

**southern africa
newsletter**

ifaw

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communities construct park fence

Construction of a 40-kilometre fence on the eastern boundary of Malawi's Kasungu National Park is nearly complete, providing employment to more than 230 community members over the 12-month period.

The fence is an undertaking of the IFAW-implemented Combating Wildlife Crime project in the Malawi-Zambia Transfrontier Landscape funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the generosity of the American people.

"So far 23 kilometres have been completed, and we hope the remaining section of the fence will be finished by year end," said IFAW Chief of Party, Patricio Ndadzela.

"In addition to creating meaningful jobs and teaching new skills to so many community members, we have also hired 10 full-time fence attendants to patrol the fence and maintain it in the event of vandalism, as well as to monitor problem animals. He adds, "A well maintained fence will help rangers to focus on their law enforcement patrol obligations and secure a porous section of the park from wildlife poachers."

The fence will also relieve human-wildlife conflicts in the villages of the five traditional authorities surrounding Kasungu NP namely, Lukwa, Kaomba, Mawawa, Mangwazu and Kaphaizi.

▲ In September Azzedine Downes, ifaw CEO and President (left) joined senior Malawi Government officials and community members to inspect a boundary fence being erected at Kasungu National Park.

wildlife return to forest reserve



Photo: Sally Carmie/WIL

Growing numbers of wildlife, including lions, have returned to Zimbabwe's Panda Masuie Forest—cited as just one of the achievements of a 12-month grant to support rangers in the protected area.

IFAW's Protecting Panda Masuie project, supported by [IUCN Save Our Species](#) and co-funded by the [European Union](#) ended in October 2021.

“The grant was a game changer for the project. It ensured that we were able to fully kit and provision 15 Forestry Rangers and their supervisors making them among the best equipped in Zimbabwe. We also provided them with their first training in seven years and trained a further four community rangers,” says Neil Greenwood, IFAW Regional Director for Southern Africa.

The Panda Masuie Forest Reserve near Victoria Falls is co-managed by the [Forestry Commission of Zimbabwe](#) and the [Wild is Life Trust \(WIL\)](#), a Zimbabwean not for profit organisation, with technical and financial support from the [International Fund for Animal Welfare \(IFAW\)](#).

Other achievements included setting up four permanent ranger bases which provided full coverage and uninterrupted operations, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Rangers also received training in SMART technology.

Ten camera traps set by the project show lion, an apex predator, are thriving in the 34,000 ha² Reserve.

Lions (*Panthera leo*) are listed as vulnerable on the [IUCN Red List](#) with only an estimated 25,000-39,000 remaining in the wild across Africa.

Panda Masuie is a key protected area and is part of the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area, the world's largest TFCA where thousands of elephants roam freely across international borders.

In addition, IFAW and partner Wild is Life provide health and safety support to the nearby Masuwe community of about 800 people. Masuwe's herd of about 600 cattle receive veterinary care and are regularly dipped to keep them free from parasites and diseases.

catch them young



315

Number of pupils in the Junior Ranger programme implemented by ZimParks with support from IFAW turns pre-teens into conservation ambassadors.

In Zimbabwe, a Junior Ranger Programme implemented by ZimParks with support from IFAW turns pre-teens into conservation ambassadors in the communal lands bordering Hwange National Park.

Starting in 2019 with two schools, the project now works with 21 primary schools and reaches 315 pupils in the Tsholotsho, Lupane and Hwange Districts.

Combining outdoor nature education activities and interactions with classroom-based learning, the project targets students aged 8-11 years (Grades 3-7) to develop their knowledge and understanding of nature.

“Overall the Junior Ranger Programme builds an increased sense of wildlife resource ownership among young people who live with free-roaming wildlife,” says Nelson Mhlanga, IFAW Landscape Conservation Officer.

“This ‘catch them young’ approach turns youth into conservation ambassadors who positively influence the attitudes of their own communities towards wildlife. We organise two-day bushcamps for them in Hwange NP where they participate in field-based activities such as game counts, nature walks and bush craft,” Mhlanga says.

