



Great Limpopo: Talk of the Transfrontier

Official Newsletter of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park:
July 2004 – September 2004
Issue 3

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Website: www.greatlimpopopark.com

Wel come, Bem Vindo!

t o t h e G r e a t L i m p o p o

T r a n s f r o n t i e r P a r k N e w s l e t t e r

The Great Limpopo Transfrontier park is one of the most exciting, exhilarating and ambitious conservation projects in the world today. It aims to establish one of the largest conservation and wildlife areas not only through the integration of vast landscapes and reconnecting ecological systems, but also through development of cross-border tourism linkages, ensuring sustainable benefits to local communities through socio-economic upliftment, and the promotion of peace and stability in the region. It is a great honour and privilege for me to be involved in this exciting regional development initiative.

Piet Theron
Coordinator, TFCAs, South Africa

This newsletter is produced by the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP) on a quarterly basis, by the coordinating country, Mozambique of the GLTP, within the Ministry of Tourism.

The aim of this newsletter is to keep all interested parties informed of the progress within the GLTP, to inform of issues of interest related to the park itself and agencies involved with the park and to provide a forum for comment and feedback. The views expressed in the articles in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the management and funding agencies involved with the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park.

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Submissions

This newsletter is your newsletter. It relies on information and stories from you. If you would like to submit a story, pictures, or ideas. Please contact Jacqueline Bice, on jackie.bice@tv cabo.co.mz or Dr Jorge Ferrão on liferrao@tv cabo.co.mz



What's Happening in the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park.....

Planning and Management

Ministerial Meeting Held

A ministerial meeting for the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP) was held in Shingwedzi, Kruger National Park (KNP), South Africa, on the 20th August 2004.

Joint Management Board Meetings Held

An extraordinary meeting of the Joint Management Board (JMB) for the GLTP was held at Skukuza in (KNP) on the 21st of July 2004.

The following meeting of the JMB was held in Harare on the 14-15th September 2004.

Zimbabwe preparing to take over coordination of the GLTP

Zimbabwe has begun communications with other countries and the Peace Parks Foundation, regarding the take over of coordination of the GLTP, as per the International treaty. Study visits to both Mozambique and South Africa are currently being organized for the Zimbabwean staff. The National TFCA Coordination Unit will comprise of a national program manager, 3 program managers and a secretary. The recruitment process has now been finalised.

Mr Edson Chidziya has been appointed National Coordinator and Mr Ebbias Manyonganise has been appointed the manager for corporate services and administration, according to Dr Morris Matsambiwa.

Next Ministerial and JMB Meetings

The next ordinary meeting of the JMB will be held on 11th November immediately prior to the Ministerial meeting on the 13th November. The meetings will be held in Zimbabwe.

Pafuri Integrated Plan

The Pafuri Integrated Plan (PIP) was discussed at the JMB meeting in July. It involves the drafting of a plan regarding the land use where the countries meet.

Johan Louw, a consultant to the Peace Parks Foundation (PPF) was appointed to draft an

integrated land use plan for the area funded by the PPF.

The draft plan is well underway, with the focus being on the provision of attractions, access, amenities and awareness.

Marketing Strategy and Investment Plan to be formulated

An investment plan and the guidelines or framework for a marketing strategy will be tabled at the next ministerial meeting to aid strategic planning in these areas of GLTP management.

Strategic Review Workshop Results Discussed

As a result of the Strategic review workshop held earlier in 2004, (details in the June 04 issue of 'Talk of the Transfrontier') some of the recommendations drafted were discussed at the JMB meeting in September. These included the establishment of a secretariat that will be permanently in place, the drafting of an integrated master plan, the establishment of a road network and the term of office of the country coordinator.

International Exposure for the GLTP

Representatives from the GLTP will be presenting at the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress in Bangkok in Thailand on the 17th to 25th of November. The Congress will present an assessment of the state of biodiversity on our planet. It will explore how cutting edge knowledge can be applied to address the world's most pressing sustainable development challenges through 4 broad themes;

Ecosystem management – bridging sustainability and productivity;

Health, poverty and conservation – responding to the challenge of human well-being;

Biodiversity loss and species extinction – managing risk in a changing world

Markets, business and the environment – strengthening corporate social responsibility, law and policy.



The GLTP will also be represented at an international symposium on “International Dimensions in Political Ecology: the case of the Amazon and other tropical areas” from 4-6th October in São Paulo, Brazil. The symposium is organized by UNESP, UNICAMP and PUC-SP from Brazil and CLACSO from Argentina. Dr Jorge Ferrão, the International Coordinator of the GLTP will be presenting “New paradigms for conservation in Africa: The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park” in a session on the subject of Political Ecology: Development, conservation and impacts.

Following this presentation, Dr Jorge Ferrão will then be presenting the GLTP to post graduate students at the Federal University in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

Dr Jorge Ferrão also trained students at the College of African Wildlife Management, Mweka in Tanzania on definitions, objectives, principles, process and management of Transfrontier initiatives as part of a newly introduced, 2 week module on Transfrontier conservation, of which Dr Ferrão has been taking part in reviewing the curriculum.

