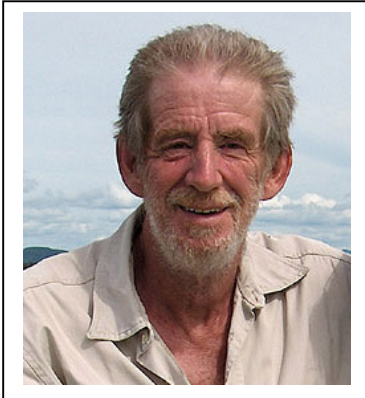


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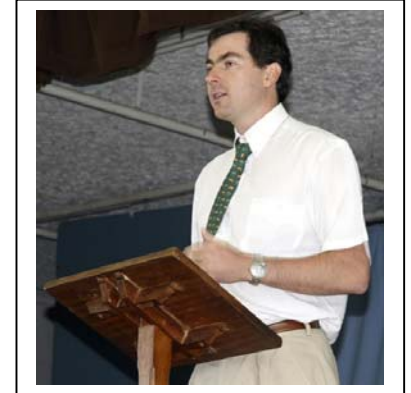
BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2006



CHANGE OF DIRECTOR MARKS 25 YEARS

On 1st December 2006, as planned during the transitional period of the past two years, Duncan Purchase (pictured right) will take over the position of Director of The Zambezi Society from Dick Pitman (pictured left), who has directed the Society since its inception in 1982. Dick will be retiring from the post at the end of this year, thus allowing for a handover period of a month. He will continue to be active in guiding the Society through a leading position on the Zamsoc Board. Next year a number of activities and events are planned to celebrate The Zambezi Society's 25th Anniversary and the changes that it heralds.



ZAMBEZI WILDERNESS TRAINING COURSE

The Zambezi Society held the first ever Zambezi-based training course in *Wilderness Concepts and Practice* between 17th and 28th September at the Zimbabwe Hunters' Association's RIFA Educational camp near Chirundu, on the Zambezi River. This was a resounding success.

Twenty carefully-selected Parks Authority policy-makers, senior wardens and wardens, (15 from Zimbabwe and 5 from Zambia – pictured below) benefited from the training which was organised by The Society and facilitated by the Wilderness Action Group of South Africa (WAG) with funding from the WILD Foundation (USA).

The 10-day course gave the participants greater understanding of the values and benefits of wilderness for people and biodiversity conservation in the Zambezi region and, through relevant case studies and practical work, provided ideas and inspiration for application of this understanding in Park planning. It also gave the South African facilitators, Bill Bainbridge (pictured extreme left) and Drummond Densham (front right), new insights into existing Zambezi wilderness zonations, the vast extent of these areas and the challenges facing wilderness conservation and its practitioners in this region. These challenges were discussed at the end of the training and possible ways forward were discussed.



Participants were given the opportunity to evaluate the courses via a questionnaire. The results show that the training was very well received, the exercise well worth the expense in time, effort and resources, and that a positive new perspective on wilderness conservation in Park management had taken root. Some of the participants' comments are given below:

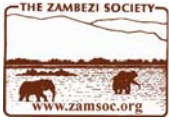
- “The whole course was overwhelming and very educative and I look forward to more courses of this nature. The idea is very encouraging and valuable”
- “This short course in wilderness management has been an eye-opener to protected area managers in Southern Africa, particularly in Zimbabwe and Zambia

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- *“I liked the course. It is to a greater extent helpful to protected area managers in general and protected area planners and researchers also. It made me understand the challenges facing the entire Valley and how we can develop our own definitions and management plans for different land uses to satisfy different stakeholders as well as the environment itself.”*
- *“The course is essential for protected area managers and policy makers in the region. Wilderness management should be a component of ALL protected areas and regional planning in modern landscape management.”*
- *“The course has a lot for protected area managers more specially in Southern Africa. These kinds of short courses in wilderness management must be encouraged at all costs. As this is beneficial for both our biodiversity and communities.”*
- *“The wilderness management course has enhanced knowledge of the vital concepts of the subject. This information is going to be used to redo our park plan.”*

A further set of courses has been proposed for 2007 at a venue in Zambia. Funding is to be sourced initially through the Zambian Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) and planning for this between the Zambezi Society and Wilderness Action Group has already begun.

A useful follow-up meeting was held in Harare between representatives of The Zambezi Society, the Wilderness Action Group and the Directorship of the Zimbabwean Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZPWMA) at which future directions for wilderness conservation and training in that country were discussed.

The Society is deeply grateful to the WILD Foundation (USA) for its support in providing most of the funding for this course, and to the Zimbabwe Hunters Association and RIFA Camp for pulling out all the stops in a challenging environment to provide extremely appropriate facilities and excellent catering. Special thanks to Bill Bainbridge and Drummond Densham from the Wilderness Action Group, who ran the programme tirelessly over 10 full days, did the work of four facilitators and inspired everyone with their life-long practical experience of conserving wild places.

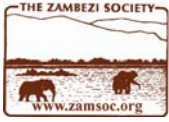
The Society also wishes to thank Curriculum Safari Earth (USA), Cloe Teacher (UK), Walt Brown (USA), Susan MacKenzie (Zambia), Mr Rob Abendanon (South Africa), Dr Ian Player (South Africa), Dave Glynn (Zimbabwe) and Meikles Hotel (Zimbabwe) for their additional support.

