

# The Livingstone Weekly

5 May 2013

Dear All

My header is from Lochinvar National Park. Sunset with hundreds of birds – geese, ducks, ibis, storks and cranes – who could ask for more?

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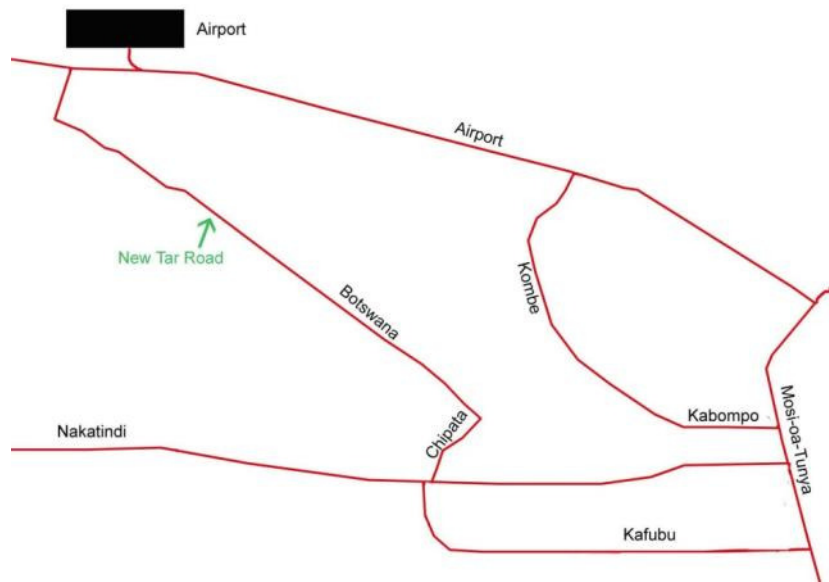
## New Tar Road

A new tar road might help avoid the town for those people going from Nakatindi (Kazungula) Road to the airport.

Although the contractors are still working on the road, it is passable. The road goes through Dambwa, a high density area, so care is needed when driving through as the children do not understand the dangers of cars.

The good news is that there are pavements being added to the road ...

Well done, Roads Department. I just hope that there are funds for planting trees along the road because it is very open and needs shade.



## Musanza Mealie Meal

During the week I took a quick tour of Musanza Milling. I had gone to see Brian Coventry about something and asked to have a look. We all know Musanza as a brewery of chibuku, everyone's favourite opaque beer. Some months ago the company decided to extend their operations into milling. The mill was brought in from Turkey and assembled on site. It is quite an amazing piece of meccano, as Brian put it.



The plant is now operational and employs 20 people.

As I was going around town I asked a few people if they had tried the mealie meal. Some said that they had not tried it; but others said that it was the best. No-one had bad reports about it. So, when you are out shopping for your next bag, give Livingstone's Musanza mealie meal a go.

No, I am not advertising Musanza, I just know that if we all supported our local products we increase employment in the town.



If we buy Livingstone products we keep Livingstone people employed. If we support Zambian products, we keep Zambian people employed ... on the other hand, if we buy South African products, for example, we keep South Africans employed ... So, let's Buy Livingstone where we can.

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## Robin Pope takes over Stanley Safari Lodge

Stanley Safari Lodge had been joined to Robin Pope Safaris. Robin Pope Safaris operates in Luangwa, Liuwa Plain and Malawi. Stanley Safari Lodge was opened in 2004 and is on the road to Mukuni Village.

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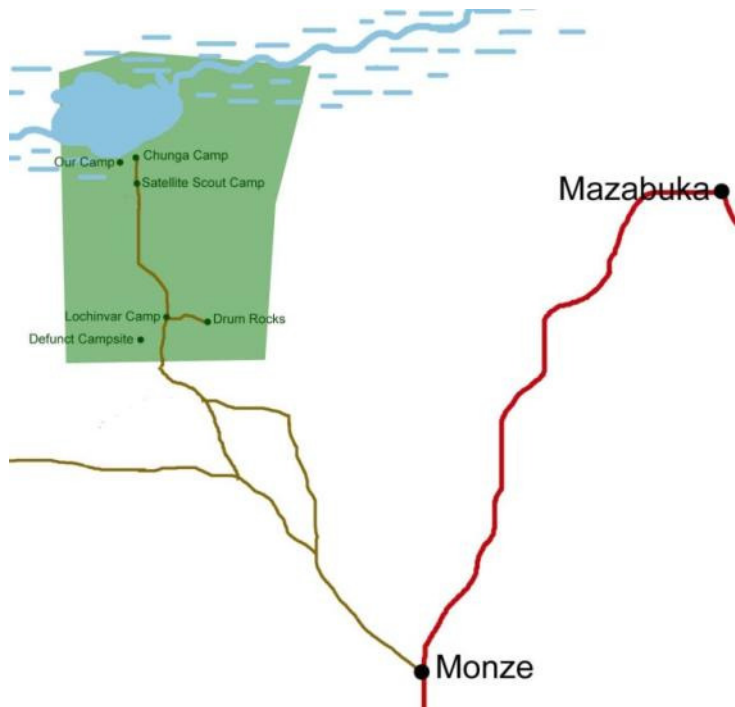
## Lochinvar National Park

