



Dear All

The header is a rather sad photograph of the view from my house. I noticed during the week that a ZESCO pole had been erected, ready for cable connection right in the way of my view of the Victoria Falls. Shock horror.

I immediately drove down to ZESCO and spoke to them about it. They asked me to put it in writing, so I came home and wrote the letter and took it back to them. Within 2 hours the engineer came up to have a look. He agreed with me that it wasn't too nice for me to look at.

I don't know what the outcome will be, but they did seem sympathetic. I will have to await their decision. Eye pollution is accepted here in Zambia and people do have the right to complain.

Events on the Way

31 May: Fete at Old Farmhouse. 4pm
 15 June: Siavonga Canoe Challenge
 22 June: Kasane Music Festival
 25 June: Put Foot Rally.
 18-21 June: Southern Tourism, Agriculture and Commercial Show
 21-22 June: International Cultural Arts Festival
 29 June: Book Sale in aid of LAPS at Kubu Café. 9am
 24-29 August: UNWTO
 11-16 August: Cycle Zambia.

LIVINGSTONE

Sewage Ponds

During the week I went to have a look at the sewage ponds. These ponds receive all the sewage waste from Livingstone. When they were first constructed it was known that there was a problem and that they didn't work too well. I am told that they leaked. But this was over 20 years ago and we have lived with the problem all this time.

The original plan was that the sewage would be delivered to the ponds. The effluent would then be broken down by sunlight and, as it moved from one pond to the next, it would get cleaner and cleaner until it was safe to be put into the Zambezi River. The theory is great, but it didn't work well, although the Zambezi River was not polluted.



And, for years, we have had another problem. Water hyacinth, a (very pretty) noxious weed from South America has found a home and has covered much of the water surface. By covering the surface, the sunlight cannot reach the waste and therefore it is not broken down as it should.

Now there is a new attempt to solve Livingstone's sewage waste issue. The Energy and Environment Partnership (EEP) is working with Southern Water and Sewage Company and a private company, Livingfalls BioPower, to collect the water hyacinth and process it in a bio-digester to produce gas and compost.

The gas will be used by nearby homes and lodges – Waterfront, Chrismar, Bushfront and David Livingstone Safari Lodge – for cooking and the compost will be used to fertilise a fruit tree plantation and will be sold.

It all sounds too good to be true, but this is very much in the experimental stage – the theory is there but there will be many practical challenges. The biggest challenge will be how to collect the water hyacinth – how do you get it out of the ponds? Not only are the ponds very smelly and full of sh*t, they are home to many crocodiles.



Cycling for Development

During the week the US Ambassador to Zambia, Mark Storella visited Livingstone to promote tourism for development. He was joined by several celebrities and the Minister of Tourism, Sylvia Masebo, who is also becoming quite a celebrity for Zambia. Mark Storella brought his bike with him and the celebrities followed suit, I would guess, somewhat reluctantly to cycle from the Falls Resort to the bridge and then into Livingstone. At the Victoria Falls Bridge they met up with Bruce Wharton, US Ambassador to Zimbabwe who had also brought his bike.



Altogether they cycled to Livingstone, stopping at the Livingstone Museum for a tour and a break. The calendar for the Ambassadors was full of people to see and places to go for the rest of the day. One of them was a visit to Chief Mukuni's Palace along a dirt road. I asked John Kapumpa, Livingstone City Council who was one of the cycling party, if they were going to cycle to Mukuni Village. *I sincerely hope not*, he told me.

Our Corridors

In Livingstone we call our covered pavements by the shops in town 'corridors'. When, in 2011, the government stated that street vendors could trade wherever they wanted, our corridors became market places.

It got worse and worse as food was being prepared on the streets, litter filled the drains. It came to the point, for me, that I would avoid the town like the plague because I could not tolerate the mess and irritation of weaving through cardboard boxes covered with soap and sweets. Don't get me wrong, I love going to the markets in Livingstone – it is fun and colourful, but when I want to do some quick shopping I don't have the time to stop and chat, watch the guitar players and indulge in traditional trading. I just want to buy something.

So, when Sylvia Masebo decided that the corridors in Livingstone would be cleared of vendors you could almost hear the cheer go up in town.

An interesting comment from a Livingstonian who was part of the clearing of the corridors was that some (she said 'many') of the street vendors actually came from Tanzania! The Tanzanians had heard that street vending was free and available in Zambia and had flocked to the country!

I know that Livingstonians hope that the cleared corridors will continue after the UNWTO but we will all have to wait and see. As Wolfgang says: Watch this Space!



Livingstone Animal Protection Society

A recently formed society in Livingstone is keen to help government to provide a better service for our pets.

Their priority is to raise some funds so that they can buy a new operating table for the government veterinary office in town.



They will be holding a book sale on 29 June at Mosi-oa-Tunya Square.

There will be many items for sale on that day, apart from books, so put the date in your diary. In the meantime, if you have second hand books which you would like to donate for the book sale, drop them off at Kubu Café, Zig-Zag, or Batoka Sky.

