

Part 3

CONSERVATION LANDSCAPE

A growing number of Africa's reserves are managed by non-government organisations, often achieving extraordinary success while making minimal fuss. **Sue Watt** celebrates a few of the more remarkable examples

In recent issues of *Travel Africa* we've highlighted some of the larger charities — Africa-specific and global — that help conserve Africa's precious biodiversity. Here we look at a selection of the myriad organisations dedicated to protecting individual parks or reserves across the continent, from the shadows of Mt Kenya to the banks of the Zambezi, from vital rainforests to vulnerable ocean environments. Whilst they may be small geographically, compared to the NGO heavyweights, they punch way above their weight when it comes to their impact on communities and conservation, even discovering species new to science and exploring pioneering technology to save critically endangered species.

The Malilangwe Trust, Zimbabwe

WWW.MALILANGWE.ORG

In 1994, the non-profit Malilangwe Trust, founded by philanthropist Paul Tudor Jones II, bought a former cattle ranch in south-west Zimbabwe, transforming it into the Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve and restoring its historic biodiversity. In 1997/8, forty rhinos were reintroduced. Their numbers have increased so much that Malilangwe now translocates rhinos to other suitable reserves, returning viable populations to depleted habitats across Africa. Today, Zimbabwe has the fourth highest population of rhinos on the continent, numbering over 1000, partly due to Malilangwe's work. Aside from its thriving wildlife, the reserve also protects 120 ancient rock art sites, employs over 250 local staff, and supports communities in education and healthcare with funding from its luxury Singita Pamushana Lodge.

Feeding young minds. The Malilangwe Trust's nutrition programme provides 20,000 children with a fortifying meal before school every day



SINGITA PAMUSHANA / MALILANGWE TRUST



ASILIA AFRICA

Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Kenya

WWW.OLPEJETACONSERVANCY.ORG

A former cattle ranch in Laikipia, Ol Pejeta became a rhino sanctuary in the mid-1990s to protect the species from widespread poaching, pioneering an 'integrated conservation' approach that embraces wildlife and tourism alongside Boran cattle farming. Today, it's the largest black rhino sanctuary in East and Central Africa with over 165 black rhinos, 44 southern whites and the last two northern white rhinos in the world, Najin and Fatu, daughter and granddaughter of the famous Sudan, who died in Ol Pejeta five years ago. Scientists here are breaking new ground in assisted reproduction technology, hoping to save northern whites from the brink of extinction by creating a baby rhino with Fatu's eggs and frozen sperm.

Above: Close encounters. Ol Pejeta offers visitors exceptional opportunities to see black or white (pictured) rhinos. Asilia Africa is one of the tourism operators on the conservancy.