Last week I told you about Gwabi Lodge on the Kafue River. From there we drove up the Zambezi Escarpment, to the Mazabuka turnoff, to Monze and then into Lochinvar. The turning from Monze to Lochinvar is easily seen opposite the huge grain silos on the main road.

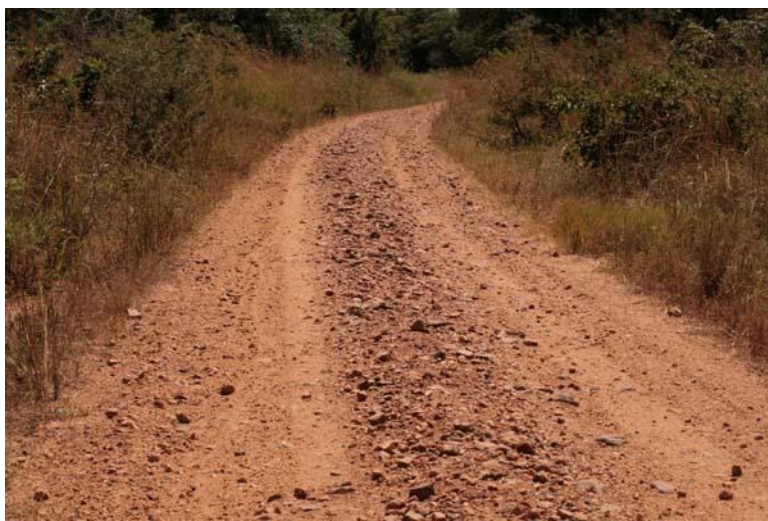


(Please ZAWA, can we have the old sign down and a new one put up to show visitors that you have been given a new road).

Having paid our park fees we headed north to Chunga Lagoon. The scout at the gate had told us that the campsite was still in a state of collapse and that we were free to camp where we wanted. I told him we would camp near the lagoon. There is a newish road in Lochinvar which goes from the entrance to Chunga Lagoon so I was hoping for a pleasant drive through the park ... not so ... The newish road had turned to stone and we rattled along as if we were on cobblestones. It was nasty. Anyhow we reached the lagoon to find that the scout, who is normally on duty there, had gone off on a boat with some researchers. The place was empty.



We followed the sign on the Namwala road which pointed us towards Lochinvar and, because I had been there before, I knew where to turn off this little dirt road onto another track. Having bumped along this one for a while we came to a new road! This was fine and took us straight to the entrance of Lochinvar.



Setting up camp nearby – it wasn't the nicest of spots but it was getting late and we didn't have time to look for a better one – we made some supper and watched the sunset over the lagoon. Perfect.

In the morning we decided to have a bit of a tour. There are people around the lagoon – fishermen – so we packed up the camp for security reasons, and headed off back down the cobblestone road to have a look at the Drum Rocks. We tried to find the hot springs but got lost in a maze of small tracks, completely overgrown, and thought better of it. We filled up our jerry can with fresh water from the borehole at Lochinvar Camp. The camp is a small village; they even told me that they had a school for the children and were hoping soon to have their own clinic. From a purist point of view, I find this quite disconcerting, but

Zambia has to find a way forward for villages inside its National Parks even if they are villages populated by the families of Game Scouts.

We decided that we would stay an extra night, finding a better campsite. The afternoon was to be spent lazing by the lagoon and watching the birds. We found a great spot, not far from the Chunga Scout Camp and parked by a tree ... it was then that disaster happened ...

When I tried to start the car again it wouldn't go. Not a flicker of life ... I opened the bonnet and looked inside and found that the battery had slewed off its perch and ended up into the well between the engine and the radiator ... Panic ... We blamed the breakdown on that awful road and its cobblestones.

Neither Josh nor I are any sort of mechanic and although we managed to get the battery back in place we had two wires hanging about which needed to be attached to something. We connected one but the connection for the other one was a mystery.