Despite interruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, IFAW and key donor Elizabeth Phillips have identified opportunities to expand the project beyond the provision of educational material and equipment. These include investing in technology that will link students in Zimbabwe to students around the world who participate in similar nature-based education programmes. Other plans include a scholarship programme for girls.



counting wildlife under the moonlight

300

Number of volunteers deployed across pans in Hwange NP over a 24-hour period to record a variety of wildlife visiting waterholes.

Popular Zimbabwe media personality Rumbidzai “Rumbie” Takawira was IFAW’s guest for the annual Full Moon Game Count conducted at Hwange National Park in September 2021.

The count records the variety of wildlife visiting waterholes over a 24-hour period over a full moon late into the dry-season.

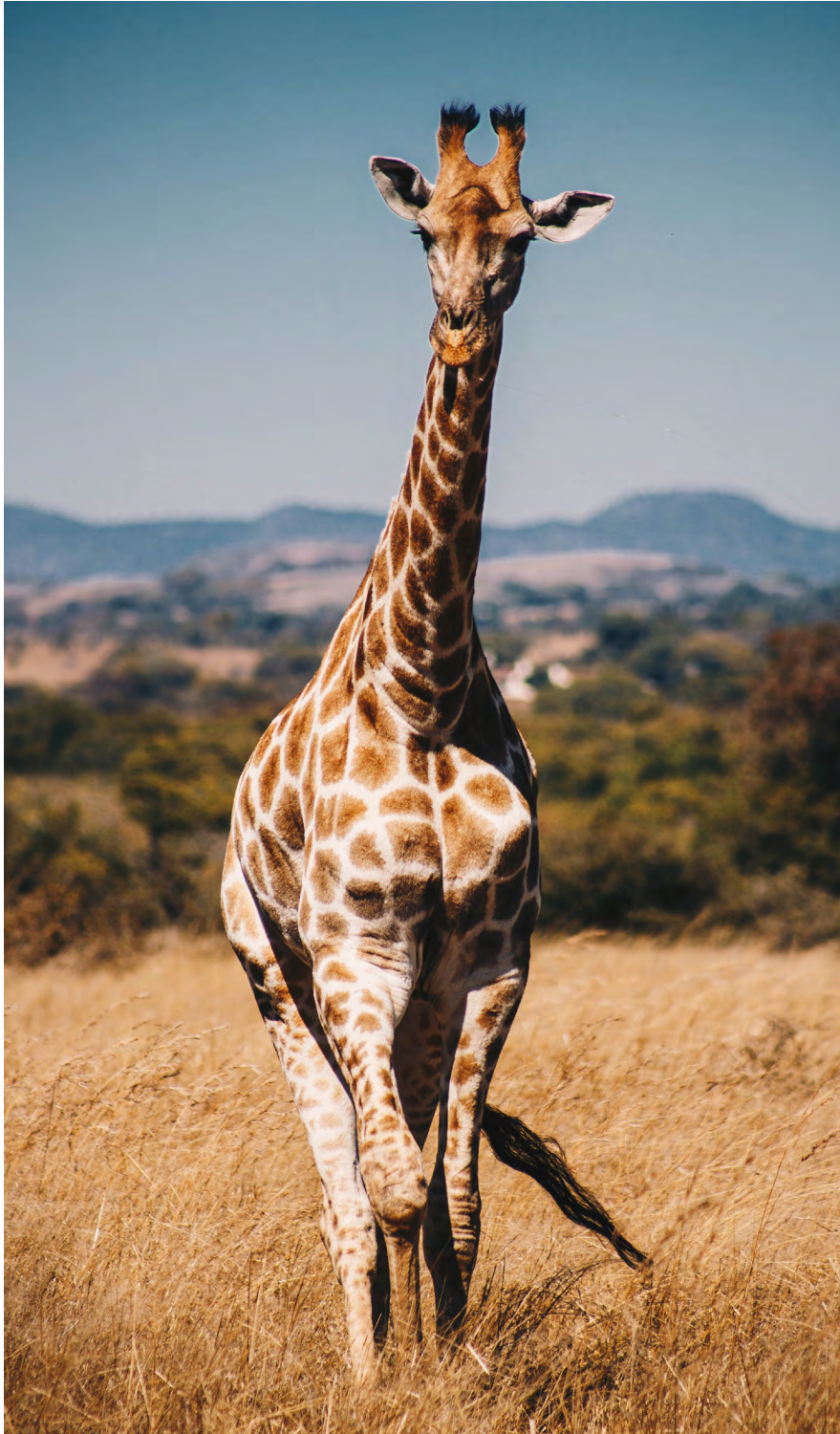
Organised by Wildlife & Environment Zimbabwe (WEZ) and ZimParks, the event saw more than 300 volunteers being deployed across pans and waterholes in Hwange NP from midday September 20th to midday September 21st.

