

April, 2021

Apologies for the long silence... but we've been busy! Loss of revenue during the COVID-19 pandemic has understandably hampered the operations of Zimbabwe's Parks & Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks). We are doing all we can to help protect wildlife and wilderness in **Mana Pools National Park** and to strengthen the capacity of rangers and management in Kariba's **Charara Safari Area**, while other colleagues assist elsewhere. We are fortunate to have a committed Operations team, and a long-established relationship of trust with ZimParks management and rangers in the field. We are particularly grateful to our donors, partners and friends for critical ongoing support.

The Zambezi Society is proud to have played a significant role in helping to complete the Herculean task of successfully reporting to UNESCO (on behalf of Zimbabwe's Man and Biosphere committee) on the first 10 years of the Middle-Zambezi Biosphere Reserve, thus ensuring that this valuable global designation continues. We hope to play a useful role in fulfilling some of the report's recommendations in the next decade.

With mining activities getting out of control in the Zambezi area, we've also been working hard to protect valuable habitats, wildlife and wilderness by seeking legal support, collaborating with partners and insisting on full environmental impact assessments

And we've been talking to the world about the wilderness wonder of the Zambezi Valley !

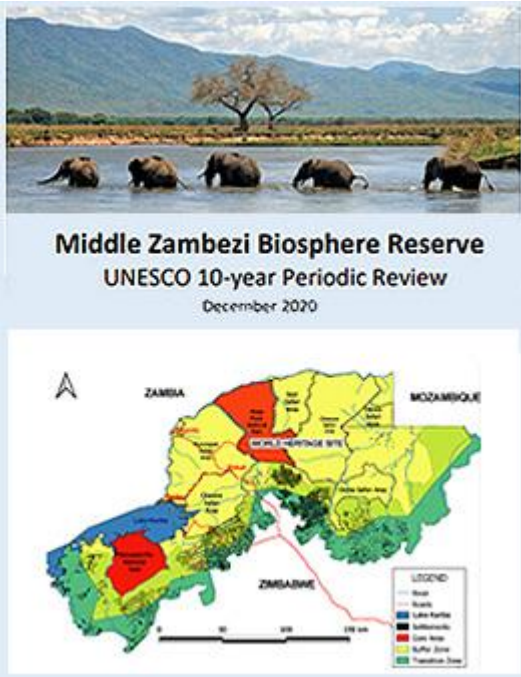
WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR WORK FOR THE ZAMBEZI'S WILD PLACES. We couldn't do any of this without you!....

- The Zambezi Society Team

WANTING TO DONATE TOWARDS OUR WORK?

We have simplified the procedure on our [DONATE](#) page!
It's now a whole lot easier to support the Zambezi Society's activities.

[**DONATE HERE**](#)



MIDDLE ZAMBEZI BIOSPHERE RESERVE REPORT (2010-2020)

The Zambezi Society is proud to have played a significant role in assisting Zimbabwe's Man & Biosphere (MAB) Committee to compile the first 10-year Periodic Review of the **Middle Zambezi Biosphere Reserve**, designated by UNESCO in 2010. The 150-page document outlines a considerable body of conservation and sustainable development work achieved across all sectors in this vast (34,000 sq km) area between 2010 and 2020, despite many economic and administrative challenges. It also makes recommendations for the next 10 years of Zimbabwe's first Biosphere Reserve. The report is under review by UNESCO and we hope to be able post a link to it soon. [READ MORE HERE](#)



INTRODUCING THE TEAM THAT GETS THE JOBS DONE

In this issue of The Bulletin, we would like to say a special thank you to all the members of the Zambezi Society's Operations team who get things done out in the field, ensure that our projects run smoothly and that all our donor funds are meticulously accounted for. The updates and successes summarised below would not be possible without the incredible amount of dedication and commitment that these people put into their work. Please click on the link below to read more about who they are and how they came to us. [READ MORE HERE](#)

CHARARA WILDLIFE RECOVERY PROJECT



RAINY SEASON OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES!

