



WWF Namibia newsletter

April - May 2025

KAZA PIA Summit: Strengthening Conservation Efforts

The 2025 in-person Programme Implementation Agreement (PIA) team meeting took place from 7 to 11 April 2025 in Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe.

You might be wondering, what is the PIA? It brings together all WWF partner offices, including National Organisations (NOs) supporting joint WWF efforts in KAZA, as well as Country Offices (COs) in the region: WWF Namibia (Juliane Zeidler), WWF Zambia (Nalucha Nganga), and WWF Zimbabwe (Itai Chibaya), alongside the WWF Regional Office for Africa (ROA). Together, they form the steering team for WWF's work in KAZA.



The Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) is one of the world's largest conservation landscapes where WWF is actively engaged. Spanning an area the size of France across five countries, KAZA is managed collaboratively by these nations. The KAZA Secretariat, based in Kasane, Botswana, plays a central role, and WWF works closely with the Secretariat to drive impactful conservation efforts.

Highlights from the 2025 PIA Meeting

This year's PIA meeting focused on :

- Assessing annual work progress
- Reviewing strategic priorities
- Exploring WWF's niche role in KAZA's success



A key highlight was the KAZA “reset” workshop, facilitated by Jon Hutton, a long standing WWF expert. The session, designed to reassess WWF's long-term operations and programmatic effectiveness, generated valuable insights for shaping future strategic decisions.

Additionally, Russell Taylor and Madelene Mostert, WWF Namibia's Operations Director, provided a compelling historical review of WWF's engagement in KAZA, showcasing the organization's impactful conservation work over the past decade and beyond.

Special recognition goes to the WWF KAZA team, including Mike Knight, Gordon Homer, Daniel Morais, Norman Rigava, Erdwin Muradzikwa, and Vongai Makamure, for their dedication to organizing and delivering an inspiring meeting that reinforced WWF's commitment to KAZA's conservation goals.

Want to stay updated? Sign up for the WWF KAZA newsletter by reaching out to Vongai at vmakamure@wwf.org.zw

WWF Netherlands Content Collection Trip



From 12-16 April 2025, a team from WWF Netherlands, WWF Namibia and WWF in KAZA embarked on a content collection trip to Namibia's Zambezi Region and Botswana, capturing stories of impact from our work through the KAZA, Dream Fund, and Wildlife Credits projects.

This journey was not just about documenting change; it was about witnessing first hand how conservation efforts are transforming lives and landscapes. The trip began in Kasane, Botswana, with a visit to the KAZA Secretariat, where discussions centered on regional collaboration for conservation.



From there, the team ventured into Namibia's Zambezi Region, diving deep into the heart of initiatives that support communities and wildlife alike. Three cluster farms showcased how families are tackling food insecurity while improving their livelihoods, growing diverse crops and creating sustainable sources of nutrition and income. Nearby, a dam serving as a vital catchment area stood as a testament to water resource management supporting both people and nature.

In the midst of these successes, the predator-proof kraal demonstrated an innovative approach to protecting livestock from wildlife attacks, an effort that not only safeguards livelihoods but also fosters coexistence between communities and predators.

Further into the region, the team engaged with the Cuando Carnivore Project, where conservationists work to ensure the future of Africa's iconic big cats and wild dogs. At the Sobbe Conservancy office, conversations centered around Wildlife Credits, a system that rewards communities for conserving nature. The stories shared revealed how this model is empowering local residents, providing financial incentives for conservation efforts, and strengthening their connection to the land.



The trip reaffirmed the power of collaboration, innovation, and resilience in conservation. Every project visited underscored the importance of community-driven solutions where protecting nature goes hand-in-hand with improving livelihoods. As these stories are shared more widely, the hope is that they inspire further support and action for a future where people and wildlife thrive together.