CABORA BASSA DAM

The announcement that Portugal has finally handed over its controlling stake in the Cabora Bassa Dam to former colony, Mozambique after a protracted 30-odd year negotiation struggle has potential implications for Zambezi River planning. Mozambique has long used the issue of Portugal's stranglehold over Cabora Bassa as an excuse to fast-track the development of the proposed Mepanda Uncoa hydro-electric dam across the Lupata Gorge on the Zambezi just downstream from the town of Tete. Mozambique's new 85% stake of the existing dam (15% still remains with Portugal) now gives environmental organisations like The Zambezi Society, The Biodiversity Foundation for Africa and the International Crane Foundation, which are worried about the potential impacts of another Zambezi dam at Lupata, a fresh chance to lobby the Maputo government to reconsider its position.



Participants from the National Park Authorities of Zimbabwe and Zambia work on a trans-boundary planning exercise during the wilderness training course.



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The World Commission on Dams, after undertaking painstaking research in the 1990s into the impacts of large dams worldwide, called for the ecological and social impacts of such schemes to be given far more consideration than has hitherto been the case. The Zambezi Society was invited to make a submission to this Commission at the time, and outlined the results of its research into Zambezi Basin wetland biodiversity, (undertaken in partnership with the Biodiversity Foundation for Africa) which revealed that dam construction on the Zambezi river had resulted in major impacts on hydrology and flood regimes, was affecting habitat and species composition and was resulting in the drying up and salination of the wetlands of the Zambezi Delta. "New infrastructure development proposed downstream of Cabora Bassa will worsen the already declining ecological situation in the delta" (IUCN *State of the Environment: Zambezi Basin* 2000).

The Society will be using its newly-formed partner organisation in Mozambique (see below) to lobby for more attention to be paid to the long-term and downstream ecological and social implications of new dam development on the Zambezi.

THE ZAMBEZI SOCIETY IN MOZAMBIQUE

The Zambezi Society has been instrumental in assisting with the formation of an environmental conservation organization in Tete, Mozambique called (in translation) the "Organisation for Environmental Services of the Zambezi". Not only are we represented as members on their equivalent of a Trustee Board but are also providing guidance and advice on the initial structure and framework of this new organisation. The Zambezi Society will link to this partner through a strong Memorandum Of Understanding that will give us the opportunity to be permanently represented in Mozambique while reciprocating with expertise, experience and assistance. We have already identified a Human/Crocodile conflict issue within a Tchuma Tchato community. We will now work on a joint project proposal to investigate mitigation of this conflict and provide solutions on the ground.

VICTORIA FALLS/MOSI-OA-TUNYA DEVELOPMENT CONTROVERSY

A large hotel and Country Club development with an 18-hole golf course is proposed on the Zambian side of the Zambezi River upstream from the Victoria Falls and within both the Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park and the boundary of the joint World Heritage Site. The Zambezi Society has had the opportunity to study the Environmental Impact Assessment for this development and has submitted a statement with a number of comments regarding the proposed development.

Victoria Falls



We query the existence of a Land-Use Management Plan for the Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park and whether the developers have taken cognisance of it. We point out that in the absence of any such Plan, no development with potential impacts on the Park should be allowed to proceed, as it sets an undesirable precedent.

We comment on the unnecessarily large size of the proposed golf-course development and its potential impact on habitat and wildlife movement in the area.

We express the opinion that since this area is of global and regional importance as a World Heritage Site and lies within the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area as well as being a protected National Park on the Zambezi River, stakeholder consultations should have been exhaustive and should have taken place BEFORE the development was approved by any Zambian Authority. The fact that there is public outrage and controversy over this development (including a threat by UNESCO to withdraw World Heritage Status and blacklist Zambian tourism) indicates that public consultations have been neither thorough nor effective.

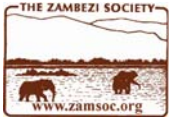
We state that although the Zambezi Society recognises the need for development, it is essential for the future sustainability of tourism in the area that any such development conforms to international and regional conservation needs and that it does not destroy the very biological and aesthetic resources that it is dependent upon.

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MATUSADONA RHINOS

The Zambezi Society's long-running support project for the Matusadona National Park Black Rhino Intensive Protection Zone continues. Our Field Officer, Godwin Vhurumuku (pictured standing third from the left) is stationed at Tashinga along with three Zambezi Society-employed trackers, Bekitembo Mtambo (standing left), Twoboy Khumalo (standing second left) and Daniel Hlabangana (standing right), whose job it is to assist the Parks Authority with monitoring the black rhinos in the park. (The fifth man pictured, is Park Ranger, Douglas Kuramba).

Following on from our 6-day rhino operation in early August this year, during which eight black rhinos were immobilised and fitted with tracking mechanisms to assist with their protection, and had their ears notched for easier identification in the field, we are now implementing our post operation monitoring strategy. All the rhino that we immobilized during the August operation have been sighted at least once to ensure that they are still in good health. We are now working to three main priorities; a) to continue monitoring the rhino already fitted with radio transmitters, b) to gather the movement patterns of those rhino already identified but not immobilized in August and c) to locate and identify other rhino.



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