

CONSERVATION LANDSCAPE

It is clear you care deeply about protecting Africa's natural heritage. Several readers have shown an interest in knowing more about the organisations that sit behind much of the large-scale conservation initiatives across the continent. We'll delve deeper in future issues, but let's start with some of the bigger Africa-based players. Compiled by Sue Watt

With vast expanses of habitat ranging from sweeping savannahs and verdant rainforests to lush wetlands and arid deserts, all home to exceptional fauna and flora, Africa is one of the most biodiverse continents on Earth. But with its human population predicted to double to 2.5 billion by 2050, the need to conserve these wild places is now more vital than ever. Huge global NGOs are active throughout Africa, among them WWF, Wildlife Conservation Society, International Fund for Animal Welfare and The Nature Conservancy. Equally as important to the conservation landscape are far smaller non-profits and organisations dedicated to simply protecting individual reserves, including Zambia's Conservation Lower Zambezi, Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya, The Gorongosa Project in Mozambique and The Malilangwe Trust in Zimbabwe.

In between the big names and the smaller charities lie numerous organisations working solely on African soil, sharing their regional expertise in diverse projects across the continent. The Africa-specific NGOs below are among those leading the effort to embrace habitat protection with wildlife conservation and community upliftment at their core.

African Parks

AFRICANPARKS.ORG

Currently manages 22 parks or reserves spanning a staggering 20 million hectares across 12 countries. Based in South Africa, its objective is to manage 30 parks by 2030. In a unique business approach to conservation, African Parks works in public-private partnerships with national governments, taking on full responsibility for the rehabilitation of depleted reserves for 20 years or more. Their formula has proved resoundingly successful in destinations as diverse as Liwonde in Malawi, Bazaruto Archipelago in Mozambique and Zakouma in Chad.

Sahara Conservation

SAHARA CONSERVATION.ORG

Perceived as devoid of wildlife, deserts can be the poor relation in landscape protection. Sahara Conservation aims to change this, concentrating on the Sahara and neighbouring Sahelian grasslands that together span 10 million sq km. Set up in 2004, the charity works mainly in Chad and Niger, but also supports projects in Senegal, Morocco and Tunisia, sharing its expertise on rare desert wildlife conservation. With the Chadian government, it

also co-manages Ouadi Rimé-Ouadi Achim Wildlife Reserve, the only place in the world that is home to three critically endangered antelopes: the dama gazelle, scimitar-horned oryx, and addax.

The African Wildlife Foundation

AWF.ORG

Established over 60 years ago, AWF focuses on developing conservation leadership among African people. Its vision is "of an Africa where sustainable development includes thriving wildlife and wild lands as a cultural and economic asset for Africa's future generations." AWF currently operates in 14 countries, with projects ranging from expanding Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park to secure more habitat for mountain gorillas; to improving Ethiopia's Simien Mountains National Park, home to the world's rarest canid, the Ethiopian wolf; and to creating new community conservancies in Uganda.

Making space Pian Upe Game Reserve in northeast Uganda is the second largest protected area in the country, but one of the least visited. It is now co-managed by Space for Giants and Uganda Wildlife Authority.

Space for Giants

SPACEFORGIANTS.ORG

Space for Giants aims to "protect the natural ecosystems on which Africa's large wild animals depend and ensure they are valued by people so that they endure, forever." From its Kenyan HQ, it works in 11 countries and its influential Giants Club counts present and former African presidents as members, along with African and international business leaders and philanthropists. In July, with the Uganda Wildlife Authority, it signed the country's first Co-Management Partnership for the running and restoration of Pian Upe Game Reserve.

Tusk

TUSK.ORG

Tusk is a British-based charity that provides donor funding to grassroots conservation projects throughout Africa. Founded over 30 years ago, it has helped protect some 70 million hectares of land and currently works in 23 countries, from

Angola to Zimbabwe and beyond. Among its many projects, it supports Blue Ventures in Madagascar to protect coastlines by setting up Locally Managed Marine Areas that benefit both communities and marine conservation. The prestigious annual Tusk Conservation Awards, presented by patron Prince William, celebrates the work of Africa's leading conservationists.

Lion Recovery Fund

LIONRECOVERYFUND.ORG

LRF aims to double the number of lions in the wild from 25,000, by 2050. Since 2017, it has funded some 225 projects in 23 countries, benefitting 45 per cent of Africa's lion range. Habitat loss is a key threat to the cat's survival,

hence LRF helps to restore neglected parks. In Tanzania's Selous Game Reserve and Nyerere National Park, a vital stronghold for lions, LRF supports projects working on the management of the area and on human/lion conflict.

Peace Parks Foundation

PEACEPARKS.ORG

Peace Parks does landscape conservation at scale, engaging political leaders to unite in protecting huge ecosystems by forming conservation areas that cross national boundaries. With Nelson Mandela as co-founder, Peace Parks' 'dream' is to create Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) "protecting and regenerating natural and cultural heritage vital to enabling and sustaining a harmonious future

Helping geladas

In Ethiopia's Simien Mountains, AWF works with communities to develop alternative livelihoods to livestock grazing and subsistence farming. It funded Limalimo Ecolodge to provide community-owned and operated tourism revenue, and assists communities in land-use planning, which helps them use lands more sustainably, avoiding encroachment on gelada's territory.



PERRIN BANKS / AWF



MARCUS WESTBERG / AFRICAN PARKS

Big boost

In August 2022 African Parks and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan signed a 10-year renewable management agreement for Boma and Badingilo National Parks, which includes significant floodplains and migration corridors to an estimated one million antelope.

Flat out: Boma and Badingilo National Parks feature floodplains that attract a wealth of wildlife

for humankind and the natural world." To date it has developed 10 TFCAs across southern Africa, among them Kavango-Zambezi, which spans 520 000 sq km and melds 36 protected areas across five countries (Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe), forming the largest TFCA in the world.

Horny issue

The Ouadi Rimé-Ouadi Achim Game Reserve in Chad — the only place you can see scimitar-horned oryx — a flagship project of Sahara Conservation