Protected by ZimParks rangers, the IFAW team camped overnight at Livingi Pan spotting a variety of wildlife that included elephant, hippopotamus, waterbuck, zebra, giraffe and a variety of bird species.

Hwange NP has no permanent water supply and, during the dry season, wildlife is entirely reliant on artificially filled waterholes to sustain them. IFAW is helping ZimParks with scooping waterholes like Nyamandhlovu Pan to ensure wildlife have sustainable water supply during the dry season.

Rumbie captured her adventure as a story, which you can view on IFAW’s Instagram @ifaw_global

vets on wheels



A state of the art mobile animal ambulance will soon be delivered to rescue and treat injured or sick wildlife in Hwange-Matetsi-Zambezi landscape in Zimbabwe.

The landscape is home to more than 100 mammal species and has seen an uptick in snaring since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the past six months, IFAW-supported sweeps by ZimParks and DART Wildlife Rescue have removed more than 1,000 snares in Hwange NP and surrounding communal lands and successfully de-snared nine elephants, three lions, one giraffe, one bushbuck and one hyena.

“Hwange’s veterinary unit, based at Umtshibi Camp, will take delivery of a customised animal ambulance before year end,” says Phillip Kuvawoga, Director of IFAW’s Landscape Conservation Programme.

“It is customised according to international best practice standards for animal welfare and will enable veterinarians to rapidly respond to rescue, treat and save the lives of animals wounded in natural events or by snaring and rapid response to disease outbreaks.”

IFAW is hard at work changing and shaping attitudes towards wildlife—specifically elephant—enhancing livelihoods and improving human security among people living in the communal lands surrounding Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe.

Home to an estimated 85,000 free ranging elephants, ongoing land conversion for agriculture and infrastructure developments is shrinking wildlife habitat in Zimbabwe and becoming more fragmented leading to increasing human-wildlife conflict (HWC) incidents.

Between 2018 and 2021, authorities reported more than 450 cases of elephant crop damage, 261 cases of livestock predation and tragically more than 40 human deaths. Sadly, in just 10 days in October 2021, six people died in HWC incidents—with elephants accounting for four of these fatalities.

“Conflict between people and elephants is intensifying around Hwange NP as the park and surrounding areas are an open system, allowing elephants to roam freely outside formal boundaries,”

says Phillip Kuvawoga, Director of IFAW’s Landscape Conservation Programme.

“People living in the Tsholotsho and Hwange District tell us they are weary of current responses to HEC—they want to be part of a solution driven process that will be a win-win for people and wildlife, allowing them to live and thrive together in harmony.”

IFAW’s HEC coexistence project will provide a permanent water supply, this will reduce the frequency of interactions between elephants and other wildlife and community members—mostly women—who are largely involved in the fetching of water for household use.