Minister Valli Moosa Retires



The South African Hon. Environmental Affairs & Tourism Minister Valli Moosa has retired from his position. A party was held in Maputo in April 2004. On this occasion, Mr Moosa talked about the GLTP and its challenges and opportunities. He will be sadly missed. He has been replaced by Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk.

Safety and Security

Safety and Security meeting held

A meeting of the Safety and Security Management Committee was held on the 20th July 2004 at Skukuza in KNP, South Africa.

Next Safety and Security Meeting

The next meeting of the Safety and Security management committee will be held on the 10th of November, at Elephant Hills, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Tenders received for construction of Giriyondo Border Post in Mozambique

A tender committee meeting for the construction of the Mozambican component of the Giriyondo border post, linking Kruger NP to the Limpopo was held on 10th August 2004. Some companies were short listed and negotiations are underway. Construction will begin as soon as the negotiations are finalized, probably in October 2004.

Funds for the construction were sourced from the Mozambique Ministry of Planning and Finance in April 2004.

Removal of the fence between KNP and LNP Sanctuary.

Reports from the Safety and Security Committee and KNP and LNP status reports continue to show no incidents of illegal use of the border to date. It is planned to drop another 20km of fence. Work is scheduled to start in September and it is envisaged it will take 3 months to complete. Another 9.9km will be dropped in 2005.

The JMB has scheduled a workshop on fencing, to address the issues and impacts, such as disease transmission and community impacts.

De-mining completed on development sites in Mozambique

The de-mining of development sites in the LNP has been completed and 8 of the 12 suspected mined areas have been surveyed. Of these at least 2 are heavily mined and will require additional work to remove the mines and unexploded ordinances.



Poaching in the GLTP

There have been a few incidences of poaching recently in the GLTP, however the joint anti-poaching operations, the “quick-fix” operations have reacted to this and some arrests were made and some elephant tusks recovered.

Conservation and Veterinary

Conservation and Veterinary Meeting held

A meeting of the Conservation and Veterinary Management Committee was held on the 20th July at Skukuza, KNP, South Africa. The main issues on the agenda were the results of the Strategic Planning Workshop and the implications of dropping parts of the fence between KNP and LNP.

Next Conservation and Veterinary Meeting

The next meeting of the Conservation and Veterinary management committee will be held on the 10th of November, at Elephant Hills, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus in lions in the GLTP

There has been some press regarding infection of lions in the GLTP with Feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV). See the story later in this issue telling the real story of FIV in the GLTP.

Testing for FMD to be undertaken in Mozambique

It has been reported that testing for Foot and Mouth Disease will be undertaken in cattle in some areas of southern Mozambique.

An Update – Bovine Tuberculosis in the GLTP

It was reported at the JMB meeting in September that Bovine Tuberculosis started in the south of the KNP and spread further north, however the prevalence is very low. It was also stated that movement of animals across the borders has resulted in the spread of BTb to Mozambique and to Zimbabwe in the future, if

not already. The important issue is continuing the surveillance in the community areas around the park, which is being undertaken by the Veterinary Department. A meeting was held on 20 September in Kruger to discuss research opportunities pertaining to BTb in wildlife in the Parks in South Africa and neighbouring countries.

Rhino Translocation undertaken with local media

On 5 August 2004 4 rhinos were translocated from KNP to the LNP sanctuary. Local press from Mozambique attended the release. See pictures later in this issue.

Elephant Management Indaba

Elephant management is one of the hottest issues in the GLTP at the moment, particularly in the KNP. An Indaba has been scheduled for the 19th-21st October 2004 at Berg-en-Dal in KNP to discuss this issue. See story on the Indaba and the options for elephant management later in this issue.

Tourism

Tourism meeting held

A meeting of the Tourism Management Committee was held at Skukuza, KNP, South Africa on 20th July 2004.

Next Tourism Meetings

A workshop will be held on the 22nd October, 2004 at Mopani Rest Camp in KNP, with the HR, Finance and Legislation and the Management Committees. It will cover the issues of the Revenue sharing assignment, the International Marketing Strategy and the Pafuri Integrated Plan.

A meeting of the Tourism Management Committee will be held on the 10th of November, in Zimbabwe.

Investigation into a crossing point over the Limpopo River to link Gonarezhou NP to Kruger NP

Nyeleti Consultants recently submitted to the JMB members and the TFCA National Coordinators, the final version of their report on the investigation into a crossing point over the Limpopo River linking Kruger National



Park to Gonarezhou National Park. The options were outlined in the June issue of "Talk of the Transfrontier".

The results were discussed at the JMB meeting in September and discussions are ongoing.

Upgrade of Tourism Facilities in GNP

Tourism facilities in the camps and the associated staff quarters are currently being upgraded, including the provision of electricity in the GNP, Zimbabwe. More tourist facilities and staff quarters are also being constructed. Roads in the GNP are also being repaired.

