



WWF
NEWSLETTER

Q3
2026



WWF in KAZA Newsletter

Wildlife translocation strengthens ecosystem resilience

Sioma Ngwezi National Park is experiencing steady ecological recovery following a series of science-led wildlife translocations implemented by WWF Zambia in partnership with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW), and with the support of local communities and traditional leadership.

These efforts are being implemented under the Climate Adaptation and Protected Areas (CAPA) Initiative, which applies nature-based solutions (NbS) to restore ecosystem functionality and strengthen climate resilience across the KAZA Landscape.

To date, 185 wild animals have been translocated into Sioma Ngwezi National Park, marking a significant milestone in the park's restoration journey.

Several phases of translocation have been successfully completed, including the movement of zebras, impalas, and wildebeest into the park. In the most recent phase, 27 Chapman's zebras (*Equus quagga chapmani*), the subspecies historically found in Sioma Ngwezi, were translocated following rigorous scientific assessments, including genetic (DNA) analyses, to ensure ecological suitability and long-term adaptation.

Earlier phases included the translocation of 40 impalas, achieving a 95% success rate consistent with international best practice, as well as wildebeest and other key species essential to restoring ecological balance.

A major milestone in the programme was the deployment of Sioma Ngwezi's first-ever satellite collar on a female impala, enabling real-time tracking of movement and adaptation patterns. Post-translocation monitoring through field patrols, satellite data, and visual assessments has already recorded encouraging results. Monthly monitoring in early 2026 observed healthy zebras, wildebeests, impalas, and buffalo, many accompanied by calves/lambs, indicating successful adaptation and reproduction.

The presence of newborn calves is a strong indicator of ecosystem recovery, demonstrating how wildlife responds positively when habitats are restored and effectively protected.

Beyond restoring biodiversity, the translocation programme contributes to broader KAZA objectives, including rebuilding wildlife connectivity, strengthening climate-resilient ecosystems, and enhancing future nature-based tourism opportunities for communities living alongside protected areas.

The Sioma Ngwezi translocation programme highlights the power of collaboration between governments, conservation partners, and communities in rewilding landscapes and securing a future where people and nature thrive together.

Cluster Farming and water retention innovations



Cluster farming and water-retention innovations in Namibia's KAZA landscapes are reshaping how communities, wildlife, and ecosystems coexist. With 22 cluster farms completed in the Zambezi Region of Namibia, WWF and partners can refocus on the model's core aim: making household resilience the driver of corridor conservation.

At its core is a household-based forest custodianship compact linking Traditional Authorities, conservancies, and participating households in shared governance. It addresses persistent challenges—food insecurity, water scarcity, and human-wildlife conflict—by tying livelihoods directly to conservation outcomes.

Historically, forested and corridor areas served as emergency agricultural reserves opened only when primary fields were exhausted. Conservation was incidental; survival was the priority. The Household Forest Linked Cluster Crop Farm (HFCCF) model builds on the historical use of corridor lands as emergency farming areas, transforming survival-driven practices into conservation opportunities. By aligning income generation with forest stewardship, households gain incentives to maintain corridors as productive, protected landscapes.

Innovations Strengthening Corridors and Restoring Ecosystem Function

A strengthened operational pathway would support the cluster farm model. This includes private-sector capacity building, structured agronomic oversight, agronomy software, Namibia Agronomic Board certification, a proposed revolving input fund, and the production of high-value horticultural crops.

Market access is anchored in agri-hubs, not as fixed facilities, but as flexible, adaptive networks across formal and informal markets. This approach should ensure liquidity, fast cash turnover, and consistent repayments into the revolving fund, keeping the system financially resilient.

Alongside the cluster farms, the introduction of Continuous Contour Trenches (CCTs) within wildlife corridors is proving transformative. CCTs enhance water retention, reduce crop damage by keeping wildlife within corridors, and improve livestock productivity.

Looking Ahead: A Scalable Pathway for KAZA

Together, cluster farms and CCTs signal a strategic shift in conservation thinking within KAZA. They demonstrate that livelihoods are not an add-on to conservation; they are the architecture that makes conservation possible.

Communities are not passive beneficiaries, but active co-designers of a landscape where food security, ecological health, and corridor integrity advance together. Conservation outcomes are by-products of the livelihood-focused community initiatives.