The project includes putting in place a community-led rapid response system in place to report and respond to HEC cases, while the construction of a new Ranger Sub-station at Makona—inside Hwange NP but close to the communities—and the rehabilitation of a road linking Makona to Tsholotsho will allow for rapid response to HEC events and community engagement meetings.

living in harmony with wildlife



Photo: Donal Boyd/IFAW





creating a larger home for orphaned elephant calves

A new rescue and rehabilitation facility for orphaned elephant calves will open in Lusaka National Park, Zambia, in 2022.

The Lusaka Elephant Nursery will provide 24/7 care and treatment for orphaned and injured elephant calves brought in for emergency treatment and preparation for life back in the wild.

Nine years since the facility was first developed, the new orphanage in Lusaka NP will provide a “wilder” environment for rehabilitating young elephants. The new location is bigger and reduces the elephants’ exposure to sights, smells, and sounds of human activity. Construction on the new orphanage premises broke ground in September 2021.

This new orphanage will be a place of recovery for calves who have experienced great trauma—the loss of their mother. The keepers and staff maintain a single goal of creating as much of a wild world as possible for these elephants so they can recover and someday be released back to the wild.

[Sinking Ship Entertainment \(SSE\)](#) and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) are partners with [Game Rangers International \(GRI\)](#) and Zambia’s Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) in developing the new orphanage.

▲ Breaking ground for the new Lusaka Elephant Nursery - Director of Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW), Dr Chuma Simukonda, Lusaka National Park Warden Kasempa, Game Rangers International (GRI) Chairman, Robin Miller and GRI Wildlife Rescue Programme Director, Rachael Murton.

LWT Project Greenheart



©LWT

over 200+

Wildlife residents have been rescued from poaching and trafficking by the clinic which is heart of the centre's wildlife rescue and welfare operations.

15 years

Together with the LWT, IFAW has supported wildlife conservation in Malawi across a number of projects.

Renovation of Malawi's only wildlife rehabilitation centre is nearly complete. Run by **the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust (LWT)**, the centre rescues, rehabilitates and releases wild animals including **critically endangered species**. In 2021, LWT embarked on Project Greenheart, to revamp and expand its facilities in Lilongwe, Malawi's capital city.

"IFAW'S support for LWT's Project Greenheart includes helping to fund the construction of a new veterinary clinic," says Katie Moore, IFAW's Deputy Vice-President for Wildlife Rescue.

"The clinic is the heart of the Centre's wildlife rescue and welfare operations and is critical to ensuring the health of more than 200+ wildlife residents—many of which have been rescued from poaching, trafficking, the illegal pet trade and other forms of abuse."

IFAW has supported wildlife conservation in Malawi for almost 15 years, working with Government agencies and for much of that time with LWT across a number of projects.



📍 Panda Masuie

**in august
2021, a lone
elephant
calf made an
extraordinary
life-or-death
journey
to safety.**

in Panda Masuie, near Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

miracle moses

In August 2021, a lone elephant calf made an extraordinary life-or-death journey to safety in Zimbabwe, somehow finding his way to the [Wild is Life](#)-IFAW Release Project site at Panda Masuie near Victoria Falls, a facility that cares for orphaned elephants.

The male calf named Moses by his human carers, turned up unexpectedly and alone outside the boma (enclosure) where Panda Masuie's resident herd of rescued, rehabilitated elephants sleep. The facility is preparing the herd for wild release.

"Our herd had come in for the night but were showing immense interest in something hidden in the bushes outside their boma," said Jos Danckwerts, WIL Conservation Director.

"We thought it might be wild elephants or lions, but suddenly this tiny calf appeared in a clearing.

"It's unusual for a mother elephant to abandon her calf so we watched and waited before releasing our elephants to greet the youngster. It was incredible to see how the older elephants touched and caressed the calf before walking him back to the safety of the boma," said Danckwerts.

Panda Masuie Forest Rangers subsequently tracked Moses' journey back four kilometres to the border of Zambezi National Park. He is about eight months old.

"We don't know what happened to his herd, but it is a near miracle the calf stayed safe from the many lions on the reserve. Even a single hyena could have hunted such a tiny calf," says Danckwerts.