Tourism Operators to start in LNP

Tourism operators are currently being appointed to operate the 4x4 safari trails and the hiking trail in the LNP. It is envisaged these will be fully operational by 2005.

Massingir in touch with the world

The community of Massingir, next to the LNP in Mozambique now has telephone communication and the infrastructure to construct repeater stations for the VHF radio has been delivered. This work will commence soon. The headquarters for the LNP are currently based in the Massingir.

Tourism Infrastructure Projects in Kruger

Of the 10 tourism infrastructure project in the KNP, most are now finalised. These projects included the upgrade of the roads to the Pafuri gate, the upgrade of the existing road to the Giriyyondo gate, the completion of the Makhadzi picnic site and interpretive centre, the upgrade of the S60 tourist route linking Punda Maria with the far northern area of the KNP, and the development of research facilities in the north of the KNP.

Finance, Human Resources and Legislation

Finance, Human Resources and Legislation Meeting Held

A meeting of the Finance, Human Resources and Legislation committee was held on the 20th

of July, 2004 at Skukuza in the KNP, South Africa. The main issues discussed were the ratification of the treaty, the strategic planning workshop held in May 2004, the revenue sharing assignment, completed in February 2004 and the challenging issue of harmonization of legislation across the GLTP.

Next Finance, HR and Legislation Meeting

A workshop will be held on the 22nd October, 2004 at Mopani Rest Camp in KNP together with the Tourism Management Committee. It will cover the issues of the Revenue sharing assignment, the International Marketing Strategy and the Pafuri Integrated Plan.

The next meeting of the finance, HR and legislation management committee will be held on the 10th of November, at Elephant Hills, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Finance, Human Resources and Legislation Management Committee Workshop

A workshop will be held on the 22nd October, 2004 at Mopani Rest Camp in KNP. It will cover the issues of the Revenue sharing assignment, the International Marketing Strategy and the Pafuri Integrated Plan.

Ratification of the treaty- Final Signatures on Gaza-Kruger-Gonarezhou Agreement

The GKG agreement on the management of the GLTP has finally been signed at the Ministerial meeting in Maputo in August 2004. See story and photos later in this issue.

Revenue Sharing in the GLTP

Internal discussions are ongoing in all three countries around the results of the recently completed revenue sharing study. It remains an extremely complex issue, however it will need to be solved before the opening of the Giriyyondo gate in January 2005.

It was agreed at the JMB meeting in September that workshops between the three countries will need to be held to resolve the issue, and that something will be presented at the next ministerial meeting in November.

Sengwe Biodiversity Corridor Legal Proceedings

The legal process to formally proclaim the Sengwe Corridor as a wilderness area has



started. The key stakeholders all agreed to set up a Statutory Combination Authority, called the Sengwe-Chipise Wilderness Areas Combination Authority, in June 2004. The Authority will comprise of the 2 district councils of Chiredzi and Beitbridge, with technical support from National Parks and other relevant Government agencies and NGOs.

Farewell to Jones Muleso Kharika from the GLTP



Our colleague **Jones Muleso Kharika**, also known as Young Pioneer Representative has moved on from the GLTP. He is replaced by **Ms. Nthabiseng Motete**.

The GLTP Community expresses our sincere appreciation for the professionalism, friendship and above all the comradeship which was developed along the last few years. Jorge Ferrão commented “..without your joy and high sense of humor, our meetings will never be the same..... Your lessons and strengths will remain a treasured part of GLTP memories.....We wish you all the best in your new endeavors. Thanks for your continuous support. We will make GLTP a very successful project! We are committed!”

Staff Hired for the Gonarezhou National Park (GNP) in Zimbabwe

Hiring of staff for the GNP has begun after the restructuring of the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority. The full staff compliment of the GNP will comprise 55 officers, 50 rangers and 31 general hands. To

date all the officers and about 80% of the junior staff are already recruited.

Exchange Visits continue

The GLTP organized exchange visits for the local communities from Makuleke in South Africa, Shingwedzi and Limpopo in Mozambique and Sengwe and Chiredzi in Zimbabwe in February 2004. The aim of these exchanges was to share ideas on potential opportunities in conservation. The visits took place in 2 phases. The first phase consisted of a visit by the Makuleke community to Mozambique, and the second phase a visit by the Mozambicans and Zimbabweans to the Makuleke area. The GLTP hopes to repeat this exercise in November/December 2004.

Park Boundary realignment Process

The team responsible for demarcating the new boundaries of the GLTP in Mozambique continues to work. The resource mapping team consisting of an agriculturalist, a representative from the provincial department of cadastral mapping, and 3 representatives from various NGOs, and led by a community liaison officer from the LNP compiled an inventory of land uses and resources. From this, the placement of the new boundary line between the support zone and the rest of the park has been proposed and approved. Workshops are scheduled to continue this work.

Voluntary Resettlements to Commence in LNP

Work on the voluntary resettlement policy and compensation framework is underway, and a Resettlement Working Group has been established in the LNP. This group is working with the communities currently residing within the boundaries of the LNP. Subject to funding, the resettlement will commence in 2005. The Governor of Gaza Province recently visited the villages of Bingo and Chibotane within the LNP, to talk with the communities about the proposed voluntary resettlement process.





