



***African Wildlife  
Conservation Fund***

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

JANUARY 2018 - DECEMBER 2022



**501 (c) (3), non-profit status**

**FIN 26-0571535**

**ZW Prot. No.: 0000476/2012**



***African Wildlife  
Conservation Fund***

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## I. Executive Summary

The African Wildlife Conservation Fund (AWCF) is a small hands-on organisation directly involved with wildlife conservation in Africa. Our current focus is on the conservation of large carnivores in the Zimbabwean part of the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area, an area of global conservation significance. Our flagship species is the endangered African Wild Dog.

AWCF is registered as a not-for-profit organisation in the US (FIN 26-0571535), and as a Trust in Zimbabwe (Prot. No.: 0000476/2012). The AWCF staff team comprises a total of 12 people, with oversight of an additional three. We have a board of Trustees in the US and a small board for the Zimbabwean Trust.

AWCF works mainly in the Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC), and the Gonarezhou National Park (GNP), and we take a holistic approach to conservation, incorporating research, hands-on conservation, education and outreach, community engagement and policy dialogue. Our four key projects are:

- Lowveld Wild Dog Project
- Gonarezhou Predator Project
- Education and Outreach Project
- Human Wildlife Coexistence Project

The Lowveld Wild Dog Project and the Gonarezhou Predator Project aim to maintain healthy, viable and well connected populations of African wild dogs and other large carnivores in Zimbabwe, as well as the habitats and prey species on which they depend. Significant increases have been recorded in populations of all large carnivores in both SVC and GNP since the program was initiated.

Our Education and Outreach Project aims to improve learning opportunities for the communities around SVC and GNP, to help improve people's attitudes, emotions, knowledge, and behaviours with regards to wildlife, as well as to improve livelihoods. Formal, external evaluation of many of the different aspects of this program, together with anecdotal evidence gathered in the field, demonstrates that we are making good headway towards achieving this aim.

Our Human Wildlife Coexistence Project aims to improve tolerance of community members to large carnivores through mitigation of human wildlife conflict (HWC) and the fostering of coexistence, with additional livelihood improvements. Although a relatively new program (established in 2016), our team of four HWC officers have made great headway in mitigating conflict and preventing retaliatory killings of wildlife.

AWCF's annual operating budgets have increased exponentially on an annual basis, as we expand our efforts both geographically and in scope. Our annual budget increased from just US\$68,087 in 2013 to \$314,825 just three years later (2016). Our projected annual operating budget for 2018 is US\$339,500.

## II. About The African Wildlife Conservation Fund

The African Wildlife Conservation Fund (AWCF) is a registered non-profit organisation [501(c)3] in the United States, with headquarters in Doral, Florida. It was registered as such in 2005. In 2012, the AWCF became registered as a trust in Zimbabwe:-The African Wildlife Conservation Fund Trust. AWCF is dedicated to the conservation of the large carnivore guild of southern Africa, with a particular emphasis on the endangered African wild dog.

### OUR MISSION:

*To conserve viable populations of endangered African wild dogs and other large carnivores in Zimbabwe, through research, hands-on conservation, education, community engagement and policy dialogue*

AWCF is 100% field based and with over a decade of experience, we are well placed to make a substantial contribution to conservation and improving human livelihoods around protected areas. We take a holistic approach to conservation that includes research, hands-on conservation, education, community engagement, promotion of human wildlife coexistence and policy dialogue.

We directly monitor and protect large carnivores over 2.2 million acres (or 9,000km<sup>2</sup>), which is home to about 30 packs of endangered African wild dogs. In addition, we work with 123 primary schools and 10 secondary schools across 39 different communities in 5 different Districts. We have teams based in and around both the Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) and the Gonarezhou National Park (GNP) in south east Zimbabwe. Populations of wild dogs, lions and hyenas have increased exponentially in both areas since 2008. Currently the population of endangered African wild dogs in SVC is at one of the highest densities in the world. We also keep track of wild dog populations in other lowveld reserves including Malilangwe, Nuanetsi and Buby Valley Conservancy.