As WWF Namibia and partners move into the next phase, the focus will be on scaling these models across additional corridors, strengthening market partnerships, and deepening private sector involvement. With each investment in household resilience, it is hoped that the KAZA landscape will become more secure for people, wildlife, and the ecosystems that bind them.

The EU 'Green Growth for KAZA project' hands over vehicle to CLAWS, Botswana

The Kavango Zambezi Trans Frontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) Secretariat, together with its partners World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Sustainable Finance Coalition (SFC), officially handed over a project vehicle to Communities Living Among Wildlife Sustainably (CLAWS), Botswana under the European Union Delegation-funded 'Green Growth for KAZA project'.

CLAWS is a locally based non-governmental organisation (NGO) working to enhance human–wildlife coexistence.



The organisation uses an integrated approach that combines wildlife research and technological innovation with community-centered solutions that enhance safety and support livelihoods, particularly through traditional cattle herding practices. Together with its partners, CLAWS supports communities to construct both permanent and mobile predator-proof livestock kraals and to reinforce traditional kraals in high-conflict areas. These fenced enclosures are designed to protect cattle and goats from potential carnivore attacks, helping to safeguard livelihoods while promoting coexistence between people and wildlife. They are primarily designed to prevent cattle breaking out when harassed by carnivores.

As human populations grow, wildlife habitats are increasingly fragmented, bringing people and wildlife into closer contact. Large carnivores often enter human-inhabited areas and prey on livestock, assets of major economic and cultural importance to rural communities.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, on behalf of Mr. Boatametse Modukanele- Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Mr. Michael Molaodi noted that the dynamics of the region pose challenges in areas classified as red zones by the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture.

“This vehicle will contribute to the tremendous work being undertaken by CLAWS on Commodity-Based Trade (CBT) beef models that support human–wildlife coexistence,” he said.

Honorable Itumeleng Kelebetseng, Chairman of the Northwest District Council officially welcomed the handover of the vehicle, emphasizing the importance of promoting coexistence between wildlife and people and assured project partners of continued government support.

KAZA TFCA Secretariat Executive Director, Dr Nyambe Nyambe, highlighted that the involvement of CLAWS, with support from the EU Delegation, reflects a deliberate focus on green growth within KAZA, combining strategic vision with practical implementation.

“This vehicle will enable the Wildlife Veterinarian to operate more effectively across the vast and complex landscape, supporting disease surveillance, response, and prevention at the livestock–wildlife interface,” he said.

Ms. Catja Orford, CLAWS Botswana Programme Director, extended appreciation to the project’s collaborating partners for supporting the implementation of the shared KAZA vision.

“This vehicle will support our ongoing work in engaging partner communities in the eastern panhandle to adopt strategic herding and grazing practices. These best farming practices will help mitigate human–wildlife conflict, improve the health of our rangelands, and slow down the spread of diseases at the wildlife–livestock interface,” she said.

The project vehicle will enable more efficient access to remote communities and conflict hotspots, timely responses to human–wildlife conflict incidents, and improved monitoring of conservation interventions.

WWF Zimbabwe supports conservation efforts in Hwange National Park



WWF Zimbabwe officially handed over an off-road vehicle, a tractor, and communication equipment to strengthen the mobility and operational capacity of the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks) in the Sinamatella–Hwange landscape, during World Wildlife Day commemorations.

The equipment will support real-time coordination for species protection and improve response to problem-animal incidents.

The donation includes two WiFi kits, an all-in-one desktop computer, a 55-inch monitor screen, and WiFi coverage-boosting equipment. These tools are expected to improve communication, strengthen coordination between teams, support monitoring and reporting, and enhance field operations in protected areas. The vehicle and tractor will assist with on-the-ground conservation work, while the ICT equipment will strengthen connectivity and information management.

The handover took place during the commemoration of World Wildlife Day, which WWF Zimbabwe celebrated alongside partners and stakeholders under the theme *“Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Conserving Health, Heritage and Livelihoods.”*

The ZimParks Director General, Prof. Edson Gandiwa expressed appreciation for the support.

“We thank WWF Zimbabwe for its generous donation today, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your support and contribution to wildlife conservation,” he said.

Speaking after the handover, WWF in KAZA Communications Manager, Vongai Makamure reaffirmed WWF Zimbabwe’s commitment to conserving nature for people and the planet.