Neil Greenwood, Regional Director IFAW Southern Africa, said Moses would remain in the care of the project until, like the other rescued elephants, he is able to depart and live freely as a wild elephant.

"Most of the elephants at Panda Masuie were rescued as orphans from life-threatening danger and have been moved to the release facility after receiving thousands of hours of dedicated rehabilitation and intense nursing by the Wild is Life and IFAW-supported Zimbabwe Elephant Nursery in Harare.

"The story of how Moses arrived is slightly different but he will receive the same care and support. This vital work offers hope for elephants and our work in Panda Masuie ensures the protection of their future. The incredible Panda Masuie landscape is a vital corridor of protected land to migrating wildlife populations, including Africa's endangered elephants," said Greenwood.



"Most elephants at Panda Masuie were rescued as orphans from life-threatening danger and moved to the release facility after thousands of hours of care at the Zimbabwe Elephant Nursery."

snared elephant calf airlifted to safety in zimbabwe



18-month-old female calf

Was rescued and airlifted to safety after she was found entangled in a wire snare. Wildlife rangers and the veterinary team immobilised the calf and then flown her to safety.

In a complicated operation, rescuers in Zimbabwe airlifted a seriously injured elephant calf to safety after she was found entangled in a wire snare, with one ear almost completely detached.

IFAW said fishermen had spotted the approximately 18-month-old female calf wondering alone on the banks of the Zambezi River, in an area close to Chirundu on the Zambian border. The snare had caught her ear and the rest of the wire was being dragged alongside her on the ground, she also had visible wounds from surviving an attack by hyenas.

The veterinary team from [Wild is Life-Zen Nursery \(WIL\)](#) in Harare worked alongside rangers of the [Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority \(ZimParks\)](#) to dart and immobilise the elephant to remove the snare. The calf was then flown to WIL.

WIL said the prognosis for the elephant's recovery is good and she will be a candidate for release back into the wild within a few years.

▲ Recovering well from her injuries, the snared calf has been called "Sally" and can be seen in the foreground of this picture. Programme Director, Rachael Murton.

IFAW has created an unexpected connection between wildlife rangers and a community project—and it comes with dinner. In October, the [Chikolongo Livelihood Project](#) sold one ton of rice (20 x 50 kilogram bags) to the [CWC Malawi-Zambia Trans-frontier Project](#)—this project is supported by IFAW and [USAID](#) through the generosity of the American people.

Developed to prevent poaching and save lives from human-wildlife conflict, Chikolongo also solves food security challenges and provides an income for people living on the border of Liwonde National Park in Malawi.

Nearly 10-years since inception, the community project now supplies rice for patrol rations issued to 82 wildlife rangers based in Kasungu National Park, 450 kilometres away.

“As part of our work we provide food rations to wildlife rangers and law enforcement officers when they are on patrol. Rather than purchase rice elsewhere, we’re buying from Chikolongo at market

price—one IFAW founded project supporting another,” says Neil Greenwood, IFAW’s Regional Director for Southern Africa.

In 2013, IFAW collaborated with the Chikolongo community to repair the degraded fence separating villages and farmlands from Liwonde NP, and to run a pipeline to carry water from the Shire River for irrigation and household use. This ended the need for people to risk their lives fetching water, with the well-maintained fence keeping farmlands safe from crop raiding elephants.

The project has ended human-wildlife conflict and no lives have been lost since.

The community project has expanded over the years and 24 irrigated community plots solves food security issues for the 1,400+ people living in 13 villages and providing an income from the sale of rice and vegetables. This year’s rice yield was three tons. The remaining two tons of rice will go to market in the main centres of Blantyre and Lilongwe.

community rice harvest supports rangers

► Community members harvest rice at the Chikolongo Livelihood Project in Malawi.