African Leadership Institute Seminar: Elevating Professional Writing Excellence

On April 16, 2025, three members of WWF Namibia Simonia Kanyumara, Kosmas Shilongo, and Clementine Masambo had the opportunity to attend the African Leadership Institute (ALI) Professional Writing Skills Summit, hosted by Education Specialist Dr. Florida Beukes at Rock lodge.

This intensive, one-day workshop brought together professionals from various sectors to explore the principles of effective business writing and professional communication. The summit provided not only technical skills but also a platform for meaningful exchange and learning across disciplines.

Dr. Beukes emphasized that professional writing is a critical workplace skill that differs significantly from academic writing. It should be clear, concise, and purpose-driven, with every document tailored to its audience.



Participants gained practical tools and insights, including:

- Key Features of Professional Writing: Clarity, formality, audience awareness, accuracy, correct grammar, and structured formatting.
- Paragraph Writing Techniques: Using the PEEL method (Point, Explain, Evidence, Link) to structure ideas clearly and logically.
- Document & Report Structure: Understanding how to organize executive summaries, findings, and recommendations in business reports.
- The 7 Cs of Communication: Writing that is Clear, Concise, Coherent, Complete, Concrete, Courteous, and Correct.
- Self-Editing and Proofreading: The importance of refining work for clarity, consistency, and professionalism.

One of the most impactful sessions involved drafting a formal email to stakeholders addressing a delay in a public service project. This exercise reinforced the importance of tone, empathy, and transparency when delivering sensitive information.

This summit has significantly strengthened their communication skills and enhanced their confidence in professional writing. Beyond the technical aspects, the experience encouraged stronger cross-sector collaboration and personal growth.

A closing note from Dr. Beukes: "You have to know what your priorities are and focus on them."



Collaborating for Conservation: Namibia for Life's Progress and Next Steps

From 22-24 April 2025, stakeholders from across the conservation and finance sectors in and beyond Namibia gathered online for an engaging discussion on the progress of Namibia for Life (N4L), a Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) initiative. The meeting provided crucial updates on this groundbreaking effort, which secures long-term support for communal conservancies, ensuring lasting social, economic, and wildlife benefits for both people and nature.

The 3-day session opened with a comprehensive overview of the PFP approach and N4L's current status, reaffirming the commitment to sustainable funding and conservation impact. The discussion then shifted to N4L's governance structure, highlighting the mechanisms in place to ensure transparency, efficiency, and long-term success.



Participants received updates on key assessments, including the Community Conservation Fund of Namibia (CCFN) assessment and due diligence process, as well as the SEDF screening and outcomes, both critical components in evaluating financial and operational readiness. Extension Services (ES) updates provided insight into how technical support continues to strengthen conservancy management and local engagement. The financial model discussion reaffirmed N4L's stability, ensuring resources are allocated effectively for maximum conservation and community benefits.

As the initiative moved forward, stakeholders reviewed closing and disbursement conditions, outlining the next steps required for funding execution. Additionally, the Socioeconomic Development Fund (SEDF) update highlighted ongoing efforts to drive community development alongside conservation goals. To conclude, participants explored communications strategies, reinforcing the importance of transparent, inclusive engagement with local and international stakeholders.

Safeguarding Namibia's Protected Areas: Financing the Future



Securing sustainable funding is essential for long-term conservation, and Namibia's Financing4Future initiative is leading the way. On 24th April 2025, WWF Namibia Country Director Dr. Juliane Zeidler joined a public panel discussion in Windhoek to discuss Biodiversity Finance (BIOFIN), emphasising the critical role of strategic conservation funding in protecting Namibia's natural heritage.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT), WWF, and German Development Bank (KfW), BIOFIN builds on existing efforts to secure lasting financial support for conservation. It complements the UNDP-led BIOFIN process, which is shaping Namibia's Biodiversity Finance Plan and the third National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP III), to ensure stable financial backing for biodiversity protection.