Zimbabwe - South Africa - Mozambique Working together

Ratification of the Gaza-Kruger-Gonarezhou Treaty

The final step has been taken in the ratification of the Gaza-Kruger-Gonarezhou (GKG) agreement, with the signing of the Portuguese version. The English version of the agreement, also known as the “treaty”, was signed in November 2000. However under the Mozambican legal system the GKG Agreement could not be ratified without having signed the Portuguese version, which is equally authentic.

The Finance, Human Resources and Legislation Management Committee drafted an Amendment to the GKG Agreement, which provided for the three original Portuguese texts to be signed.

The final version with amendments was signed at the Ministerial meeting for the GLTP at

Shingwedzi in South Africa on the 20th August 2004.

The agreement is based on the development of the GLTP with the shared desires ‘to promote ecosystem integrity, biodiversity conservation and sustainable socioeconomic development across international boundaries’.

The agreement covers such issues as geographic delimitation, the shared objectives, principles and cooperation, security and borderline control, implementation, the institutional framework, management plans, financing and dispute settlement.



Signing of the final amendment in Portuguese of the GKG agreement by Hon Minister Fernando Sumbana, Mozambique, Hon Minister Francis Nhema, Zimbabwe and Hon Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk, South Africa.



Translocation of rhinos from Kruger NP to Limpopo NP

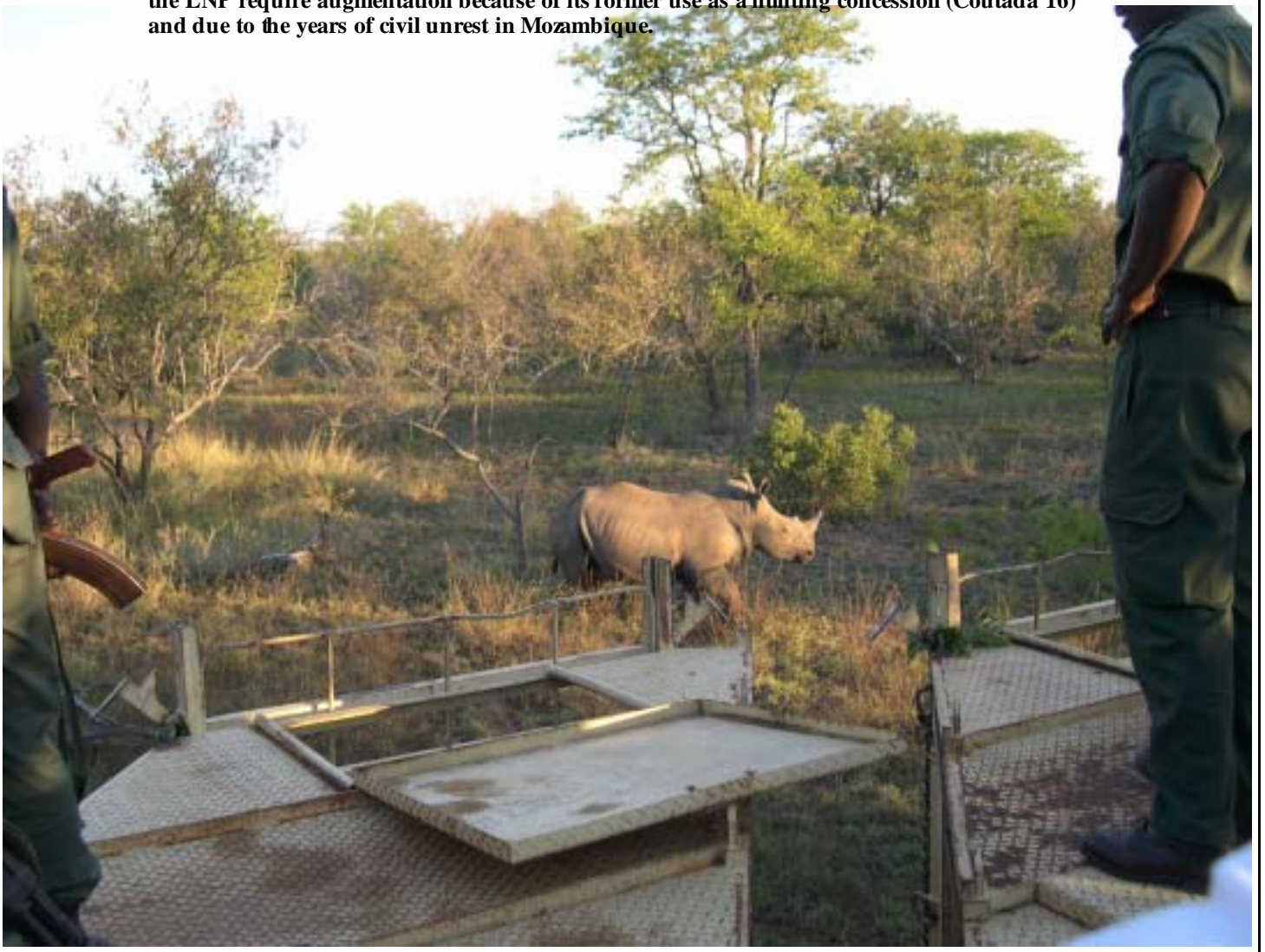
On the 5th of August 2004 a group of 4 white rhinos consisting of two males and two females were translocated from the KNP in South Africa to the 30 000 ha sanctuary within the LNP in Mozambique. Local press were present at the release in Mozambique. These animals were part of a total 10 individuals that were translocated to the sanctuary, in August 2004. They are the first rhinos to be translocated from KNP to the LNP Sanctuary, although 2 bulls were moved from the outside to the inside of the LNP sanctuary in 2002.