Photo: Jonathan Treviño/IFAW



Photo: Shaun McMinj/@IFAW

landmark achievement for ifaw-ZimParks partnership

▲ IFAW CEO and President, Azzedine Downes (centre, left) and Zimbabwe's Minister of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Hon. Mangaliso Ndhlovu (centre, right) at the ribbon cutting of the new Makona operations centre.

The Government of Zimbabwe celebrated a major milestone in the conservation partnership between IFAW and Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks) in late September with the official handover of the Makona Sub-station (ranger base).

Situated in the southern part of Hwange National Park, wildlife rangers at Makona protect a vast section (4,500 km²) of the 14,000 km² Park. This includes an extensive 150 km border with the Tsholotsho communal lands and part of the shared international border with Botswana.

The new Makona Sub-station, expected to be operational before the end of 2021, includes an operations centre for enhanced law enforcement, an administration block, and comfortable family housing to accommodate the 56 rangers and their families who will be permanently based there.

IFAW CEO and President, Azzedine Downes and Zimbabwe's Minister of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry, the Hon. Mangaliso Ndhlovu travelled to Hwange National Park to inspect and officially handover Makona Station infrastructure.

IFAW's support is enhancing wildlife protection and park management with investments enabling ranger training, provision of tools and equipment, better game water supply, operational support (staff rations and fuel) and helping the veterinary unit and K9 dog unit as well.

► [Click here to watch the interview](#)

Hwange NP—new road to link park to people



Photo: Shaun McMinn/IFAW

▲ Makona Sub-station in the southern part of Hwange NP.

Rehabilitation of a 15-kilometre stretch of road between Hwange National Park - Makona Subsector and the nearby Tsholotsho communities will soon halve the distance between the important business hub of Bulawayo and the protected area.

The project is the next activity of the partnership between IFAW and Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks). The road will link the Makona Sub-station (ranger base) in the remote south of the park to the nearby Tsholotsho community and from there to Bulawayo, a distance of 232 kilometres.

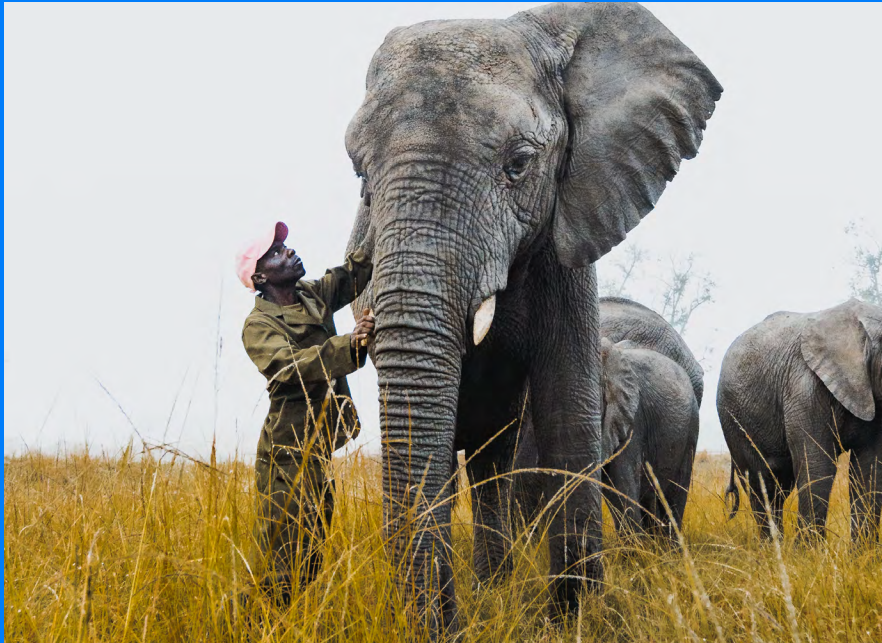
With ZimParks, IFAW is engaged in an ambitious infrastructure development project that will see the construction of a permanent ranger base in the Makona Sub-Sector.