On 07 May 2025, key stakeholders gathered at the Community Conservation and Inspiration Hub (CCI Hub), to shape the future of the Wildlife Credits Namibia programme. The workshop focused on transitioning the initiative from a project into a national programme, building on insights from last year's discussions and the findings of the project evaluation report.

Taking an interactive approach, participants worked through a structured process:

- Identifying key functions necessary for the transition
- Defining specific actions required under each function
- Assigning roles to organizations responsible for implementation

By establishing clear mandates and operational structures, the programme aims to strengthen governance, efficiency, accountability, and long-term sustainability. The discussions fostered alignment among partners, positioning each stakeholder to contribute effectively to the programme's success.

The workshop brought together 20 in person participants, including representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT), the Namibian Association of Community-Based Natural Resource Management Support Organisations (NACSO) and its Working Groups, Tourism Supporting Conservation (TOSCO), Ultimate Safaris, the Namibian Nature Foundation (NNF), and the Community Conservation Fund of Namibia (CCFN), with Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) joining remotely.

Through collaborative action and strategic planning, Namibia's Wildlife Credits programme is taking significant strides toward ensuring lasting benefits for conservation and local communities.



Bwabwata National Park Memorandum of Agreement Action Plan Development Meeting

On May 6th, a significant meeting took place between the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism (MEFT) and the Kyramacan Association (KA), aimed at formulating a comprehensive action plan for the implementation of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that was signed by both parties last year. This action plan serves as a crucial roadmap, outlining essential management measures necessary to ensure full compliance with the current park management plan.



Among the high-level actions proposed are the following:

1. Establishing an Implementation Committee: A dedicated committee will be formed to oversee the execution of this MOA, facilitating clear communication and coordination among all stakeholders involved.
2. Finalizing and Implementing the Livelihood Improvement and Cattle Removal Strategy: This initiative focuses on enhancing the livelihoods of the local community while also addressing the pressing need to manage cattle populations, ensuring a balance between ecological conservation and economic development.
3. Introducing a Permit System and Maintaining a Resident Register: To regulate access and usage of park resources, a structured permit system will be established along with a comprehensive register for residents, promoting transparency and accountability.

These collaborative efforts, spearheaded by MEFT, KA, and other key stakeholders, are set to foster sustainable practices and enhance the overall management of the park, contributing to the preservation of its natural heritage for future generations.

A Mother Elephant's Journey: Science Meets Conservation in Namibia



In Namibia's Kunene Region, a mother elephant was collared last month as part of the Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) Elephant project, supported by WWF-US. This vital research will help track her movements, enabling better management of human-wildlife conflict and protection of the species.

Meanwhile, her injured calf, recently wounded in a lion attack, received much-needed treatment thanks to WWF Namibia and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism (MEFT). Veterinarians attended to the calf, significantly boosting its chances of recovery.

This effort was made possible through the Skeleton Coast Etosha Conservation Bridge, funded by the Legacy Landscape Fund (LLF) project, strengthening both wildlife protection and conservation research.

Want to read the full story? Visit our [Facebook page](#) for more details on this dramatic rescue and the future of elephant conservation in Namibia.



GCF CREE Pipeline Development Engagement Field Trip



On 9 May 2025, a field visit was conducted to Ovito Village as part of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) supported project titled Climate Resilient Enduring Earth (CREE). The purpose of the trip was to gather information, assess the livelihoods of the community, and evaluate previously implemented climate-resilient initiatives.

This report provides a brief summary of the activities conducted during two separate occasions by the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO), World Wildlife Fund (WWF Namibia and WWF-USA), and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT).