The rhinos were released near the pen where elephants have been released in the past 4 years.

The rhinos were released outside of the pen, as major modifications would have needed to be undertaken to make it suitable for rhino release. The rhinos will be monitored using satellite radio telemetry and tracked using a helicopter twice per month.

The rhinos were moved using the transport boxes and vehicle specially designed for this purpose, belonging to the KNP. They were sedated by KNP vets to minimize the stress on the animals.

Translocations of animals from KNP to LNP is continually occurring. Translocations in August included Sable, Waterbuck, giraffe, wildebeest, zebras, impalas, warthog and roan. There are also plans to translocate sable from GNP to LNP in the near future. The numbers of animals in the LNP require augmentation because of its former use as a hunting concession (Coutada 16) and due to the years of civil unrest in Mozambique.



AHEAD - Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area Working Group - an introduction

The Animal Health for the Environment and Development (AHEAD) organization was instigated at the World Parks Congress in Durban in September 2003. The instigators included the IUCN Southern Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SASUSG), Veterinary Specialist Group (VSG), AU-IBAR and others working with World Conservation Society. The aim of the organisation is to help lay the scientific foundation for an international animal health and natural resources management initiative.

AHEAD consists of a consortium of organizations, one of which is the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Areas Working Group (GLTFCAWG). At the Congress in Durban, some 80 participants including veterinarians, ecologists, economists, wildlife managers and other experts from Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, France, the United States, and the United Kingdom, delineated landscapes of conservation priority across Southern and East Africa with significant disease issues at the wildlife/livestock/human interface. The GLTFCAWG emerged as the group's highest priority where wildlife populations will be contiguous across international borders. The hope is that progress can be made in the GLTFCAWG through international and interdisciplinary collaboration, and that a successful effort here could potentially serve as a useful model for other places facing similar challenges in Southern and East Africa, and elsewhere.

On the 7-8th June 2004 the AHEAD GLTFCAWG had their 4th meeting in Maputo Mozambique. The highlights of the meeting were:

A written Memorandum of Understanding will be developed that will define a cooperative alliance that will emphasize collaboration and

information sharing without being institutionally constraining.

A Memorandum of Understanding will be developed between the AHEAD GLTFCAWG and the JMB to facilitate better and more immediate communication when needed on issues to do with research, outreach and science based policy.

Carlos Lopes Pereira (Unidade de Epidemiologia Veterinária Departamento de Sanidade Animal, Direcção Nacional de Pecuária, Ministério da Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural) and colleagues are spearheading an initiative to develop a Wildlife Veterinary Unit for Mozambique. The establishment of this authority responds to the SADC Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement on enforcing laws, sharing information and building capacity to manage wildlife and associated legislation. It also responds to the common vision of national veterinary authorities to standardize monitoring and control of disease transmission between wildlife and domestic stock.

David Cummings of the AHEAD GLTFCAWG is preparing a concept document of all projects.



Disease and the GLTP

Transfer of disease is always an issue when considering the transfrontier parks around the world. There is an ongoing debate around buffalo translocations in the GLTP for precisely this reason. The story of this debate was outlined in the April to June issue of 'Talk of the Transfrontier'.

The main diseases of concern are Bovine Tuberculosis (BTb), Bovine Brucellosis, Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Corridor Disease, Distemper, Rabies and African swine fever. All of these diseases affect, and can be carried and transmitted by both wildlife and domestic stock. Animals that can be affected by these diseases include kudu, buffalo, hogs, impala domestic cows, pigs and sheep. Domestic dogs also present an issue with rabies and distemper.

It is a particularly pertinent issue because at present there are approximately 20 000 people living inside the LNP with their livestock consisting of approximately 10 000 cattle, 6000 goats, 2000 sheep and 500 pigs, as well as unquantified numbers of domestic dogs and cats.

Monitoring of the buffalo populations in KNP is undertaken regularly. Some monitoring of the livestock and existing buffalo populations in Mozambique is now occurring. There have also been some pilot surveys on FMD, BTb, and

Trypanosomiasis in domestic animals. It is vital to establish the baseline data on the status of disease at the wildlife-livestock interface in the LNP.