Waterfront Bar Almost Complete

As the waterfront is my favourite watering hole, I popped down for a sundowner during the week. The bar is almost complete and looks very bright and refreshed. The staff too are happy with their new environment and were taking photographs of each other.

Alli Shenton was busy doing some finishing touches to the pizza oven; the South African interior design team was still working on the ceiling for the dining area.

Sadly only two of the TVs were working; the third one not yet connected. So, when you visit the Waterfront bar you will have to learn to multi-task as you will have 3 TV channels to watch at the same time as well as having a conversation with your friends ... and, if you turn your head to the wonderful view of the Zambezi River you may well see a flock of sacred ibis flying across the sunset to their roosting for the night.



UNWTO Petition

Last week I printed an article from Ian Manning who has petitioned all members of the UNWTO to boycott the meeting in Livingstone because of the government's seeming approval of mining in the Lower Zambezi National Park. This week, according to the Post, Wylbur Simuusa, Minister for the Environment, has dismissed the petition saying it is false and unpatriotic.

Ian Manning no longer lives in Zambia, having been deported many years ago. Ian is a dedicated conservationist who had tried to empower communities to set up trusts to protect their traditional land so that they could earn an income from it. Ian now lives in South Africa but continues to be a thorn in the side of Zambia's government by writing.

In response to Ian Manning's petition, Wylbur Simuusa:

Some of the allegations made in this petition are unfortunately not true. Firstly, the proposed copper mine in the Lower Zambezi National Park was rejected by the Zambia Environmental Agency (ZEMA) and is in the process of being appealed. The petition suggests that there is a statutory limit on the period in which judgment should be delivered. This is not so, there is no statutory limit and a more careful process is underway to determine whether this decision to preserve the eco-tourism potential of the valley will at the same time be releasing some of the wealth trapped underground in Zambia for the benefit of its extremely poor population. It is not true that the minister in charge of the environment or indeed the Zambian government has failed to make a decision on the issue.

One appeal meeting has been held and another one is scheduled following further submissions made. Everyone can rest assured that there will be no shortcuts and no compromise with environmental standards whether the mine goes ahead or not. The petition also alleges that the tar road is being built through the Lower Zambezi National Park minus the environmental impact having been properly evaluated. This is totally untrue. Extreme care has been exercised with the 8000 kilometres of the new roads planned in the Link Zambia programme.

Can mining and management of a game reserve be done at the same time in the same place? As pressure increases for the exploitation and extraction of minerals and other resources, as a nation we need to settle this question, especially that the conflict exists not only in the Lower Zambezi National Park but in other protected areas of Zambia where there are abundant minerals and other resources. The Zambian government is at a loss to understand the boycotting of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation Conference, which will have a beneficial effect on the management of our superb wildlife and natural resources. We will urge everyone not to sign the petition because it seeks to cure mischief that does not exist. If you have already signed, we are not sure whether the organisation will allow you to withdraw your support as they and we, as the Zambian government, expect to see you in Livingstone.

Link Zambia 8000

There are a few documents on the internet about the new roads which are to be constructed under the Link Zambia 8000 project. I have taken out bits which you may find interesting.

For 2012 there were several roads on the list which were already being worked on and included Livingstone City Roads and Kazungula Bridge