The AWCF team is a devoted group of primarily local Zimbabweans, with an international reputation for achieving excellent conservation outcomes. All of our work relies on the financial support of granting institutions and private donors. We have extremely low overheads and none of the board directors or trustees receives any financial (or other) remuneration for their efforts.

Since their inception, the AWCF has made significant achievements with long lasting impact. Most importantly, we have played a pivotal role in the four-fold increase in the African wild dog population in the SVC, from 36 in 1996 to over 150 wild dogs in 2018 (a small, fledgling population to one at maximum carrying capacity). We have also seen an increase in the wild dog population in GNP from just 30 dogs in 2009 to over 110 today. In addition, we have established a very successful primary school education program around both the SVC and GNP, which now includes a total of 123 schools, and benefits over 60,000 students. In addition to conservation awareness, this program has seen fully functioning libraries established in all these schools, and

literacy programs in over 40. We started a human-wildlife coexistence project around GNP in 2016, which has successfully mitigated numerous cases of human wildlife conflict and prevented the retaliatory killing of a wild animal on several occasions.

The success of AWCF's work is thanks to our diverse portfolio of activities, our wide-ranging and effective collaborations with local, national and regional partners, our fantastic team of dedicated, enthusiastic and motivated local staff and our professional conduct.

AWCF has a board of Trustees in the US and a board of Trustees in Zimbabwe, and is also registered in South Africa and the United Kingdom (although does not have formal charity status in the latter two countries). All work in Zimbabwe is undertaken in partnership with the Zimbabwean Parks and Wildlife Management Authority and under permits from the Research Council of Zimbabwe.

### **III. Our Current Projects**

#### **Lowveld Wild Dog Project**

Despite their beauty, enigmatic nature, and incredible social structure, African wild dogs are the most endangered large carnivore in southern Africa, facing the very real threat of local extinction in many areas. The Lowveld Wild Dog Project (LWDP) actively promotes and facilitates the conservation of this endangered species in Zimbabwe through a combination of management-driven research, hands on conservation, education and outreach, and working with decision makers to influence policy. The LWDP has been operating since 1996, with an initial focus on the SVC. The project has since expanded to include the whole of the Zimbabwean part of the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA), a globally significant conservation area which holds as much as one tenth of the global remaining wild dogs. Through an extremely dedicated four-man tracker team, AWCF actively monitors and protects over 24 packs of this endangered large carnivore in two key populations; Savé Valley Conservancy and Gonarezhou National Park. Since the LWDP started, wild dogs in SVC have increased four-fold (from just 36 to a maximum capacity of over 150), with a similar increase recorded in GNP; impressive achievements given the constant threats from snaring, rabies and human persecution.

#### **Gonarezhou Predator Project:**

The Gonarezhou National Park in southeast Zimbabwe is a key part of the GLTFCA with major conservation potential. The Gonarezhou Predator Project aims to establish and improve the conservation status of the large carnivore species (lions, leopards, African wild dogs, cheetahs and hyenas) in this spectacular National Park. This project operates in partnership with the Gonarezhou Conservation Trust (itself a partnership between Frankfurt Zoological Society and Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority). The project was initiated in 2009 with the preliminary aim of finding out more about the local predator populations and developing conservation-based management programs where necessary. Since the start of the project, we have conducted nine annual spoor surveys, two park wide call-up surveys, and have collared a number of lions and wild dogs in an attempt to understand movements, dispersal events, threats and barriers, as well as the fate of individual animals. Populations of all large carnivores in GNP have increased exponentially and significantly since 2009.