“The work of conservation goes beyond animals and landscapes,” she said. “It also includes protecting the plants that sustain our health systems, cultural identity, and rural livelihoods, as well as the ecosystems that support the wildlife we value.”

The Hwange National Park landscape, particularly the Sinamatella area, is an important biodiversity habitat that supports a wide range of wildlife species. The region is facing increasing pressures from climate change, illegal wildlife trade, and growing human–wildlife conflict. These challenges require stronger coordination, improved field mobility, and enhanced communication systems to support effective conservation efforts.

The equipment is expected to help address some of these challenges by improving operational efficiency and enabling faster responses to conservation needs in the field. Strengthening communication systems will also support better information sharing between rangers, park managers, and conservation partners.

Since the mid-1980s, WWF Zimbabwe has worked closely with ZimParks, government institutions, rural district councils, and local communities to strengthen conservation efforts across the country.

Reconnecting corridors: How the buffalo fence enables landscape restoration in Bwabwata National Park, Namibia



Building a fence to remove another may sound counter-intuitive, but in the Bwabwata National Park landscape it is becoming a crucial step toward restoring wildlife movement and repairing long-fragmented corridors within the KAZA Transfrontier Conservation Area.

Here, carefully designed infrastructure is being used not to divide landscapes, but to reconnect them.

With support from the WWF KAZA Dreamfund Corridors Project, strategic financial and technical assistance was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, through the Directorate of Veterinary Services, and to the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism to rehabilitate approximately 15 kilometres of the Buffalo Fence along the western boundary of Bwabwata National Park. The upgraded fence now operates as a controlled, double-fenced and electrified veterinary barrier.

The wider purpose of this intervention lies in what it makes possible. By meeting animal disease control requirements, particularly for Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBP), a long-standing cattle disease that has shaped fencing decisions in the region, the Buffalo Fence creates the conditions required for the eventual removal of a significant part of the southern Bwabwata National Park cordon fence, which stretches for about 170 kilometres along the Botswana border.

For decades, this cordon fence has restricted wildlife movement and weakened Bwabwata's role as a vital link between Namibia, Angola, Botswana, Zambia.

For local cattle-owning families, the benefits are also tangible. Progress toward reclassifying the Mutc'iku–Shamangorwa landscape from a Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) red zone to a

recognised Protection Zone is restoring access to formal livestock markets for the first time in more than a decade.

This shift supports household incomes while aligning livestock management with broader conservation goals.

At the same time, the intervention will reopen pathways for wildlife. Elephants, buffaloes and other wide-ranging species that rely on seasonal movement could once again move more freely across borders, strengthening ecological resilience across the wider KAZA landscape.

Equally important is the governance process underpinning the work. Ongoing engagement with Traditional Authorities is aligning land governance decisions with corridor protection and long-term community interests, reinforcing trust between institutions and local custodians. As fencing is realigned, opportunities for wildlife-based livelihoods expand across both core and surrounding areas.

In Bwabwata, the Buffalo Fence illustrates how practical solutions can lead to transformative change. By aligning veterinary compliance with ecological restoration and livelihood benefits, the intervention is helping turn a once-divided landscape into one where wildlife can move freely, and communities can thrive alongside it.

Empowering the youth to protect nature



Many young people in the Chidobe community, just outside Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, felt helpless and unsure of how they could address growing environmental challenges, including waste pollution, the loss of trees, pressure on wildlife, and the changing climate. Most of them believed environmental issues were too big for them to solve, and they did not know where to begin. New opportunities began to open for them through the WWF Youth Engagement Programme (YEP), which seeks to empower young people with the knowledge, confidence, and tools to protect nature and lead change in their own communities.

Eighteen young people from different backgrounds were selected to join the programme. Some were students hoping to build a better future, others were unemployed youths looking for purpose, and a few were already active community volunteers eager to expand their impact. What they all shared was a deep desire to do more for their environment.

With support from WWF, they formed three groups and began shaping community projects to reduce waste, protect wildlife, restore nature, raise awareness about climate change, and create sustainable income initiatives such as recycling and other nature-positive campaigns. As they worked together, they appreciated teamwork, built communication skills, and trust in one another. Friendships formed, and a new network of young conservation champions emerged across Chidobe and Victoria Falls. The youths are now carrying out clean-up campaigns, awareness sessions in schools, and planning new community-based conservation projects. Others are preparing to apply the skills they learned to future jobs and opportunities, confident that they now have something valuable to offer.