We had noticed a satellite scout camp down the road with some scouts in it so I took to the track and walked the 3 km back to them to ask for help. They told me that they had no idea of mechanics but phoned the main camp at Lochinvar (another 14 km away) and I was told that someone would come and assist us. I walked back to camp. We relaxed. But no-one came.

The following morning we waited and no-one came. By lunchtime I was really anxious so I headed back to the satellite scout camp. They again phoned Lochinvar Camp and I was told that someone was on the way. I walked back. We waited. No-one came.

The following morning, knowing that we only had enough drinking water for one more day, I started out as soon as it was light because I thought that I might have to walk the 17 km to the Lochinvar main camp. When I arrived at the satellite camp I found two different scouts! The driver from the main camp had come to change the scouts but had not come to see how we were! It was quite a shocker.

Anyhow, the two new scouts, Benson and Morris, said that they would have a go at fixing the car and walked back with me to our camp. After about half an hour they connected the wire, twiddled a few bits and the car started! My heroes.

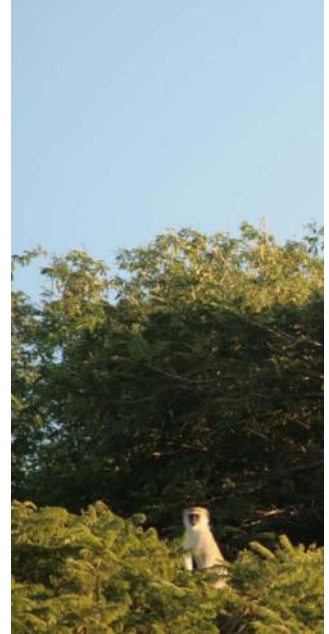
The saddest thing about all this is that I will remember the trip to Lochinvar thinking of the stress of being stuck for two days without anyone, it seemed,



caring a toss about whether we had water or whether we were safe. Fortunately there is not much dangerous in Lochinvar so I was not scared walking. Also we had a jerry can of drinking water. But ...

Anyhow, let me be over with that story. As I said, it will be the memory of our visit.

The good news about Lochinvar is that we saw lots of animals. Lechwe, impala and zebra. A duiker walked near to our camp. The birdlife was stunning and overhead in the mornings and evenings the birds kept on coming ... Josh saw two secretary birds ( while I was doing the trek to see the scouts). There were monkeys and baboons, of course. The first morning I was greeted by some monkeys in the top of a nearby tree – they watched me as I watched them ...



The early mornings were full of bird noises and one of the most classic is the sound of crowned cranes booming ...



This bank of plants in the front of this photo is the mimosa pigra which comes from South America but has found its way to Africa and is one of the worst invasive plants in the world. In Lochinvar it is serious and needs to be dealt with. I know that ZAWA has made attempts to clear a lot of it but it comes back so quickly that one isolated campaign is not enough – it has to be ongoing.



We saw several tortoises. This one gave Josh quite a run-around as he tried to photograph it.



The herds of zebra and lechwe were always in the distance. But we estimated that we saw around 500 lechwe and 300 zebra. The lechwe are the Kafue Lechwe which are only found in this area – on the Kafue Flats.



The lagoon was high with water for miles in the distance, trees flooded around the edge.





The pools were drying up in the seasonal streams. This one had a puddle full of small barbel all flopping around. Some will get eaten by birds but others will dig down into the wet soil and 'hibernate' (aestivate) until the rains come again.

So, that was Lochinvar. As soon as our car was fixed we packed up and left the park. We travelled on the new road from the park to the Namwala Road. The new road was great but the Namwala Road was horrid, so it took us a couple of hours to get onto the main road in Monze where we had two punctures and spent another hour waiting for the tyre to be fixed. Home late but safe ...

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## ZAMBIA

### Fuel Increase

From Zambia Weekly

Government has increased fuel prices by over 21% – with immediate effect. This is one of the highest increments ever seen in Zambia. The country now has the highest fuel prices in the region.

Mines, Energy and Water Development Minister Yamfwa Mukanga explained that prices had gone up because government has decided to stop subsidising fuel (the previous MMD government declared to have done the same in 2010 when prices were increased twice – which President Sata back then, as the leader of the opposition, called an “open scandal”).

Mukanga explained: “Current evidence suggests that the poor have benefited the least from this measure. Key consumers of fuel, who are the mining industries and urban dwellers that are able to own vehicles, have benefitted most from this measure. Given the current economic conditions, government was committed to improve the welfare of the Zambian worker, as well as the most vulnerable and poor in our society,” he said.