#### **Education and Outreach:**

Education and community involvement are critical to successful long-term conservation. AWCF works throughout Zimbabwe's southeast lowveld to establish long term, sustainable environmental education projects in communities surrounding key wildlife areas. We work with 123 primary schools and 10 secondary schools across 39 different communities in 5 different Districts. Our efforts include a literacy program, a library program, provision of conservation

awareness materials, DVD showing, support for environmental clubs, a scholarship program, field trips and longer field courses, and teacher training. We have estimated the reach to be about 60,000 children and 500 teachers. Our work around Gonarezhou is conducted under the auspices of the Chilojo Club, a partnership consortium between AWCF, Gonarezhou Conservation Trust and the Wildlife in Livelihoods Development Program. A recent (2016) formal evaluation of the program demonstrated a significant improvement in knowledge, attitudes and understanding of various conservation issues, by students, and our literacy program has resulted in an increase from 9 to 30% literacy in just three years. Behavioural change has also been evidenced, including when three schoolboys from our program rescued two wild dog pups from drowning in an irrigation canal, after recognising them and knowing their importance.

## **Human Wildlife Coexistence**

The Human Wildlife Coexistence Project is the latest program to be instigated by AWCF. The project was established in 2016, around Gonarezhou National Park, where it is operated under the Chilojo Club. Together with our partners, we have a team of four local community members employed; one Project Coordinator based at Chipinda Pools HQ and three HWC monitors based in the field. These monitors respond to 100% of reported human wildlife conflict cases, either by phone or (usually) in person, and attend the scenes of all serious incidences to verify the facts, provide a sympathetic ear to the victim and advise on ways of preventing similar occurrences in future. The team also holds bi-annual HWC workshops in all wards around the park and spends time assisting households to improve their livestock kraals, or better protect their fields etc. By January 2018 we had held four sets of 14 workshops, attended by a combined total of over 4000 people. Hundreds of cases of conflict have been attended to and numerous wild animals saved from retaliatory killing. Another key benefit of this program is a general improvement in the relationship between the communities and the GNP.



## IV. Objectives – 2018 to 2022

AWCF takes a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to conservation and as such we have numerous and varied objectives. The full strategy, including objectives, targets, activities, timeframes, locations, and actors is attached as an appendix to this document.

### Projects 1 and 2: Lowveld Wild Dog and Gonarezhou Predator Projects

**Outcome: To maintain healthy, viable and well connected populations of African wild dogs and other large carnivores in Zimbabwe, as well as the habitats and prey species on which they depend.**

#### *Objectives*

1. **African Wild Dogs:** A viable, healthy and well connected population of African wild dogs with a long term and sustainable future within and around the protected areas of Zimbabwe's south-east lowveld.
2. **Other Carnivores:** Viable, healthy and well connected populations of other large carnivores thrive within and around the protected areas of Zimbabwe's south-east lowveld.

### Project 3: Education and Outreach

**Outcome: To improve learning opportunities for the communities around SVC and GNP, to help improve people's attitudes, emotions, knowledge, and behaviours with regards to wildlife, as well as to improve livelihoods.**

#### *Objectives*

3. **Primary Level:** Education standards improved in all 128 primary schools around SVC & GNP, with a particular focus on environmental and conservation awareness, so that primary school students from a young age develop a conservation-orientated mind set.
4. **Secondary Level:** The quality of secondary level education around SVC and GNP is significantly improved, and increased opportunities for uplift and/or employment provided.
5. **Higher Level:** Improved conservation awareness, skills development and training at the highest local level, and strengthened capacity for sustainable conservation practices and protocols.
6. **Training and Capacity Building:** AWCF's Education Teams meet appropriate standards of excellence.

## Project 4: Human Wildlife Co-existence

**Outcome: To improve tolerance of community members to large carnivores through mitigation of human wildlife conflict and the fostering of coexistence, with additional livelihood improvements.**

### *Objectives*

7. **Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC):** HWC reduced from baseline levels, and negative attitudes and behaviours towards wildlife reduced in communities surrounding SVC and GNP
8. **Community Education:** Revitalise and strengthen the community education program around SVC.
9. **Livelihood Improvement:** Increased opportunities for education and learning, as well as increased opportunities for employment and/or revenue linked to conservation work/activities. Reduced HWC, and improved human health and welfare.

## V. AWCF Staff & Management

AWCF employs a total of 12 people (11 full time), and partners in the oversight of an additional two education officers and one human-wildlife conflict officer. We have a board of Trustees in the US and a small board for the Zimbabwean Trust. All but two of our employees are Zimbabweans. In addition, we support local capacity building by taking an undergraduate attachment student each year, from the National University of Science and Technology in Bulawayo.

