our time, please do contact us for a confidential discussion.

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