

THE ZAMBEZI SOCIETY

www.zamsoc.org

BULLETIN

MAR/APRIL 2006

FUND-RAISING

As the Society's Director has often pointed out, the politically-inspired withdrawal of donor interest and funding for Zimbabwe-based conservation, coupled with huge local economic challenges is unfortunate and does not bode well for the wildlife and wildernesses of the Zambezi basin.

This situation has forced The Zambezi Society to rethink its funding strategies. The establishment of our online Credit Card donation facility is one of the results, as is the recent publication of a number of publicity articles in international magazines. We have also begun to hold breakfast meetings with local business leaders and industrialists whose organisations depend on the very values that we are trying to conserve in the Zambezi basin. We hope soon to be able to report evidence of substantial support and commitment from this sector.

WILDERNESS TRAINING

Plans for the Zambezi Society's two-week training course in *Wilderness Concepts, Awareness and Management* to be held at RIFA camp on the Zambezi River this September in partnership with the Wilderness Action Group of South Africa are shaping up. This is the first time such a course has been run in the Zambezi region. One of its key outputs will be to develop a basic framework for a *Zambezi Wilderness Code of Conduct* aimed at influencing the tourism and hunting industries on both sides of the river.

The Society has identified 20 course participants from Zambia and Zimbabwe whom we believe are key to influencing how the Zambezi's wild areas should be managed in the future and how its wilderness values should be conserved. Invitees will include personnel from National Parks on both sides of the river; tourism representatives; training officers and curriculum developers and traditional leaders. Two experienced trainers from the Wilderness Action Group will run the course which is accredited to the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal.

Appeal for top-up fund

Most of the funding for this wilderness course is being provided by the US-based WILD Foundation (which last year enabled the Zambezi Society to send four participants to the World Wilderness Congress in Alaska.) However, we have a shortfall of about US\$5000 to cover costs. If there is anyone out there who thinks they may be able to help us fill this gap with a contribution (however small), we would be most grateful to hear from them. Please e-mail us or contribute online with an International Credit Card to our WILDERNESS fund at <http://www.zamsoc.org/html/activities.html>

BULAWAYO PROJECTS OFFICE

Duncan Purchase, our Projects Director has moved into a new office in Bulawayo at 130a Josiah Tongogara Avenue, between 14th and 13th Street. The land line number is +263 (0)9 70367 or he can be reached on his cell, +263 (0)91 242272. We would very much like to thank *The Grass Valley Trust* for providing the necessary finance to lease this office space for an initial period of three years.

RHINO MONITORING PROJECT - UPDATE

The Intensive Black Rhino Monitoring Project in the Matusadona National Park is still very active in the field. The project was suspended for the month of March due to the very thick vegetation, which was making it very difficult to locate rhino. The aim of the project is to visually locate all the black rhino in Matusadona National Park in preparation for an intensive management operation scheduled for July/August 2006. We have a dedicated team of three experienced trackers in the field, supervised by Godwin Vhurumuku, our project co-ordinator, who is now stationed at Tashinga. The project is made

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possible by financial support from the UK-based organisation Save the Rhino International. The Zambezi Society (UK) is providing funds for fuel, to assist with Ranger and Tracker deployment.

RHINO DONORS VISIT

Save the Rhino International (SRI) visited Zimbabwe at the end of February this year, to see various project sites. Director (Cathy Dean) and Founder (Dave Stirling) drove up through the back of the park with Duncan Purchase, and spent a weekend at Tashinga appraising the Black Rhino Intensive Monitoring Project. They were very fortunate to see a black rhino on the foreshore in front of the lodges just as they arrived. Our experienced trackers showed their skills by locating a mother and calf the next day. The visit was extremely productive, giving SRI the opportunity to witness first hand the dedication and experience of the field staff managed by the Society and to appreciate the very strong working relationship which exists with the senior management on station. Duncan held very productive discussions with Cathy and Dave, the result of which was that SRI are to commit £10,000 to the Society's ongoing monitoring programme in Matusadona for 2006/2007.

CHEETAH TRANSLOCATION – 10 YEARS ON

In October 2005, Dr. Gianetta Purchase and Godwin Vhurumuku completed a year-long follow up study of cheetah translocated to Matusadona 10 years ago. The study was made possible by a grant from FFI through its partnership with Rio Tinto plc. A report was submitted to Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, and an article has been accepted for the IUCN Cat News Newsletter for publication. Results of the study suggest that there has in fact been a slight increase in cheetah numbers in Matusadona, but more importantly, the community surrounding Matusadona have not been affected by what were originally "problem cheetah". This is the third study that the Zambezi Society has carried out on this cheetah population, an indication of long-term commitment to conservation issues.

MOU WITH ZIMBABWE PWMA

The Zambezi Society has initiated discussions with the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority to formalise a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations. We feel that as our collaboration with the PWMA continues to grow from strength to strength, that there is now a need to enter a more formal relationship. We are in the process of drawing up the first draft document that will then be submitted for review by the PWMA.

ZAMSOC UK OBJECTIVES RE-WORDED

In order to achieve conformity of the Zambezi Society UK objectives with those at Head Office, formal application to the Charities Commission in the UK is required, with prior circulation to all UK members of the proposed changes and adequate time for objections to be registered.

The current ZSUK objectives (which have existed since 1992 and are now require an update) are:

"The Company's objects are to promote the conservation, research and sound environmental use of the Zambesi river and adjacent land areas and to initiate research on threatened species to monitor development activities, to advance the education of the public in Zimbabwe and the United Kingdom in the fields of conservation ecology and other related environmental sciences and in furtherance of the objects, but not otherwise the Company may exercise the following powers:-"

We propose that these be deleted, and replaced with the following:

"The Company's objects are to promote the conservation, research and sound environmental use of the Zambezi river basin and adjacent land areas; to initiate research on threatened species and to monitor development activities; to advance the education of the public of the Zambezi Basin

States (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe) and the United Kingdom in the fields of conservation, ecology and other related environmental sciences; but not otherwise the company may exercise the following powers:

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- a. To conserve the Zambezi Basin wilderness and promote recognition of its values;
- b. To ensure that conservation is incorporated into planning for the Zambezi river basin as a whole;
- c. To encourage people to find ways of using the natural resources of the Zambezi basin without destroying them;
- d. To purchase, take on lease or in exchange.....etc, etc"

We feel it necessary to make these alterations in order to ensure that the ZSUK objectives match those of the parent organisation in Zimbabwe and meet the Charities Commission Criteria.

Kindly e-mail ZSUK Director, Adrian Wilson at zambeziuk@zamsoc.org if you have any comment.

Visit our website at: www.zamsoc.org

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