Despite this year's heavy rains, the Zambezi Society's field vehicles covered a lot of ground undertaking wet season ranger deployments and visiting ZimParks stations in Mana Pools and Charara to deliver food and medical supplies as well as other requirements. In January, the vehicles covered some 2332 kms; in February, 3057 kms, and in March 3725 kms. It's a lot of hard wear and tear on the vehicles.

If you would like to help us by making a contribution to our vehicle repair and maintenance costs, we would be delighted. Click the DONATE button below!

[DONATE HERE](#)



NEW ANTI-POACHING TRAILER

Thanks to funding from the [Elephant Crisis Fund](#), The Zambezi Society now has a dedicated anti-poaching trailer in the Charara Safari Area as part of our [Charara Wildlife Recovery Project](#). We are grateful to the [Gona-re-Zhou Conservation Trust](#) for sharing the design of this trailer. Custom-made for rough terrain, it is 100% tamper-proof, stores 200litres of water, sleeping equipment, food rations, and is fully equipped with solar power for lights and charging communication devices. This allows for longer, remote anti-poaching deployments in all seasons.



RANGERS' FIRST AID TRAINING

In March 2021, the Zambezi Society organised for vitally important First Aid training to be conducted by [ACE Air & Ambulance](#) in Kariba, as part of our programme to upskill field operations for the **Wildlife Recovery Project** in the Charara Safari Area. A total of 37 rangers, 4 ZimParks admin staff and 5 Zambezi Society staff/drivers took part. Two senior Zambezi Society's operations staff also benefitted from an additional 2-day advanced first aid course . We are most grateful to the [Lion Recovery Fund](#) for covering the costs of these courses, which will be followed up with monthly refresher training.



OPS ROOM & SMART TRAINING

The new, fully-functional Operations Room at Nyanyana, Charara, (built by the Zambezi Society via the [Lion Recovery Fund](#)) now has maps, white-boards and electronics used for capturing anti-poaching data via the SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) system. Ranger training and refresher courses in the SMART technology continue monthly for Park rangers, who also collaborate and share data with the [Kariba Animal Welfare Fund Trust \(KAWFT\)](#).



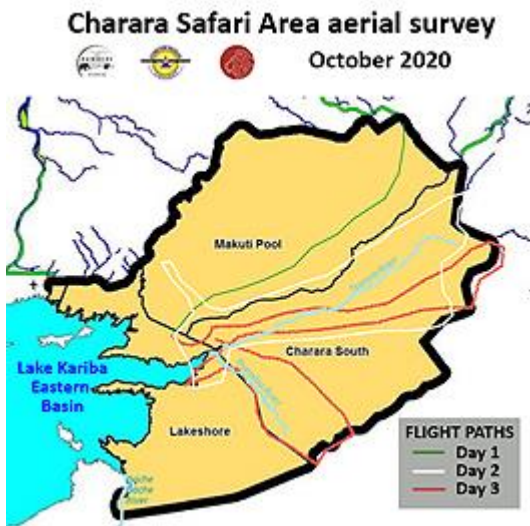
AMBUSH & ARREST TRAINING

Bushmeat poaching is currently a huge threat to the wildlife in the Kariba/Charara area (more than 3,000 wire snares were removed in 2020 - 80% up on previous years). Training rangers to tackle this threat, by boosting their ambush and arrest skills is the focus of a new Zambezi Society programme funded by the [Lion Recovery Fund](#). In April 2021, 24 ZimParks rangers and 5 Kariba Animal Welfare Fund Trust scouts undertook a 5-day training course led by Gareth Donnelly at Nyanyana Station in Charara. It focused on how to conduct road blocks, stop and searches, vehicle and suspect searches, and manage detainees. More courses are planned.