A study proposal, outlining how this monitoring could be undertaken has been prepared by Carlos Lopes Pereira from the Veterinary Epidemiology Unit, Animal Health Department, National Directorate of Livestock, Mozambique, Jacobus Raat, a wildlife veterinarian from Ngongoni, South Africa and Manfred Tanner, a wildlife veterinarian from Germany. The proposal would investigate the wild and domestic animal health status in the LNP by addressing the epidemiological situation in both domestic and wild animals with the objective of proposing and implementing appropriate disease prevention strategies within the wildlife, livestock and human interface.

The complete removal of the border fences and translocations of animals within the GLTP will lead to contiguous populations of animals. Before this occurs it is vital to have

the baseline data and the infrastructure to manage and use this data.

There are a number of projects underway in the GLTP addressing the issues of disease, as part of the AHEAD initiative, and these include:

KNP, South Africa

1. Bovine tuberculosis biannual survey
2. Longitudinal study of BTb by Paul Cross
3. BTb vaccination project
4. Comparative study of infective and non-infected lion populations
5. BTb molecular epidemiology
6. BTb in kudu
7. Passive surveillance
8. Development of diagnostic techniques for pachyderms
9. Diagnostic of Theileriosis
10. Continuing surveys of a range of diseases in Kruger
11. Genetics of buffalo

LNP, Mozambique

1. Monitoring of BTb, FMD and Brucellosis
2. Ongoing data processing and analysis of the incidence of diseases in the country using TAD-info the program developed by FAO.
3. Tsetse surveillance and monitoring

GNP, Zimbabwe

1. Preliminary survey of the incidence of BTb in the Sengwe communal land
2. FMD in kudu and impala
3. Tsetse surveillance and monitoring

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus in the GLTP – the REAL Story...

In recent months there has been some press on the complex issue of Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) affecting lions in KNP, and affecting the viability of the lion populations in the GLTP.

Veterinarians from the KNP and the AHEAD GLTFCA working group comment that to the best of their knowledge, FIV does not have any major impact on lions especially healthy lions and that they do not know of any clinical disease in lions from this virus.

Members of the IUCN Veterinary Specialist Group, the Cat Specialist Group, the African Lion Working Group and other experts have prepared the following fact sheet on the status of FIV in southern African lion populations.

The Facts

FIV is a lentivirus that infects both wild and domestic feline species and is closely related to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Species-specific strains of FIV have been isolated from the domestic cat, puma, lion, leopard and Pallas' cat. In the domestic cat, the virus is present in blood and saliva, and biting is believed to be the most common way the virus is transmitted among the cats. Domestic cats infected with FIV develop changes in the numbers of T lymphocyte blood cells over a period of months to years analogous to those seen with HIV/AIDS in people. While FIV infection is usually associated with abnormal T-lymphocyte counts, this does not necessarily result in a compromised immune system. Some infected domestic cats develop clinical problems resulting in increased mortality, while others show no signs of illness and have a normal life expectancy.

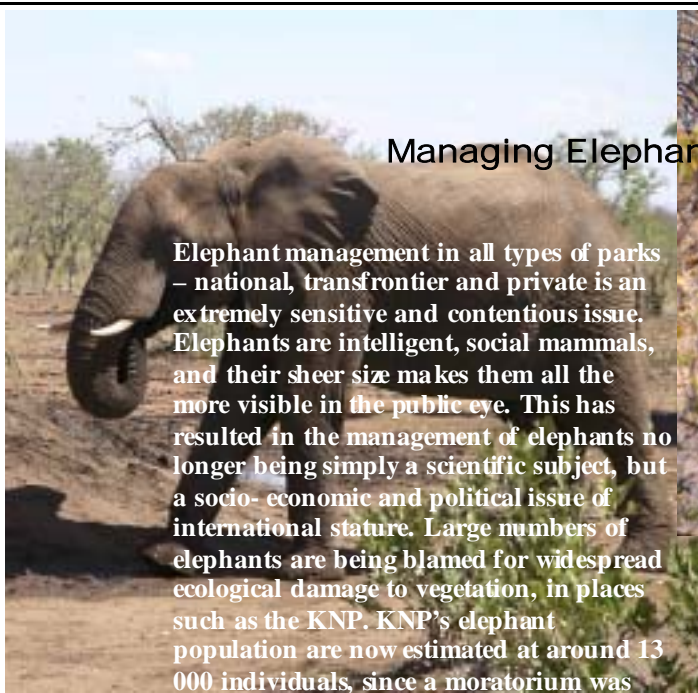
FIV infection in wild African lions has not been associated with overt clinical signs and there is no evidence that FIV infection results in increased mortality. Some FIV-infected captive lions have displayed the same changes in T lymphocyte counts as exhibited by infected domestic cats but there is little evidence that infection results in clinical signs or increased mortality.