The next section was on roads which are to be started in 2012

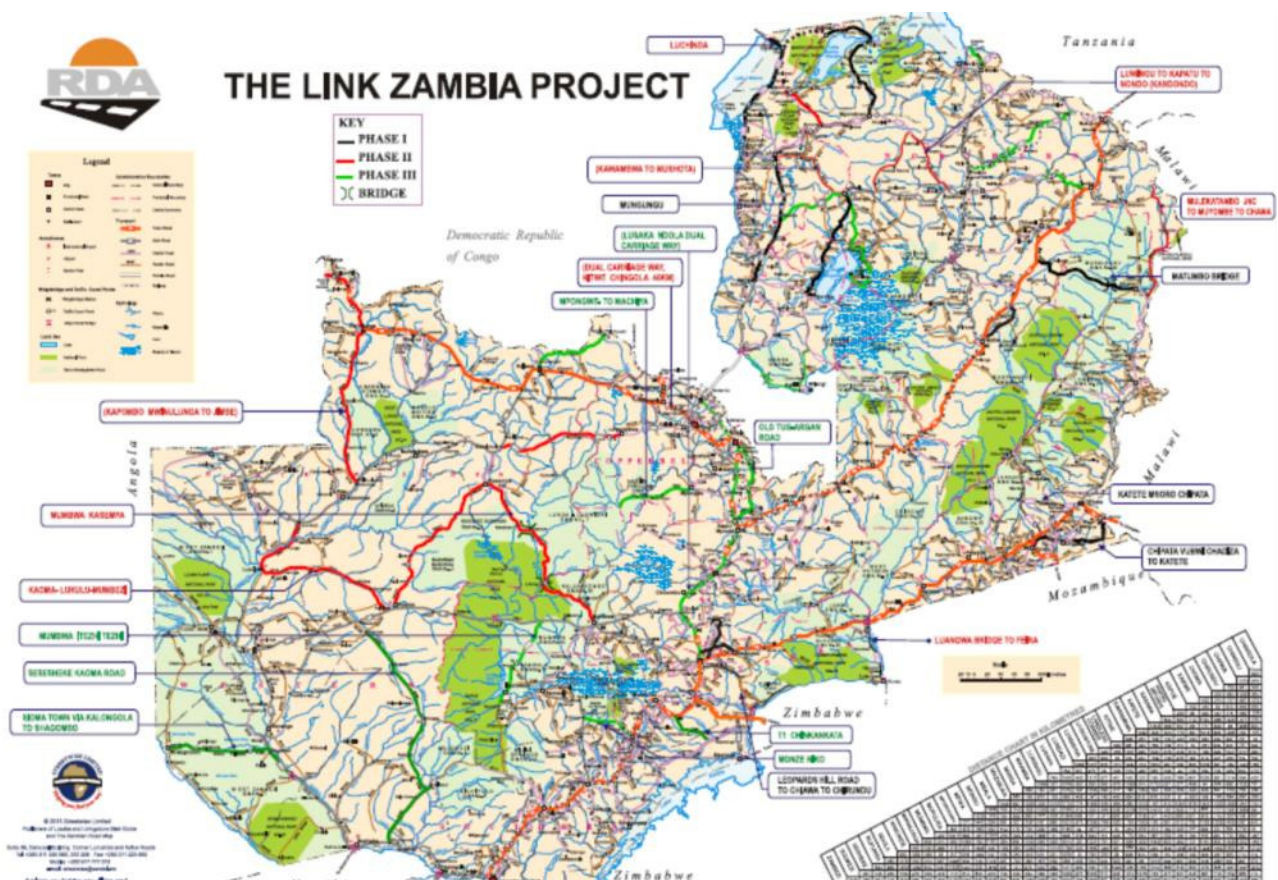
Description	Province	Distance
Kenneth Kaunda Intl Airport to Kasisi to GER, Ngwerere road from GNR to junction with Kasisi Mission Road D176/D564/D753]	Lusaka	62.90
Chalimbana & Palabana Roads connecting to Leopards Hill Road [RD149/D156/D150/D566/D153/D154]	Lusaka	97.79
Leopards Hill Road from Lusaka - Chiawa -Chirundu [D152/RD481/D482]	Lusaka	115.00
Chongwe River via Feira to Luangwa Bridge	Lusaka	245.00
Chipata - Vubwi - Chadiza [D804/RD580/D126]	Eastern	201.90
Chadiza to Katete to Msoro to Chipata [D598/D123/D125/D586/D581/D128]	Eastern	170.40
Mporokoso -Nsama -Kaputa [D307]	Northern	194.90
Mpika -Nabwalya-Mfuwe, Katubunga Road Chilonga Mission through Mwanfushi	Muchinga	260.00
Mulilansolo-Chinsali-Safwa	Muchinga	204.00
Nchelenge -Chiengi-Luchinda -Kaputa	Luapula	205.80
Mansa to Chipili to Kawambwa	Luapula	170.20
Samfya Musaila to Lubwe to Kasaba to Ipukusilo to Luwingu via Ipusikilo Mission	Luapula	161.00
The Upgrading and Re-alignment of D301 from Muyombe Junction to Chama (32 km) and Road from Chama to Luangwa River (42 km) including 12 km of Urban Roads in Chama in Muchinga Province of Zambia- Lot 1	Muchinga	86.00
The Upgrading and Re-Alignment of R231 from Great North Road at Matumbo to Luangwa Bridge (115 Km) Road in Muchinga Province of Zambia- Lot 2	Muchinga	115.00
The Construction of Bridges at Luangwa and Kampemba Rivers in Chama District of Muchinga Province	Muchinga	N/A

Those roads for 2013 are:

Kalulushi to Kasempa	N/Western	185.00
Mumbwa to Kasempa	N/Western & Central	266.00
Kasempa to Kaoma	N/Western & Western	215.00
Kaoma to Lukulu to Zambezi	N/Western	275.30
Kabompo to Mwinilunga to Jimbe	N/Western	311.00
Luwingu to Kapatu Mission to Nondo	Northern	99.20
Kawambwa to Luwingu via Chief Mushota	Northern	130.00
Mununga to Mporokoso	Luapula	130.00
Mbala to Nakonde	Northern	171.20
Upgrading of approximately 393 Km of the Isoka to Muyombe to Chama to Lundazi Road (Lot 1) [Isoka to Chama]	Eastern	91.00
Upgrading of Road D18 from Kasama to Isoka; Lot1, Kasama to Mbesuma Pontoon in Northern Province	Northern	110.00
Siavonga to Gwembe	Southern	131.50
Kitwe - Chingola	Copperbelt	46.00
Lusaka - Ndola Dual Carrriageway - 3 Lots	LSK/CENT/C BELT	321.00
Kalongola to Kalabo to Sikongo	Western	265.00

For Construction in 2014:

Nseluka -Chitimukulu-Makasa up to D001	Northern	170.00
Mbala-Kaseshya Border - Kalambo	Northern	47.00
Chembe to Milenge	Luapula	120.00
Munganga - Kawambwa	Luapula	90.00
Nsamsamwenfe-Kanyala-Nakonde	Muchinga	72.00
Isoka -Mbesuma	Muchinga	85.00
Mwase-Lundazi-Chitungulu & Mwanya Mfuwe	Eastern	290.00
Serenje District Roads	Central	45.00
Kabwe Urban Roads	Central	45.00
Mumbwa - Itezhi Tezhi	Central	109.00
Sesheke - Kaoma	Western	450.00
Sesheke-Kalabo-Shangombo	Western	230.00
Mongu-namushakende-Nalikulanda	Western	60.00
Mumbezhi-Lukulu-Kaoma	N/Western	270.00
Mwinilunga to Ikelenge to Salujinga	N/Western	100.00
Solwezi -Mushindamo	N/Western	121.00
Choma Township Roads	Southern	30.00
T1 - Chikankata	Southern	30.00
Monze - Niko	Southern	75.00
D201 - Old Congo Road Tug Argan to Kapiri	Copperbelt	113.00
Mpongwe Machiya D468	Copperbelt	60.00
Ndola Mufulira	Copperbelt	60.00



The map is not very clear, but you can get an idea of what is to be done.

THE SIAVONGA CANOE CHALLENGE 2013

The Siavonga Canoe Challenge is an event designed to promote Siavonga as a tourist destination and create an exciting spectator event drawing many tourists to the town.

The first Siavonga Canoe Challenge took place in 2008 and attracted 18 teams from all over Zambia. The event was a resounding success and as a result it was decided to make this an annual event for Siavonga. The event was adopted by Zambia Breweries in 2009 and renamed the MOSI Canoe Challenge 2009. This event attracted 22 teams and substantial media coverage including ZNBC, Radio Phoenix, Muvi TV, and several National news papers.

In 2010 the event was combined with the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the building of the Dam Wall (Lake Kariba) and it was adopted by MTN and called the MTN Canoe Challenge 2010. Again, this was a resounding success and attracted almost a thousand visitors to Siavonga and increased media coverage. Due to logistical reasons and the unavailability of canoes (many borrowed from tour operators in Livingstone) the event was unable to be staged in 2011 and 2012.

However, we are proud to announce that the Siavonga Canoe Challenge is back thanks to the support of Gwabi River Lodge and Drifters Safari's who have offered the use of their Canoes.

Siavonga Canoe Challenge 2013 will take place on Saturday 15th June 2013. The cost for the entry of a team is KR3,000

The money will be used for logistical costs, charity donations (KR10,000) and to help promote Siavonga as a Tourist Destination.

This is a non profit making event and any money left over after costs and charity monies are paid out will go to the Siavonga Tourism & Business Development Association to help promote the town of Siavonga.

You are invited to sponsor this event by entering a team of paddlers to compete.

In return for entering a team, your company will receive a huge advertising boost by being able to display banners and posters at Start and Finish Line at Eagles Rest Beach and at the Prize Giving Dinner. The mass media such as ZNBC, Muvi TV, Phoenix Radio, National News Papers and International Magazines will be covering the Event. The exposure your Company will receive will be considerable and you will also help to promote Siavonga as a tourist destination. The event is also a great team building exercise for your staff members that will create camaraderie and team spirit.

In order to involve the local community, each team will consist of 3 paddlers, two nominated by you and one local member of the community selected by your team on the day. The local member of the team will not only provide additional energy and stamina, but also provide local knowledge of the route and of Siavonga.

Whilst the event is a canoe race, the first home is not necessarily the winner. The teams will race from Eagles Rest Beach to Lake Kariba Inns where they will begin to search for hidden objects and other information from clues given to them at the start of the race. The teams will be awarded points for the time taken to complete the course and also for the number of clues solved.



Included in your team entry fee is camping space at Eagles Rest for your team members (they will need to bring a tent and bedding), two breakfasts, one lunch, two dinners, and a t-shirt and cap printed with your company name.

We hope that you will consider entering a team for this great event and help us to promote Siavonga. In addition, if your Company would like to adopt the Canoe Challenge, as did Zambia Breweries and MTN for the 2009 and 2010 events, then you may do so by offering an additional amount as sponsorship. We will run this sponsorship as an auction and the Company with the highest bid will be allowed to adopt the event and advertise it as the "Your Company Name" Canoe Challenge 2013.

In view of the time frame, the closing date for adoption bids will be the 30th May 2013. This will enable us to change the advertising to promote your Company as sponsor.