### EMPLOYEES

**Dr Rosemary Groom; Chief Executive Officer**  
[rosemary@africanwildlifeconservationfund.org](mailto:rosemary@africanwildlifeconservationfund.org)

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**Mr Misheck Matari; Deputy head tracker**  
00 263 777 728615

**Ms Martha Sosera; General assistant**  
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In addition, the AWCF partners with the Gonarezhou Conservation Trust and the Wildlife in Livelihoods and Development Program, under an umbrella consortium known as the Chilojo Club. Through the Chilojo Club, the AWCF team helped to recruit and now help to oversee the following:

**Mr Ezekia Chauke; Chilojo Club Education Officer**  
[ezekiachauke@gmail.com](mailto:ezekiachauke@gmail.com)

**Mr Joseph Mundawu; HWC Monitor**  
[joemundawu@gmail.com](mailto:joemundawu@gmail.com)

**Mr Anesu Chimambo; Assistant Education Officer**  
[anesuchimambo@gmail.com](mailto:anesuchimambo@gmail.com)

Our 2018 undergraduate attachment student is Nkosilathi Ngwenya and past students include Moreangels Mbizah, MSc (2009); Persistence Nyungu, MSc (2010); Nobesuthu Ngwenya, undergraduate (2012-2013); Sydney Dube, undergraduate (2013-2014); Rosebud Marembo, MSc (2013); Matthew Wijers, Honors project (2014); Golden Mukaro, undergraduate (2015); Laura Tensen, PhD (2014 to 2017).

## **Boards of Trustees**

### **AWCF Trust, Zimbabwe**

**Dr Chris Foggin; Chairman**

[chris@kigelia.net](mailto:chris@kigelia.net)

**Mr John McTaggart; Vice Chairman & Trustee**

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### **AWCF, United States of America**

#### **Directors and Board**

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**Martha Bryant**

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**Ruth Stoky**

**Christina Ventriere**

**Ingo Winzer**

## VI. Finances & Budget

AWCF relies solely on public grants and private donations. Private donors make up on average 5% of funds raised in any one year, and the bulk of the funding for the activities of the AWCF to date comes from public grant programs which are applied for annually. Several organisations have funded the ongoing activities of AWCF to date and some of our more substantial grants come from National Geographic Conservation Trust, Columbus Zoo Conservation Fund, National Geographic Big Cats Initiative, Rufford Small Grants for Nature Conservation and Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund. The rest of the funding for our activities is sourced through small grants programs, private donors and fundraising events.

### Assets

Over the past decade, we have built up a significant asset base. Our full asset register is available on request. To summarise, it includes

- 3 Toyota vehicles
- 7 motorbikes
- 3 mountain bikes
- 8 Motorola handheld radios with batteries and chargers
- 6 Sirtrack 3-element tracking antennas
- 6 Communication Specialists R-1000 tracking receivers
- 2 Telonics TR4 tracking receivers
- 8 Garmin GPS units
- 11 small digital cameras of various makes
- 2 printers
- 1 laminator
- 3 generators (1 5kVA for HQ and two portable for education projects)
- 1 centrifuge
- 1 Inverex 1000 inverter unit
- 4 laptops
- 2 projectors
- 20 Raspberry Pi computers
- 8 Moultrie camera traps
- 14 Bushnell camera traps
- 11 Cuddeback Capture IR camera traps
- 1 fridge
- 1 freezer
- 1 highlift jack
- 4 satellite collars
- 1 Dan Inject dart gun
- Numerous vehicle and motorbike spares, camping equipment, spare batteries and chargers, hard drives and other computer accessories

## Annual Expenditure

Our annual expenditure has increased exponentially on an annual basis. Total annual expenditure figures for 2013 to 2016 are provided below, with an illustrative graph.