“Currently construction materials that need to be transported from Bulawayo to HNP have to go via

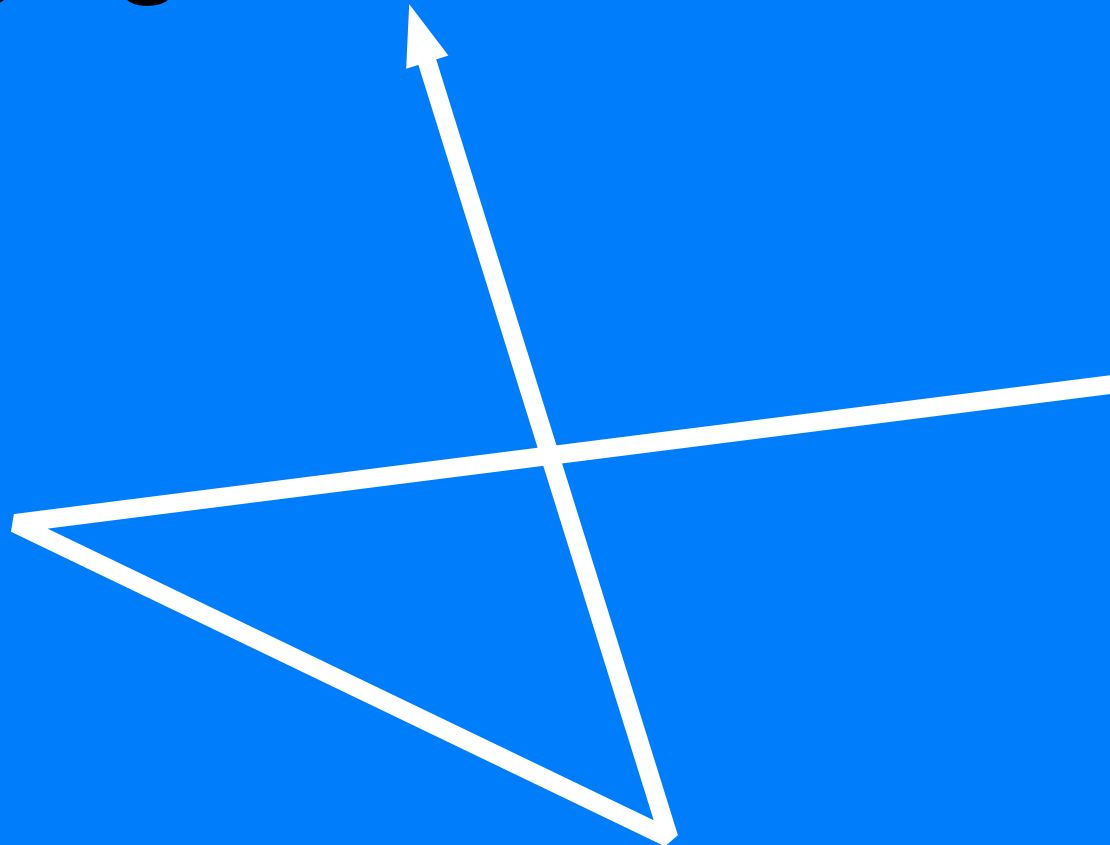
Hwange NP Main Camp and then onto Makona, a total distance of 465 kilometres. By fixing the targeted 15 kilometres we make it possible to reduce the distance these goods have to travel by linking Makona to the main road to Bulawayo, saving costs and speeding up delivery. This project will also facilitate an influx of much needed local tourism to Hwange NP which will also benefit communities living outside the park,” says Phillip Kuvawoga, IFAW Director for Landscape Conservation.

Kuvawoga said an improved road link between Makona Sub-station and Tsholotsho would also enable ZimParks rangers to respond more quickly to human-wildlife conflict issues and incidents of wildlife crime.

“Additionally, rangers and their families based at the new sub-station will also be advantaged by easier access to schools, medical facilities and shops.”



**vision:
animals and people
thriving together.**





mission:
fresh thinking and
bold action for
animals, people,
and the places we
call home.

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