OPENING UP THE ROADS

As the rainy season ends, a road gang team employed by the Zambezi Society has been hard at work opening up the roads and tracks in the Charara Safari Area that are key to ranger patrols and strategic anti-poaching responses. So far, some 150-200 kms of road have been cleared - some of which had not been used for 5-6 years and were simply a series of overgrown elephant paths! We are also grateful to Kyle Hinde who assisted with this operation. Further clearance will continue once the grass has dried out and some early burning can be done.



AERIAL MONITORING WITH FFW

In addition to providing on-the-ground anti-poaching assistance in the Charara Safari Area, the Zambezi Society is also partnering with [Flying for Wildlife](#) to ensure regular aerial monitoring of the landscape. The map at left shows approximate flight paths taken during an operational aerial survey in October 2020. This allowed our Operations Project Manager to gain valuable baseline insights into habitat and wildlife populations as well as the extent of human encroachment in the Charara area. Future flights will monitor change and inform our on-the-ground conservation activities. [READ MORE HERE](#)

ASSISTANCE IN MANA POOLS



THANKS STEVE & CAMP MANA

Last year, with tourism curtailed by COVID-19, we highlighted the amazing fund-raising efforts of tour operator, Steve Bolnick, who launched a [subscription series of informative videos](#) in support of the Park rangers in Mana Pools (and of his staff at [Camp Mana](#)). Steve's videos have so far provided an amazing 8 separate donations, which we have used to purchase high energy food supplies for ranger patrols (and more...see below).



MANA CLINIC ROOF REPAIR

During the recent rains, a waterlogged Natal Mahogany tree collapsed onto the roof of the Nyamepi Clinic at Mana Pools. Fortunately only one side of the building was affected (so clinic activities were able to continue), but repairs were needed to the roof and a couple of walls. The Zambezi Society was quickly able to assess the damage on site, and thanks to donations from Steve Bolnick of [Camp Mana](#) (see above) and the [Zambezi Elephant Fund](#), we sourced repair materials in Harare. After the rains, in mid-March, our Operations Project Manager, Mitch Riley and Builder, Moses Dzepasi, transported everything to Mana Pools and completed the repair in 2 days! The Mana Clinic provides a crucial service to ZimParks rangers and their families, and is always short of medical supplies. If you can help please be in touch or donate!



OUR PATROL BOAT IS IN NEED OF A SERVICE. CAN YOU HELP?

The Zambezi Society's aluminium patrol boat (pictured above), stationed at Mana Pools for the past two years assisting with anti-poaching activities along the Zambezi River, has been removed from the Park for a routine service in Harare. In the meantime, two of our vehicle drivers are currently studying to qualify as coxswains in order to be able to assist with boat patrols once the vessel returns to the Park.

The cost of the engine service is likely to be US\$450. If you can help us cover this expense, we would be extremely grateful. Please click the link below.

[DONATE HERE](#)



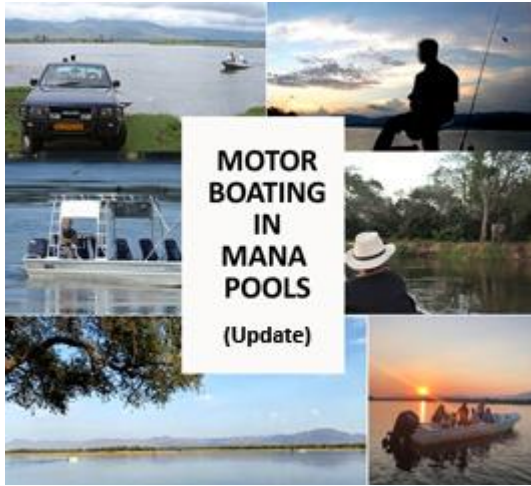
MARONGORA PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Zambezi Society is proud to be involved in helping to support the Primary School at ZimParks' Marongora field station with funding from the Pisek family from Austria, whose late father (Karl Pisek senior) provided the original funds for building it. This little school educates the children of ZimParks rangers who are based at this station, situated at the top of the Zambezi Escarpment. The Pisek family channels regular donations via the Zambezi Society which has so far installed a water tank and stand for the school's ablutions, provided stationery and text books each term, supported a 'one meal a day' programme for the students, and provided the teachers with some basic food rations. We are now looking at introducing the school to the Happy Readers Programme - a conservation-based organisation that helps to improve the literacy of rural school kids.