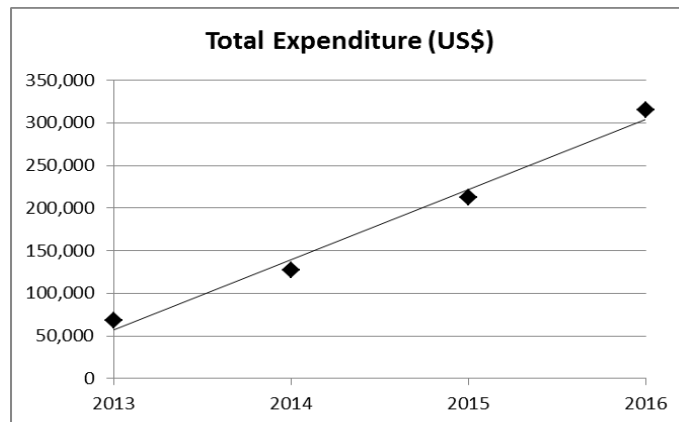
2013 68,087

2014 127,298

2015 212,575

2016 314,825

\*2017 figure coming soon



## In kind support

In addition to the actual financial expenditure presented above, AWCF has also been the recipient of numerous grants and in-kind donations, including a google grant worth \$123,600 annually, and library book donations through the Zambezi Schoolbook Project and Books for Africa, worth a total of \$309,375 between 2014 and 2015 alone. Other in-kind support includes camera traps, solar lights, rechargeable batteries and scout uniforms.

In total, our in-kind support amounted to \$191,887 in 2013, \$330,561 in 2014 and \$572,920 in 2015.

## Projected Budget – 2018

AWCF's projected operating budget for 2018 is given below, with a breakdown per project on the right hand side.

In addition to the financial support needed, we also expect to continue to receive in-kind support from numerous people and organisations, including the Savé Valley Conservancy, the Zambezi Schoolbook Project, Books for Africa and Google (through our Google grant).

### Summary Projected Expenses -2018

Overall Project Expenses	US\$
Salaries and field stipends	133,444
Vehicle costs	22,700
Motorbikes	14,450
Training workshops / field trips	16,800
Repair and replacement of equipment	11,850
Resources for schools	29,650
Cluster competitions	6,000
Scholarships	11,400
School field trips	13,100
Tracking collars	18,400
Uniforms	600
Darting supplies and accessories	1,000
Rabies vaccination campaigns	12,000
HWC Workshops	5,450
Phone credit for HWC hotlines	2,400
Administration	22,256
Contingency	18,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>339,500</b>

*\*\* We expect total annual operating costs to increase slightly each year between 2018 and 2022 as we establish more projects and raise salaries*

Lowveld Wild Dog Project	US\$
Salaries and field stipends	50,840
Vehicle costs	4,780
Motorbike costs	9,950
Scout uniforms	450
Repair / Replacement of equipment	5,500
Tracking collars	10,400
Darting supplies and accessories	600
Rabies vaccination campaigns	12,000
Administration (25% of all admin costs)	5,564
Contingency	5,000
	<b>105,084</b>

Gonarezhou Predator Project	US\$
Salaries and field stipends	18,100
Vehicle costs	4,810
Scout uniforms	150
Repair / Replacement of equipment	3,250
Tracking collars	8,000
Darting supplies and accessories	400
Administration (25% of all admin costs)	5,564
Contingency	3,000
	<b>43,274</b>

Education Project (SVC & GNP)	US\$
Salaries and field stipends	37,404
Vehicle costs	8,670
Scholarships	11,400
Cluster competitions	6,000
Training workshops / field trips	10,800
Resources for schools (primary & secondary)	29,650
Repair and replacement of equipment	1,900
Student field trips into SVC / GNP	13,100
Administration (25% of all admin costs)	5,564
Contingency	10,000
	<b>130,488</b>

Human Wildlife Coexistence	US\$
Salaries and field stipends	27,100
Vehicle & motorbike costs	4,440
New motorbikes	4,500
HWC workshops	5,450
Training workshops / field trips	6,000
Repair and replacement of equipment	1,200
Phone credit for HWC hotlines	2,400
Administration (25% of all admin costs)	5,564
Contingency	4,000
	<b>60,654</b>