African lions in eastern and southern Africa have the highest prevalence of FIV infection of any wild feline with nearly 100% of adults infected in several areas. Although recognized only in the last few decades, FIV has been present in wild lion populations for prolonged periods, possibly thousands of years. The most detailed studies of FIV have been conducted on the lions of the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania, where the lion strain was first recognized in the mid-1980s. Long-term studies of individuals sampled in the 1980s and 1990s showed no difference in survival between animals that were infected at an early age vs. those infected at a later age. During a severe outbreak of canine distemper virus (CDV) in the Serengeti in 1994, FIV-infected animals were no more likely to die from CDV than animals that were not infected with FIV. In addition, the Serengeti lion population has doubled over the past 10 yrs, so these lions are clearly vigorous despite the ubiquity of the virus.

The lions of Kruger National Park, South Africa are infected with FIV at a similar rate (and for at least as long) as the Serengeti lions. Accordingly, it is unlikely that FIV alone represents a health threat to Kruger lions. The prime health threat to the Kruger lions is considered to be the recent spread into the population of bovine tuberculosis (BTb) caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium bovis*. *Mycobacterium bovis* causes disease in felids regardless of their FIV status. Whether the course of *M. bovis* infection in FIV-infected lions is different has not been determined.

Although BTb and CDV can cause serious health problems in lions, it is unlikely that FIV poses a serious threat to lions where FIV has been present for extended periods of time. Of the lion populations tested to date, only those in Etosha National Park, Namibia and Hluhluwe-Umfolozzi Reserve South Africa (and satellite populations of these established by translocations) have tested negative. However, recent testing suggests that these populations may be infected with a different strain not detected using earlier methodologies. If any of these populations are truly FIV-negative, these lions may not be resistant to FIV induced disease as they have not had a chance to adapt to the virus during evolution. Therefore, when translocating lions between populations, prudence suggests not introducing FIV-infected lions into FIV-negative lion populations.

Managing Elephants – what are the options?



Elephant management in all types of parks – national, transfrontier and private is an extremely sensitive and contentious issue. Elephants are intelligent, social mammals, and their sheer size makes them all the more visible in the public eye. This has resulted in the management of elephants no longer being simply a scientific subject, but a socio-economic and political issue of international stature. Large numbers of elephants are being blamed for widespread ecological damage to vegetation, in places such as the KNP. KNP's elephant population are now estimated at around 13 000 individuals, since a moratorium was placed on culling 10 years ago.

Very much simplified, there are five main options for elephant management to maintain numbers at an ecologically viable level. All options have pros and cons. Contraception is a long term solution, and although it does not help in the immediate future. It is a very expensive option, because animals need to be darted from helicopters. It is also logistically difficult where there are large numbers of elephants over a large area.

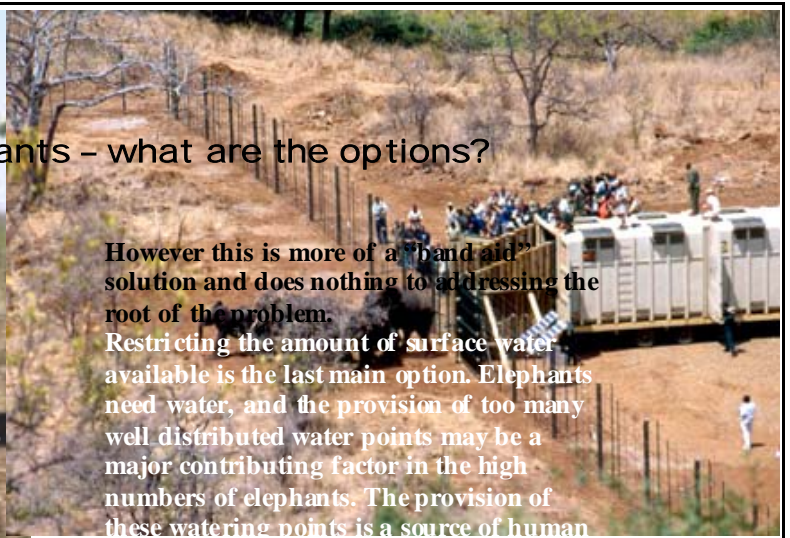
Translocation to other parks is an agreeable option, but also very expensive and often involves only small numbers of individuals. It requires specialized equipment, personnel and follow up monitoring.

There is always the risk with translocation that the animals will return home, such as the elephants translocated to LNP, who returned to the KNP.

Culling was the method of control used in KNP until 1995. It is a controversial method that elicits strong reactions (both for and against) and is questioned ethically.

Theoretically it is the most cost effective method of elephant control, and the subsequent products, such as meat, hide and ivory are a potential source of revenue for future elephant management.

Fencing off enclosures to allow plant species that are threatened by elephants to be protected has been undertaken in Addo Elephant National Park in South Africa.



However this is more of a "band aid" solution and does nothing to addressing the root of the problem.