An outline of the key activities conducted during the trip is stated below:

- Site visits to the clusters in Ovitoto village community-managed areas which included the Oruuwa, Okomakwara and Okaue posts.
- Meetings with local communities and stakeholders (traditional authorities, farmers, business owners and vast community members)
- Observations on environmental conservation practices. (Site-seeing)
- Information collection on common themes in terms of business ideas and community



Key Findings and Observations based on the trip:

- Community Engagement: Level of participation from the community was exceptional and involvement in identifying business opportunities initiatives.
- Resource Management: Conservation efforts, biodiversity status, and resource sustainability are well recognized concepts in the area. However, the communities did stress that the Ovitoto area does not have a lot or significant presence wildlife in the area thus they do not compare with other conservancies in the country resulting in a lack of eco-tourism start-ups.
- Challenges Identified: During the question-and-answer session, meeting participants were able to express their concerns ranging from a lack of power (electricity), water for household and irrigation purposes, as well as network coverage which hinders their daily livelihoods.
- Other social concerns were difficulties in reaching amenities due to long distances and insufficient provision of services.



One of the planned engagement activities was the 'Card and Loan Game', which was aimed at assisting the participants with identifying potential sustainable business ideas. The game was an eye-opener, especially with helping individuals understand and visualize how loans work, and how individuals overlook the fine prints when it comes to loans, often binding oneself to unpractical contracts and conditions.

SADC TFCA Summit 2025



The recently concluded Southern African Development Community (SADC) Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA) Summit, held in Harare, Zimbabwe from 19–23 May 2025, commemorated 25 years of TFCA development in the region. The Summit aimed to reaffirm political commitment and elevate TFCA initiatives across the SADC region.

The key objectives of the Summit included:

1. Strengthening Political Commitment for the TFCA Programme

The Summit celebrated progress made in TFCA development and promoted the expansion of the network. It also aimed to secure renewed commitments from Heads of State and international partners through the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), agreements, and potentially new treaties.

2. Promoting Investment in TFCAs

A unified agenda was set to drive greater investment in TFCAs, contributing to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Activities included investment forums, public-private dialogues, and discussions on improving land and air access to and within TFCAs.

3. Enhancing Cross-Sectoral Integration for TFCA Development

Emphasizing TFCAs as critical economic pillars for rural communities, the Summit highlighted the vital role of local stakeholders. It also underscored the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration and public-private partnerships in advancing TFCA objectives.

These goals are aligned with the broader SADC TFCA Strategy 2023–2033, which seeks to promote regional integration, biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods, climate resilience, and cross sectoral collaboration.



The Summit also provided a platform for stakeholders to reflect on achievements, confront challenges, and present progress to the SADC Heads of State. This culminated in a Summit Declaration reaffirming member states commitment to strengthening and expanding the TFCA programme.

A notable highlight from the event was the participation of our very own WWF Namibia Programme Deputy Director for Wildlife and Landscapes, Mendes Vinte, during the KAZA SADC TFCA session on Day 3. He led a group discussion titled “Sharing Nature Credits,” featuring Namibia’s innovative wildlife nature credits case study.

In his remarks, Mendes stated:

“Nature credits offer a promising path to link conservation with economic incentives, empowering communities to protect wildlife while benefiting from sustainable revenue streams. This approach can transform how we fund and manage our protected areas.”

Delegates engaged in dynamic discussions on how nature based credits can support biodiversity conservation, generate sustainable jobs, and increase community participation within TFCA’s ultimately helping to ensure long term conservation success and deeper regional integration.



To learn more about the SADC TFCA Summit, visit the WWF [Zimbabwe Facebook page](#) for highlights and key takeaways

Strengthening Voices for Africa's Landscapes: WWF Communicators Gather in Nairobi

From strategy to storytelling, the WWF Africa Landscape Communicators Forum held in Nairobi, Kenya from 20-24 May 2025 was a hub of learning, exchange, and collaboration. Maggie Kampulu represented WWF Namibia at the forum. Over four days, communicators from WWF landscapes across East and Southern Africa came together to sharpen their skills, share insights, and collectively shape a stronger, more strategic approach to landscape communications.



This was not just another gathering it was an immersive experience designed to push the boundaries of how conservation stories are told. Attendees explored what's working across different landscapes, engaging in practical sessions on everything from social media mastery crafting compelling Reels, Stories, and Live updates to storytelling for impact in written, spoken, and visual form.