AN APPEAL FOR OLD (WORKING) DESKTOP COMPUTERS for the Karl Pisek School, Marongora

Are any of The Zambezi Society's local supporters in a position to donate a second-hand, desktop computer in working order (two are needed) to assist the Karl Pisek School's pupils with their Grade 7 (Primary School Final) exams? Apparently the students need to be able to identify certain parts of a desktop computer, and also know how to work one. So far, this little school at ZimParks Marongora station has achieved an excellent 80% pass rate for their National Exams, but they'd like to do even better. If you can assist, please be in touch with us via e-mail.

[EMAIL US HERE](#)



THANK YOU FOR YOUR BOATING SURVEY RESPONSES

The Zambezi Society is extremely grateful to friends and supporters who provided very valuable inputs regarding [Motorised Boating on the Zambezi River in Mana Pools](#) and took time to complete the important ZimParks Survey on this subject in December 2020. We still await formal report-back on the outcome, but we are informed that the Survey attracted 185 responses. Half of these were from tourists, 50% of whom have been visiting Mana Pools for 10 years or more).

ADVOCACY



ANGWA RIVER "DE-SILTATION"

In mid 2020 we reported that a mining company appeared to be prospecting for gold in the sands of the Angwa River on the eastern boundary of the Chewore Safari Area which lies within the Middle Zambezi World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve. The Zambezi Society gave initial feedback but called for a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), and, with the help of the [Zambezi Valley Conservation Network \(ZVCN\)](#) compiled a detailed dossier outlining potential impacts. The ZVCN then gathered stakeholders for a meeting with the mining company in March 2021. This revealed an apparent change of operation from the original "Mining" to De-siltation", and a change in the area of operation to now exclude the Chewore Safari Area. Zamsoc was asked to submit detailed comments to be included in the EIA process. This we have done [READ MORE HERE.](#)



EARTH DAY: 'TIME-OUT' FEATURES ZAMBEZI VALLEY

TIME-OUT, the global media and hospitality brand influencing how tens of millions of people go out around the world, chose to feature the Zambezi Valley in their [Earth Day feature on 22nd April 2021](#). They interviewed our Strategic Director, Richard Maasdorp, who told the world about this vast landscape, its global importance, its significance for conservation and the threats it faces. Tourism can help, he says, but it doesn't pay the bills to protect all this wilderness. Read his views [HERE](#)

OUR SUPPORTERS



THANK YOU TO SARF!

The Zambezi Society has written a feature summarising 33 years of support provided to us by the Australian-based [SAVE African Rhino Foundation \(SARF\)](#). Our relationship with this organisation dates all the way back to 1988, in the days when the Matusadona National Park was an Intensive Protection Zone for the endangered black rhino. SARF's donations always supported anti-poaching (tents, backpacks, supplies, vehicle parts, camera traps etc), and then widened to support elephant protection operations and illegal wildlife trade intelligence-gathering. We are most grateful for their extraordinary loyalty. [READ MORE HERE](#)



WATCH THIS APPEAL FROM THE ZAMBEZI ELEPHANT FUND

Please watch the latest [video appeal](#) from the the **Zambezi Elephant Fund** which raises money to help a small group of implementing agencies, including The Zambezi Society, to achieve good things on the ground in the Zambezi's wild areas. It's a "BIG ASK", but it's worth the watch, and we really need your help!

Help us do more.

DONATE TODAY



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