Should you wish to enter a team or become a major sponsor, please complete the Entry Form attached to this letter and Email it to the Association at stba@siavonga-zambia.com

ZIMBABWE

PROBLEMS IN HWANGE NATIONAL PARK

From Zimbabwe Conservation Task Force

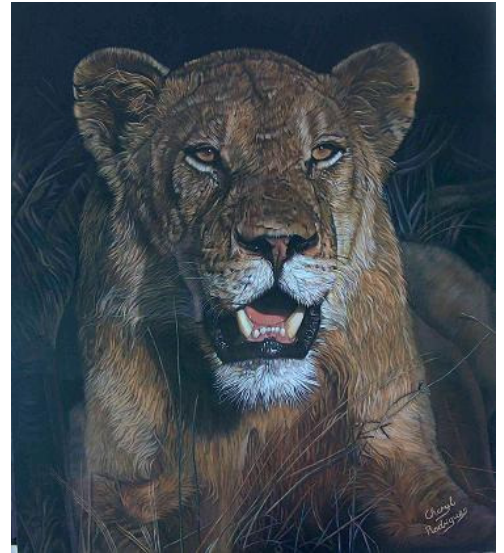
We are extremely disturbed by reports from concerned tourists of gunfire being heard in Hwange tourist areas. Investigations have uncovered that there appears to be sport hunting quotas approved by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources in areas that should never have them. The chances of tourists going to lodges around the Main Camp section of Hwange National Park and hearing gunfire are once again high and we urge all tourists, local and international, to continue to report all gunfire heard. The Parks Authority and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources have reneged on guarantees made in previous years especially it would seem in the area of the Presidential elephants of Zimbabwe, and in at least one case they are believed to have reinstated a hunting quota on land so narrow there is no possibility of any wildlife actually being resident there, bordering two prime photographic safari camps, previously declared a no-hunting area when chaos prevailed in this area about eight years ago. At least one other hunting quota is said to have been issued in another nearby prime tourism site. When people's backs are turned underhanded things continue to happen involving people who have solid government connections. We are also hearing unconfirmed reports that paying overseas hunters are once again, as did happen in previous years despite denials by the wildlife authorities, being allowed inside Hwange National Park to hunt.

With the upcoming United Nations World Tourism Organisation summit in August, we fail to see how Zimbabwe can hold their head high remembering also the awful scenario we reported previously about elephants being shipped off to horrific conditions in China. We urge the Tourism Minister to get involved to put pressure on the Environment Minister to fix escalating problems in Hwange photographic tourism areas. These problems also include mining plans reported in areas right beside Hwange Main Camp which are obviously born out of disrespect for the environment and pure greed and disrespect for Hwange's important photographic tourism industry. It is a tragedy that we have received confirmed reports that the most widely known and read about presidential elephant is dead, making a mockery of the government's supposed commitment to providing special protection to these photographic safari areas where Zimbabwe's flagship herd roams. We are aware that this elephant was known to tens of thousands of people around the world and anyone reading the literature available can work out that she was not of an age where she would die naturally. It is past time that the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources look after the wildlife that they are tasked to protect rather than assisting in its destruction, especially in such an important tourism area as Hwange and we are appalled that no progress in fixing any of the problems is evident.

SILENT AUCTION

The painting which we are auctioning to raise funds is still available. The closing date will be 30th June 2013.

The painting, titled "Young Warrior" is an original oil on canvas painted by Cheryl Rodrigues and measures 77cm x 90cm. There is a reserve price of USD2 000. If anyone can offer more than this, please email us with your offer. Any shipping charges will be for the account of the buyer.



Award for the inventor of the Blair Toilet

From Sanitation Updates

Dr. Peter Morgan has been named the 2013 Stockholm Water Prize Laureate for his work to protect the health and lives of millions of people through improved sanitation and water technologies. H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden will present the prize to Dr. Morgan at a Royal Award Ceremony during the 2013 World Water Week in Stockholm on September 5.

Over the past four decades, Dr. Morgan has invented and advanced low-cost practical solutions to provide access to safe sanitation and clean water that are being used by millions of people worldwide.

“Many currently existing solutions to provide clean water and sanitation are unaffordable, impractical and out of reach for the world’s poorest people,” said the Stockholm Water Prize Committee in its citation. “As a result of Dr. Morgan’s pioneering work to develop practical water and sanitation technologies for those most in need, countless communities now enjoy safer water, a cleaner environment and quality of life.” ...

Dr. Morgan has invented a wide range of simple, smart and low-cost water and sanitation technologies. Several of his most prominent innovations, including the Bush Pump and the Blair Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) Latrine, have been adapted as the national standard by the government of Zimbabwe. Over 500,000 Blair VIP latrines have been built and serve 3 million people in Zimbabwe alone, and many more have been built worldwide. Dr. Morgan also created the ‘Upgraded Family Well’, which now help half a million people improve the quality of water obtained from traditional wells. ...

Floor Tiles at Dete

Recently a Livingstonian visited Dete to get some floor tiles. I thought others might be interested, so here is a photo and contact details.

Godfree Zivanai – General Manager
E-mail: ceramics@iwayafrica.co.zw
gzivanai@iwayafrica.co.zw

Phone: +263 18 253
+263 776 174 152/+263 712 632 398



Elephants Poached near Maun

From Ngami Times

This picture is the unacceptable face of poaching.

These elephants were among five killed in the NG32 concession area last week – and had their trunks and tusks cut off with what is thought to be a power saw.