The forum also dove into communication strategy development, fundraising and pitching ideas, content planning and gathering, and even drone basics for field content creation. Whether in a workshop or out in the field, communicators connected, exchanged knowledge, and built the foundations of a vibrant, supportive network.



One of the forum's standout achievements was the collaborative development of the Nairobi Gold Standard Guide for Landscape Comms, a living document that captures best practices, lessons learned, and bold ideas to elevate conservation communication.

The energy, creativity, and drive that emerged from this forum will ripple across WWF landscapes, strengthening the way communicators inspire action for nature and people. The connections made, the skills honed, and the ideas sparked in Nairobi will continue shaping the future of conservation storytelling across Africa.

Collaborating for Impact: Insights from a Memorable WWF US Visit



In May 2025, WWF Namibia welcomed esteemed guests from WWF US, fostering valuable collaboration and knowledge exchange. The discussions covered key operational areas, including proposal development, donor budgets, and procurement refinement, aligning with Namibia's upcoming Ops manual. Beyond technical improvements, the conversation also touched on career growth and personal renewal, emphasizing the importance of fresh perspectives in driving meaningful change.

The US Accounting Team: Marthe, Anne Ellyse, and Maria Gabriela worked closely with Namibia's accounting team to strengthen financial systems and operational structures. Through hands ontraining, they provided insights into revenue recognition, income tracking,grantee expenses, and best practices for capitalizing equipment, ensuring continued transparency and efficiency in financial management.



To conclude the visit, our guests explored Etosha National Park, experiencing Namibia's incredible wildlife while gaining firsthand insight into conservation efforts and the role of tourism in supporting local communities. This enriching exchange reinforced the importance of collaboration, strengthened partnerships, and inspired continued growth, ensuring WWF Namibia remains committed to evolving and refining its impact.



SMART Technology Expands in Namibia: Transforming Conservation



From tracking endangered species to improving law enforcement, SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) is revolutionising conservation in Namibia. April marked a major expansion of SMART technology, enhancing its role in protecting wildlife and natural habitats.

Thanks to the KfW-funded Integrated Wildlife Protection Project (IWPP), several key initiatives were implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) and the North Carolina Zoological Society.



On 2 April, IWPP hosted a SMART dashboard inception workshop to develop a real-time data visualisation tool for MEFT. This dashboard, led by North Carolina Zoo, will enhance adaptive management practices across protected areas. From 3–5 April, MEFT held a SMART Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop in Windhoek, equipping 18 SMART champions with skills in SMART Mobile, SMART Connect, and SMART 7. The training strengthens MEFT's commitment to expanding SMART technology in national parks, coastal parks, and wildlife protection services.

In a ground breaking move, SMART was deployed for farm inspections for the first time, helping MEFT's Permit Office enhance environmental regulation enforcement and resource management. A tailored SMART database was developed, improving efficiency and reducing errors in inspections.

IWPP continued its impact in May, supporting the first Annual General Meeting of the Black Rhino Association of Namibia and rhino dehorning operations in Etosha National Park.

Learn more about SMART's role in conservation here: [SMART Transformation Namibia](#)



A Fond Farewell to Cherished Colleagues

April marked a bittersweet moment as we said so long but not goodbye to some incredible colleagues who have played an immeasurable role in advancing our inclusive conservation mission.

Hertha Itembu, Selma Gebhard and Frieda Mandume have each left a lasting impact through their dedication, passion, and tireless efforts in protecting Namibia's natural heritage. Their work has inspired us, strengthened our shared goals, and helped shape a brighter future for conservation.



While we will miss them deeply, their legacy remains with us, and we are grateful for the invaluable contributions they have made. We wish them success in their next adventures and know that their journey in conservation is far from over.

Thank you, Hertha, Selma, and Frieda; you will always be part of our Panda family!



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