Restricting the amount of surface water available is the last main option. Elephants need water, and the provision of too many well distributed water points may be a major contributing factor in the high numbers of elephants. The provision of these watering points is a source of human

interference with the ecosystem, which is often stated as one of the major problems with management of many issues in parks and reserves. It is however unethical to reduce water availability for the express purpose of reducing elephant populations. Despite the varying views, elephant management in the GLTP will be based on scientific evidence, from field experiments, such as those conducted in Addo Elephant National Park in South Africa, mapping and monitoring of impacts and modeling and on the results of the public review and comment process.

An Elephant Management Plan is currently in preparation for the GLTP. CEO of SANParks, Dr David Mabunda stated, on the subject of elephant management, that

‘We believe that a single tool option to a complex situation is neither desirable nor feasible. Perhaps the solution lies in a toolbox consisting of multiple options to be applied over time to address immediate, medium and long term objectives of maintaining viable elephant populations in the interest of



biodiversity.”

The position of management of elephants in the GLTP will be transparent and opened to public review and comment before the plan is finalized. To further explore the options for management and to explore an appropriate, comprehensive elephant management strategy, SANPARKS is hosting ‘The Great Elephant Indaba’ on elephant management from 19th-21st October 2004.

A range of affected and interested stakeholders will participate in the Indaba, including government agencies, community representatives, partners in transfrontier

conservation, conservation, NGOs, provincial conservation authorities, private conservation organisations, academics, the media and the general public.

"We are expecting participation from all these sectors in order for us to be able to conclude the debate on the management of elephants in protected areas, specifically in National Parks," said Wanda Mkutshulwa, Head of Communications. Says Dr David Mabunda: "We are looking at a broad level of representation in order to ensure that the discussions at the workshop take into consideration all the different aspects to this challenge."

Discussions at the Indaba will be based on the following topics:

- The possible impact of elephants on biodiversity
- The conservation status and future of elephants in protected areas in southern Africa
- Ethics and values for management of elephants
- The social impact of protected areas (potential risks and benefits to neighbours)
- Options for managing elephants (translocation, contraception, culling and others)

Mabunda added: "One has to understand the challenge of managing elephant populations is not just a SANParks or South African issue. It cuts across the country and region, hence the need for us to invite even representatives from our neighbouring countries who are affected by the escalating elephant populations."

As a result of the Indaba recommendations will be made on effective and financially sustainable approaches to elephant management through meaningful participation by the interested and affected stakeholders, however Dr Mabunda stated that "it would be naïve to expect a perfect solution from a once-off workshop. The ... Indaba will simply open the debate and identify specific options that may be adopted ...".

A number of debates have been held recently in anticipation of the Great Elephant Indaba. At each of these debates the options were discussed, but no consensus was reached.

Overall the GLTP will manage it's elephants according to a joint management policy on the broader issues, although each park will manage the specifics individually.

Housing and Infrastructure in the Limpopo National Park

A great step forward in realizing the true transfrontier nature of the GLTP is the construction and standardization of quality of infrastructure between the three National Parks involved. The LNP in Mozambique is moving ahead in leaps and bounds in this issue.

The Design Development Report for the first phase of development of the park management infrastructure in the LNP in Mozambique is now completed. The report contains the basic and detailed objectives of the developments, conceptual

designs and drawings of the buildings to be constructed, and an implementation plan and budget.



Initial buildings in this first phase will include 6 staff houses, a head office complex and associated engineering infrastructure services, such as water, sewerage, electricity and roads.

The tenders for the construction of the staff accommodation have already been awarded.

The designs for the wilderness hiking trails camp, the 4x4 trail camps and the Massingir camping site have also been completed.

Helder Mandlate and Elias Mateus Mundlovu, employees of the LNP at the current staff accommodation, Zona de Giriyoondo, August 2004.

Your Say

- 🌿 Do you have something to say about the GLTP?
- 🌿 Do you have something to say about any of the articles you have read in this newsletter?
- 🌿 Do you just have something to say?

Please send us your comments, thoughts, questions and ideas to the following address at the GLTP:

ljferrao@tvcabo.co.mz or jackie.bice@tvcabo.co.mz

A note from the Editor:



Well the last two issues drew a few comments, which I really appreciated and will endeavor to incorporate your suggestions into the newsletter. But don't stop!!! Keep the suggestions coming, and don't forget the submissions of your stories.

On a lighter note, I recently stayed at the Covane Community Lodge and visited the LNP with my brother and 1 year old daughter, Ava. The accommodation and the reception we received at Covane Lodge was warm and welcoming. The lodge is situated on a hill above the

Massingir Dam, and the sunsets over the dam from the viewing and picnic area were spectacular. The food prepared for us at the lodge by people from the Canhane Community was delicious and served with care.

The LNP was a beautiful park, although the roads were a little challenging at times – the infrastructure is being developed in the park, so it can only improve. Of course if you are a fan of 4WD, now is the time to go.

We visited the sanctuary and saw plenty of animals and interesting plants. The best thing was that these animals may have been coming back and forth across the border to South Africa – Transfrontier, which is the whole point of this initiative.

I look forward to watching the development of the park, and visiting more and more – and of course staying at the Covane Community Lodge.

Até logo

Jacqueline Bice



*See you in the next issue
in December 2004*