“When I joined, I felt shy and unsure,” recalls 21-year-old Primrose Moyo. “But I told myself, maybe this is the chance I have been waiting for to actually help my community.”

The youths learned about leadership, conservation, climate change, waste management, and community action. But more importantly, they discovered their own voices and realised that they had the power to make a difference.

Gerald Nkosinabo Ngwenya (25) reflected, “I didn’t realise that actions like burning waste or cutting down trees affect our future. Now I understand that the environment needs us, and we need it too.”

This new understanding helped the youths see environmental problems as opportunities for action, teamwork, and innovation. This shift in mindset inspired them to think about what they could do immediately, within their communities.

Lorraine Mungamba (18) explained, “For the first time, I realised that we, the youth can lead change. We don’t have to wait for anyone; we can start with what we have.”

Promoting Community-based conservation in KAZA



From 9-11 March 2026, WWF Namibia co-hosted a regional Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) workshop in Kasane, Botswana, funded by the Darwin Innovation Fund and WWF UK, bringing together 33 practitioners and stakeholders from Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe to reflect on the Enabling Conditions Tool (ECT) to gauge the enabling environment for CBNRM.

CBNRM faces many challenges across KAZA, related to governance and flow of benefits to households. The ECT will help identify shortcomings and help chart a road ahead for improved community conservation of various natural resources (wildlife, forests, NTFP, fisheries etc) in KAZA.

Organised in collaboration with WWF country offices in Zambia and Zimbabwe and the KAZA-TFCA Secretariat, the workshop brought together people working across policy, programme design and on-the-ground implementation. While participants came from different contexts, they were united by a shared understanding that lasting conservation outcomes depend not only on strong ideas, but on the conditions that allow communities to meaningfully lead and benefit from conservation.

Discussions unfolded in a relaxed but focused atmosphere, with participants openly sharing experiences from their own countries. Conversations moved beyond technical solutions to explore common challenges and opportunities, including how rights are devolved to communities, how benefits are shared fairly, and how collaboration between government, civil society and community institutions can be strengthened. The regional setting allowed countries to learn from one another while reflecting on how more consistent approaches could be developed across KAZA.

At the centre of these conversations was the ECT, which provided a shared framework for reflection and dialogue. Participants engaged with the tool as a learning space rather than an assessment exercise, offering practical ideas to make it simpler, more accessible and better suited to supporting adaptive decision-making at community level. This collaborative approach reflected a growing shift towards learning-based conservation practice that evolves through experience rather than compliance.

The workshop concluded with agreement to pilot the tool in seven selected sites across KAZA countries. In Namibia, pilot areas will help test how the tool can be applied within local conservation structures and inform its further refinement.

For WWF Namibia, this work reinforces commitment to evidence-based, inclusive and collaborative conservation. By supporting shared learning and regional cooperation, the workshop contributes to stronger community stewardship and more resilient conservation systems.

Conservation workshop held in Angola



A high-level conservation workshop was organised by INBAC – National Institute of Biodiversity and Conservation Areas (Ministry of Environment) with International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF) and Rob Walton Foundation in Luanda, Angola at the end of March. It brought together senior representatives from organizations and leaders working in protected area management and landscape conservation in Africa including FZS, TNC, WCS, African Parks, Peace Parks Foundation, ACADIR, and WWF.

This provided WWF with an opportunity to participate in high-level discussions on the future of conservation in Angola, focusing on protected area management, partnerships, and long-term delivery. The workshop also enabled WWF to engage with key partners and reaffirm its commitment to collaborative, credible conservation solutions grounded in long-term regional experience.

Exploring approaches for scaling climate finance



Lusaka Climate Finance Week held over three days in March, provided opportunities for strategic dialogue, to explore practical approaches for scaling climate finance, strengthening institutions, and connecting project developers with financiers to accelerate investment.

A key milestone of the event was the official launch of the Zambia Climate Finance Unit (CFU) under the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, marking a significant step toward building a robust pipeline of investment-ready projects and improving access to climate finance.

The event underscored the importance of strong partnerships, effective institutions, and innovative financing solutions in advancing climate action and supporting Zambia's transition toward a climate-resilient, sustainable future.