The three pictured here were ambushed as they walked slowly through the bush near a supply track, leading to remote luxury lodges from the Boro gate in the buffalo fence close to Maun. About 9km into the bush the armed poachers lay in wait and shot dead the three elephants for their ivory.



Hunting safari personnel say the killings were brutally carried out with at least one power saw being used to cut off trunks, rip out the tusks, and mutilate the heads. The poachers, it is believed, had the use of a truck onto which they loaded the ivory and then carried on with their killing spree – and killed the 4th elephant.

Later, in the Kopano Mokoro Community Trust area, the carcass of a 5th elephant was also discovered. It is not known if the killers of the first four were also responsible for the 5th.

This week, a massive operation was launched to flush out would-be poachers in the Okavango delta with helicopters and fixed wing aircraft assisting security personnel on the ground as they tracked the poachers.

The Wildlife coordinator for Maun, Bolt Otlhomile, confirmed the arrest of 6 poachers in NG32 near Xhuruxharaga, close to Maun. The six suspects, all local people, were taken into custody for possession of two elephant tusks. They are likely to face charges of unlawful hunting which carries a P100 000 fine or 5 years imprisonment. There is no indication as yet whether the six were responsible for the poaching of the 5th elephant. Otlhomile urged all Batswana “to work hand-in-hand with wildlife scouts, police, tribal chiefs, members of the community and conservation bodies to combat poaching and problem animals which kill people in the region time and again. “The Wildlife department is currently training special scouts to help the community because of the escalating poaching rate and problem animals in Ngamiland.”

For more information call us at 625-2392 or email at caracal@caracal.info

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Clive, Grant & Corn

KASANE, 22 June '13 ** 10am- 11pm

Entrance P75.00/ Adult// P35/Children under 16

The special scouts are to operate in remote areas.

The discovery of the dead elephants has horrified safari operators and the hunting fraternity and they say poaching can be prevented if hunting is allowed to continue after the year-end deadline announced by the government earlier this year.

“Hunters are the policemen of the bush. Poachers wouldn't dare try to kill animals if there are hunting parties nearby as they know they will be pursued and caught,” said one hunter.

Meanwhile, the Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) says it is seriously concerned about escalating incidents of poaching.

Sophia Walters, the society's public relations consultant, said in an interview published in Gaborone recently that the “KCS views poaching as a serious threat to Botswana's wildlife. “

Creative exhibition at Nhabe Museum

From the Ngami Times

Three creative impressions of Ngamiland is the theme of an excellent Colour, Shape and Light exhibition now on at Maun's Nhabe Museum.

Renowned wildlife artist Roger Brown, ceramic sculpturist Ompatile Sebuelo and award winning photographer Stuart James Arnold have joined forces to exhibit their works.

Brown has been living in Botswana for 13 years. His love of art was encouraged by his parents who are both artists. He spent much of his childhood in wilderness areas of Africa and began painting its wildlife and people. His first solo exhibition was in 2005 and since then has had many exhibitions in Botswana and South Africa.



Brown received the prize for the Best Upcoming Artist in Botswana in 2010 and 2011. Ompatile Sebuelo was born in Mmankgodi and completed his National Diploma and B.Tech in Fine Art degree at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. He is currently art teacher at the Okavango International School in Maun. His works have been extensively exhibited and has won many awards through his excellence in ceramic sculpture. Stuart James Arnold is well known in Maun and Botswana an award winning photographer in the United Kingdom and the United States. He is an Associate member of the Royal Photographic Society in Britain.



His recent second book, “Mothers and Children of Maun”, with Kalahari images, has been acclaimed by many. He said there are captivating imagers of everyday people going about their daily lives. The exhibition is at the museum until June 4 and then moves to Gaborone from June 11 to July 5.

A Motorcycle Route & Magazine Dedicated To Bikers Of The World Who Live To Ride...

A new publication in Namibia promotes motorbike routes from Cape Town to Namibia.

Great photos. Check it out:

www.facebook.com/THECAPETOETOSHAROUTEBIKER



DRC

Hydropower megaproject to dam River Congo

From New Scientist

Africa's greatest river is about to be tamed. The River Congo is set to succumb to a series of giant hydroelectric dams with twice the generating capacity of the world's most powerful hydro-plant, the Three Gorges in China.

Last weekend, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and South Africa announced a treaty to develop a giant hydroelectric project at Inga Falls, just downstream of the DRC's capital Kinshasa. The \$9-billion first phase, with a capacity of 4800 megawatts (MW), will generate more power than Egypt's Aswan High Dam, currently Africa's largest-capacity hydropower dam. Construction will start in late 2015. South Africa will take half of the power, with most of the rest earmarked for Congolese copper mines.

But the eventual aim, say the two governments, is to generate more than 40,000 MW by fulfilling the dreams of engineers since colonial times to harness the full power of the world's second largest river, after the Amazon. At Inga Falls, some 42,000 cubic metres of water rush down a series of giant rapids every second. With the right infrastructure, the force of the River Congo could supply electricity to Nigeria, Egypt and even Europe.

Good news, bad news

The project will not require a large reservoir to store the water needed to turn its turbines, because the river flows unceasingly at high volume. This is good news as it means that land will not need to be cleared and flooded.