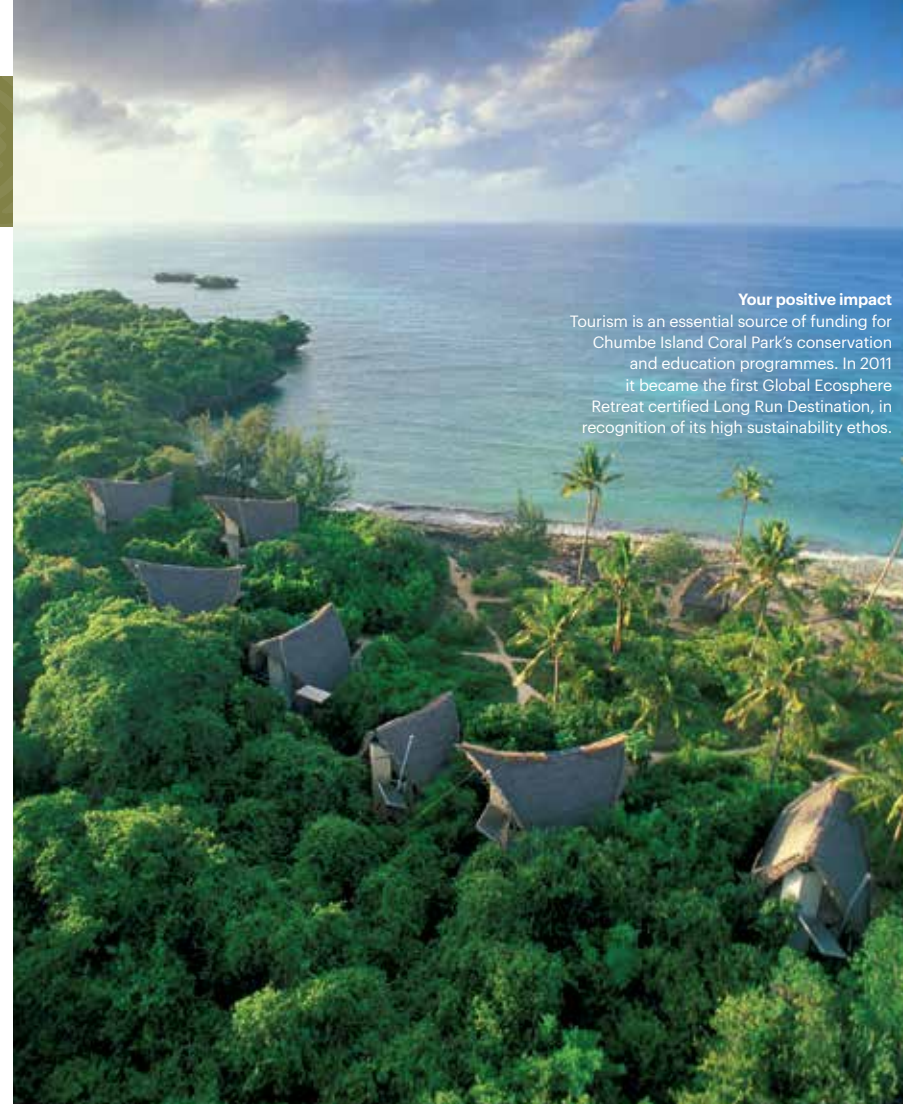
MICHAEL DOS SANTOS / GORONGOSA.NET

The Gorongosa Project, Mozambique

WWW.GORONGOSA.ORG

Gorongosa is a story of war and peace, of decimation and incredible restoration. Once Africa's go-to safari destination, by the mid-1990s 90 per cent of the national park's wildlife had been killed during Mozambique's civil war. Today, thanks to The Gorongosa Project, founded by American philanthropist Greg Carr, it's home to over 102,000 large mammals and has been called "the most diverse park in the world." Its on-site Edward O Wilson Biodiversity Laboratory, with lecture halls, laboratories and a veterinary unit, is cataloguing this biodiversity. Over 90 species new to science have been discovered. Employing over 1,600 staff, local people are integral to the park's mission: it supports inspiring health, education and alternative income initiatives including honey, coffee and fish harvesting.

Above: Unheralded gem. At the heart of little-visited Mozambique, Gorongosa may be one of the most spectacular wildlife-destinations in the world, revived under the direction of The Carr Foundation.



Your positive impact

Tourism is an essential source of funding for Chumbe Island Coral Park's conservation and education programmes. In 2011 it became the first Global Ecosphere Retreat certified Long Run Destination, in recognition of its high sustainability ethos.

SUPERSTOCK / LOOK

Chumbe Island Coral Park, Tanzania

WWW.CHUMBEISLAND.COM

Lying off Zanzibar's south-west coast, multi-award-winning Chumbe Island was the world's first private marine park. It is home to 90 per cent of East Africa's hard coral species and over 400 fish species, along with green and hawksbill turtles. Established in 1991, the uninhabited not-for-profit reserve hosts myriad research projects and has close links with fishermen and neighbouring communities. Locally-made crafts decorate the eco-lodge and are sold in its artisan boutique, and rangers teach Zanzibari schoolchildren all about marine conservation on island and outreach visits. The 22-hectare island is also a coral-rag forest reserve, where huge coconut crabs and critically endangered Ader's Duikers roam.



FRANCOIS DELBEE / CONSERVATION LOWER ZAMBEZI

Conservation Lower Zambezi, Zambia

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Conservation Lower Zambezi was founded in 1994 to provide support to Zambia's Department of National Parks and Wildlife after concern from local safari operators about extensive poaching in the Lower Zambezi National Park. The three pillars of CLZ's work include community empowerment and support in neighbouring Game Management Areas, especially concerning human wildlife conflict; environmental education, teaching some 2500 children annually (many of today's scouts are former pupils of CLZ's classes); and wildlife protection. Responding to ever-increasing demands, they've recently set up an Investigations and Intelligence Unit, a Rapid Deployment Team, a specialised Marine Unit to help monitor cross-border poaching along the Zambezi, and founded Zambia's first all-female scout team called Kufadza, appropriately meaning 'to inspire.'

Lessons on nature. One of Conservation Lower Zambezi's priorities is a community education programme, which gives environmental awareness lessons to 2500 children annually.



ANDY SKILLEN / KAMBA AFRICAN RAINFOREST EXPERIENCES

Kamba Africa, Congo

WWW.KAMBAAFRICA.COM

Founded by German philanthropist Sabine Plattner, Kamba Africa supports research and conservation and empowers communities around north-western Congo's remote Odzala-Kakoua National Park. The 13,600sq km fairy-tale rainforest is home to 20,000 critically endangered Western lowland gorillas. Working with renowned primatologist Dr Magda Bermejo, Kamba added a lodge to Ngaga Research Camp and built two further camps in the region to fund her research and create sustainable tourism opportunities with extraordinary gorilla tracking experiences. Supported by Kamba's sister NGO, The Sabine Plattner African Charities (SPAC), Ngaga has become one of the most important gorilla research centres in Africa.

On the rise. Guests at Ngaga Lodge, the gorilla research camp in the Ndzehi Concession outside Odzala-Kokoua NP in the Republic of Congo, have the rare opportunity to observe Western lowland gorillas in the forest.