Introducing the 'Green Growth for KAZA' project team

The EU NaturAfrica funded 'Green Growth for KAZA' programme, is managed by a consortium of the KAZA Secretariat (Lead), WWF and the Sustainable Finance Coalition. WWF's role focuses on the conservation and part of the green economy components, as described below.

Teodensia Thomas serves as a Project Administrative Assistant for the EU NaturAfrica Programme. She has extensive experience in supporting donor-funded projects across Africa, working through a variety of regional and international partnerships. Teodensia is passionate about using finance and project management as tools to strengthen community-driven initiatives. Her work has consistently focused on supporting sustainable, long-term development impact - values that align closely with WWF's mission.



Dr. Peter Scheren is leading the development of the KAZA TFCA Conservation Strategy and Action Plan. In this role, he is working closely with partners across Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe to help shape a shared vision and practical pathway for conservation and sustainable development across one of the world's most important transboundary landscapes.

With more than 25 years of experience in environmental planning and conservation across Africa, Peter brings a strong track record in guiding complex, multi-country processes. He has worked with organizations including WWF, UNDP, and UNEP, and led WWF Africa's Ecological Futures Programme, including work on green growth opportunities in KAZA. Known for his collaborative and evidence-driven approach, he has supported the development of various transboundary land- and seascape strategies in Eastern, Western, Southern and Central Africa, helping to align diverse partners around shared goals for people and nature.



Sophia Mulundika is a sustainable finance specialist with a strong record in mobilising capital for nature-based and climate-positive investments across Southern Africa. She serves as the Regional Lead for the Bankable Nature Solutions (BNS) component within the programme. Previously she was Country Programme Lead for WWF Zambia under the Mobilising More for Climate (MoMo4C) initiative. She works at the intersection of conservation and finance, bridging the gap between ecological priorities and investment opportunities to unlock sustainable, scalable impact.

Her work focuses on developing and de-risking pipelines of investable enterprises, supporting businesses to become investment-ready and facilitating partnerships between governments, financial institutions and the private sector to unlock blended finance solutions. Sophia has extensive experience working with donor-funded programmes. She brings a unique blend of financial, policy, and stakeholder engagement expertise, with a passion for aligning investment flows with sustainable development and conservation outcomes.



Dr. Hamfrey Sanhokwe, PhD, is the Integrated Development Planning Manager, leading efforts to support Partner States and non-state actors in updating the Integrated Development Plans for KAZA. His experience as former senior PEPFAR manager suitably equips him for this position.

His work sits at the intersection of diplomacy, strategy development, development planning, and public finance, bringing a systems-oriented approach to complex, multi-stakeholder environments. With a strong focus on implementation and governance, Dr. Sanhokwe is committed to strengthening institutional frameworks and ensuring that development plans are both actionable and sustainable.



Strengthening WWF's collective vision for KAZA



In the week of 16 February, the WWF in KAZA team, together with representatives from the three WWF Country Offices (COs – WWF Namibia, WWF Zambia and WWF Zimbabwe) operating in the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA) and partner National Offices (WWF Germany, WWF Netherlands, WWF Switzerland, WWF US), gathered in Itzhi-Tezhi next to Kafue National Park in Zambia for the annual in-person Project Implementation Agreement (PIA) meeting. These annual meetings provide an important opportunity for WWF teams working across KAZA to review progress from the past year, reflect on lessons learned and jointly plan the path ahead. Central to the discussions was a shared commitment to strengthening WWF's contribution to a thriving and well-connected KAZA landscape, one of the world's largest transfrontier conservation areas and a cornerstone of conservation efforts in southern Africa.

The meeting came up with Priority Actions for 2026-27 for the PIA and a workplan for the TFCA Lead, resource mobilisation plan for the WWF in KAZA programme, updated KAZA funding pipeline data with an understanding of funding gaps and thematic and geographic prioritisation of projects/activities.

DID YOU KNOW:

The KAZA TFCA is home to three (3) World Heritage Sites – Victoria Falls (shared by Zambia and Zimbabwe); Okavango Delta (Botswana); Tsodilo Hills (Botswana)

Copyright ©2020 World Wide Fund for Nature, All rights reserved.

Contact Details:

World Wildlife Fund

Linda,

Livingstone

Zambia

Email: vmakamure@wwf.org.zw

Sharesite: wwfkaza.org