The bad news, say opponents such as the California-based NGO International Rivers, is that few Congolese will get any electricity, since they are generally far from any power grids. "The majority of Africa's poor will remain without power, at a time when better solutions are available," says Rudo Sanyanga of International Rivers, who instead backs investing in local solar power and small-scale hydro schemes.

The World Bank said in a statement that the project would "catalyse large-scale benefits to improve access to infrastructure services" in Africa.

TANZANIA

POACHING REPORT DEMANDS GOVERNMENT ACTION ON CHINA CONNECTION

<http://www.ippmedia.com/frontend/index.php?l=54837>

Investment relations between China and Tanzania have been cited in elephant poaching in Tanzania, calling for serious government intervention, a report on the elephant poaching crisis has revealed.

According to a well-detailed report authored by the Tanzania Elephant Protection Society (TEPS) made available to the Guardian, though the Chinese investments were important in the country's economy and development, they shouldn't compromise country's natural wildlife conservation efforts.

The report -- which states clearly the current rate of 30 elephants killed every day and 850 elephants shot every month -- poses unprecedented risk of the country's elephant population perishing in the next seven years notes: "China is the number one investor in Tanzania ... but the majority of tusks exported illegally from Tanzania end up in China due to the huge demand for Ivory in China" It affirms: "Tanzania's partnership with China is of great benefit to the country's economy and development but it must not be at the expense of Tanzania's vital natural resources and tourist industry ... this requires political will and strong leadership."

The document, whose was availed to The Guardian recommends: "Tanzania government should make investment from China and other countries strictly conditional on China tackling its demand for ivory at home, and stronger law enforcement collaboration to halt the flow of ivory from Tanzania to China."

Experts also recommended for the presence of sniffer dogs working 24 hours at every port and airport.

In one of its four recommendations to the government, the report says:

"Ivory is a big business for major criminal ... also involved in trafficking drugs and violent crimes. The issue must be treated as a serious crime which is a major threat to the nation. "These syndicates are able to engage in corrupt practices to ensure that their consignments are not subjected to law enforcement intervention in the countries of origin, on transit and destinations. We hope the statistics presented would raise the hairs of the policy and decision makers and cause them to quickly act to rescue the situation" says the report.

Winding up debate on the 2013/2014 fiscal year, the Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Khamis Kagasheki, said a kilogramme of a tusk is traded at \$1,000 at the international market, whereas a kilogramme of rhino horn is worth \$1 million, a revelation that the poaching and illegal trade of natural resources involves people with big money.

The report also recommends enactment of emergency laws providing for sentences of up to 15 years imprisonment for illegal hunts of an elephant or trading in ivory -- plus a fine of minimum international value of ivory per kilo -- and emergency powers for the judiciary to fast-track these cases, refusal of bail for poaching and possession of ivory.

According to the report this recommendation was based on the fact that currently very few captured poachers or traders have been convicted. Many are granted bail and return to poaching or trading. It presents that court sentencing is weak and fines are very low, usually less than the price of the tusk implying that there is little deterrence against these criminal activities.

The documents show that in China, sentence for killing a panda is death penalty whereas in India, sentence for killing a tiger is 35 years in prison and a fine of \$35,000.

Some of the affected areas were cited as Moyowosi in Kigoma region, Ugalla ecosystem which has less than 500 elephants left; Katavi -- Ruangwa in the Ruaha; the Selous Game Reserve where elephants are almost gone, Kilombero Valley, Southern Selous and the Selous Niassa corridor which are currently under threat.

On April 30, this year, the chairman of the parliamentary standing committee for lands, natural resources and environment, James Lembeli told the House that poaching activities had reached alarming proportions, and should declared a national disaster. Lembeli, a legislator for Kahama, said statistics by the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) had revealed that 30 elephants were being killed every day --or 10,950 will be killed by 2013 -- if the slaughter was allowed in the next seven years. "The wanton decimation of the country's elephants herd will impact on the national economy (declining tourism revenue and diminished employment prospects) and the country's reputation as a beacon of conservation in Africa," he says.

WOLFGANG'S COLUMN

SERENGETI HIGHWAY SUGGESTIONS BY RICHARD LEAKEY CALLED LUNATIC EXPRESS 2.0

Hitherto respected conservationist Dr. Richard Leakey earned himself howls of laughter, mockery and acid comments from around the world, when – beware the power of the internet – his suggestions to build an elevated highway across the Serengeti became more widely known and went viral among Serengeti supporters.

Leakey apparently repeated comments made much earlier already but quickly hushed up at the time, in a speech in the United States last week, that he felt an elevated highway across the Serengeti's migration routes would be a viable solution. Leakey was quoted to have said during an international conference on poaching and wildlife related crimes at the Rutgers University 'It would be a grand spectacle, to see animals migrating by underneath, and signal Africa's commitment to wildlife. If I can drive over 30 miles of elevated highways in New Jersey, why not in the Serengeti?'. Leakey then reportedly went on to accuse all and sundry to 'Talk, Talk, Talk' but failed to acknowledge that a viable and financeable option had been presented to the Tanzanian government by, among others, the German government and the Frankfurt Zoological Society, to build a road around the southern edges of the park instead of insisting to build a highway across the main migration routes of the Serengeti.

Leakey was saying that the cost of an elevated highway would only be 40 percent higher than a regular highway, clearly exposing a serious deficit in knowledge and understanding of the topographical situation of the route proposed by the Tanzanian government as well as the soil composition along the route, mainly the notorious black cotton soil. This soil type would require massive steel reinforced concrete pylons to be anchored very deep into the ground to avoid shifts of the structure when the soil gets soaked during the rainy season. Leakey also forgot to say how motorists, while driving, were to enjoy the views he proposed for the 'grand spectacle' safely, without driving over the rails and crashing into the migrating animals, unless he had the creation of major stopping points, perhaps including elevated restaurants and even hotels as found along European highways in mind, something environmentalist and truly committed conservationists would have a lot more to say about.

www.savetheserengeti.org, a conservation pressure group with more than 51.500 followers on their Facebook page, had in 2011 undertaken a study to show that significantly more people and population centres would be served by a southern road solution, but big mining business appears to insist on a direct access route connecting concession

areas between the Serengeti and Lake Victoria with a route to the coast, dubbed by this correspondent as the 'Corridor of Destruction'. (<http://wolfganghthome.wordpress.com/2011/05/01/tanzania-conservation-breaking-news-the-corridor-of-destruction-from-the-coast-to-the-lake/>).

One regular conservation source from Arusha immediately called the proposal 'Leakey's Lunatic Express' while another, almost at the same time, had similar sentiments when calling it 'Lunatic Express Reloaded 2.0'. 'This is not a compromise. A costed compromise has been on the table when the data for a southern route was put to the TZ government. This is a lunacy and Leakey has done himself and his reputation no favours here. The cost, for one, would be massive and because of soil and topography a multiple of what a

surface highway would cost. The Serengeti is not Jersey with flat surfaces. This is a hilly area, dissected by dry river beds, and the soft soil would require very very deep foundations. To top it, this is an earthquake prone area, so the construction would have to take this into account, driving the cost up even more. Not Leakey's finest hour I must say' did a source wishing to remain unnamed write in response to a request for a comment, since the news broke last Thursday. According to other conservation sources in Tanzania, requests for clarification to the Leakey Foundation went unanswered, at least by the time of uploading this article, though there is clearly little they can say in mitigation, unless their principal would be ready to withdraw his ill considered off the cuff remarks.

In comparison, the new Gotthard tunnel, the world's longest, took the Swiss, experts in tunnel highways, some 15 years to complete at a cost of over 20 billion US Dollars, and covers a length of some 54 kilometres, a distance similar to the crossing of the Serengeti – this being said in case other brainiacs come up and try to float the tunnel version under the migration paths once again. The Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania had, in earnest, proposed a tunnel version in July 2011, giving the cost and technical challenges of their proposal apparently as little thought as Leakey now did with his elevated highway talk. Meanwhile has the Tanzanian government made no binding firm commitments to spare the Serengeti of the highway, other than vaguely say it would build a gravel road, not a paved highway – for now that is – and has equally failed to conclusively state that the planned railway route from Tanga to a newly planned port at Musoma / Lake Victoria, would NOT run in parallel with the initially proposed highway route. Much fodder for thought again in a fight which can only be equated to a fight of good and evil, or dark and bright forces, the good guys being the ones to preserve the Serengeti as the UNESCO World Heritage Site it is and honouring the Tanzanian nation's founding father's commitment to Prof. Grzimek of 'Serengeti Must Not Die' fame to preserve the Serengeti for future generations. Watch this space.

KWITA IZINA 2013 WILL NAME A DOZEN NEW GORILLA BABIES

When the Rwanda Development Board's Tourism and Conservation Department holds their annual Kwita Izina Gorilla Naming Ceremony on Saturday, the 22nd June at Kinigi / outside the Volcano National Park, exactly a dozen newborn gorilla babies will be named this year. One of them was only born two days ago to the joy of the park staff and the conservation and tourism fraternity at large. It was Muganga of the Isabukuru group who has given birth to a baby of yet to be determined sex. Namers selected by RDB to perform the actual naming during the high profile ceremony are normally given a choice of two names, at

times three, proposed by the rangers and wardens looking after the gorilla groups, and reflect often the circumstances of the birth, make reference to the location or reflect the mood of the group at the time. Kwita Izina has over the years developed into a weeklong celebration, during which conferences and workshops dedicated to conservation take place, community projects benefiting the people living around the Volcano National Park are handed over, or launched and where sporting and society events are used to mark Rwanda's unwavering commitment to looking after the gentle giants of the Virunga mountains. Travelers from around the world are now regularly planning visits to Rwanda to coincide with the annual Festival of the Gorillas which is unique in the range countries where mountain gorillas are found. Visit www.rwandatourism.com for more information about the country's tourism attractions, how to get there and how best to travel across the Land of a Thousand Hills.





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Have a good week

Gill