In 2012, government allegedly spent KR754 million on fuel subsidies, equivalent to 30% of its health sector budget. Mukanga told the Post that government expects to gain KR2.4 billion by scrapping the fuel subsidy. Mukanga added that the increment could have been even higher: “In order to reduce the level of increase in fuel prices, government has decided to remove the 5% import duty chargeable on crude feedstock. Furthermore government has reduced the KR0.24 that was chargeable on petrol for the strategic reserves fund to KR0.15 on all products”.

Minibus drivers (and probably their – non-car-owning – passengers) protested, and consumer organisations pointed out that the increment would affect anything from transport fares to mealie meal prices. Industry organisations pointed out that it would increase the cost of production, thereby affecting anything from inflation to the trade balance.

Others wondered what happened to the PF government’s campaign promises. The last time fuel prices changed was right after the PF government assumed office, when prices were reduced by an average of KR0.45 per litre. Back then Sata appealed to millers, ZESCO, bus operators and transporters to “pass the benefits to the people”. He also dissolved the Energy Regulation Board on allegations of corruption, and appointed a commission of inquiry to probe public procurement of fuel – with the overall objective to

“bring the cost of fuel in Zambia to the reigning levels in the southern African region,” stated Mukanga’s predecessor, Christopher Yaluma. Instead Zambia now has the highest fuel prices in the region – despite international fuel prices falling in the meantime, argued some commentators.

The commission of inquiry, led by PF Secretary General and Justice Minister Wynter Kabimba, concluded in 2012 that the MMD government had lost KR2 billion to “malpractices” in awarding petroleum supply contracts from 2007 and 2011, and promised to do better. The PF government then proceeded to award fuel contracts to Gunvor Company (spiked crude oil) and Trafigura Oil Company (diesel and unleaded petrol), despite the tender procedures being breached. Later, the Anti-Corruption Commission initiated investigations into allegations that Kabimba had received a kick-back from Trafigura, but eventually cleared him of all wrongdoings.

The main problem with Zambia’s fuel prices is the cost of production, with government insisting on maintaining (and upgrading) the Indeni Petroleum Refinery. Indeni is too small to be able to compete with direct imports of petroleum products. Hitherto it has therefore only survived through tariff protections. Import duty on finished petroleum products is 25%, but only 5% on Indeni crude – and the 5% has just been removed by government, thereby further increasing Indeni’s advantage.

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### **Strict export rules coming**

From the Zambia Weekly

Government has lifted part of the veil on how it intends to implement the new Bank of Zambia (amendment) Bill, which allows the central bank to regulate and monitor imports and exports as well as financial in- and outflows in Zambia. Deputy Finance Minister Miles Sampa told the Financial Times that government intends to force companies to repatriate foreign currency earned from all exports above \$10,000 back into a commercial bank account in Zambia within 60 days. Exporters will then have to provide evidence to the bank, through supporting documents, of the reasons for transferring funds offshore, such as for dividend payments or for the import of equipment. Exporters will also have to provide documentation to show the goods had arrived. Sampa dismissed that the measures amounted to foreign currency control, arguing that the planned legislation is expected to increase the mining sector’s contribution to government revenue from 5% to 20%. The legislation will come into force from mid-May.

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### **Is Zambia utilising research findings in water?**

By BENEDICT TEMBO

From NEPAD Water

“Our blue planet earth is at a most interesting cross-road as water challenges continue to grow more pressing, while demand for the finite resources continue to escalate due to both population and economic growth,” says Daniel Nkhuwa, University of Zambia (UNZA) lecturer in the School of Mines.

Professor Nkhuwa says the requirements to produce more food and energy, as well as the variability of water availability, are putting “our water resources under significant stress”.

“On all fronts, more needs to be done to create a world where the human right to clean water and sanitation is fulfilled for all people. All these issues need to be informed by research. The question is whether enough research is being done to inform decision-making on the development, utilisation and management of this endangered resource,” Prof. Nkhuwa says.

From April 9 to 11 this year, UNZA held a workshop to examine, among others, some of these issues. The country workshop, held at Mika Lodge in Lusaka, was designed to share knowledge on various issues of water development, utilisation and management in Zambia and the entire southern African region. The workshop was organised under the auspices of the Southern African Network of Water Centres of Excellence (SANWATCE), which is an initiative of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). ...

“The meeting observed that intensifying competition for water resources by agricultural, industrial, and domestic users will continue to put a lot of pressure on water resources,” Prof. Nkhuwa said. He said the cause for this situation was identified as having been:

- (i) the country not being able to challenge its scientists to solve some water-related developmental issues, and
- (ii) research not receiving adequate attention, which has led to policy and decision-making remaining uninformed. Further, the meeting identified the following research and development gaps in the water sector, which must be addressed in order ‘to ensure that our people have fair access to the resource and related services regardless of their economic and social status.’

Currently, the meeting noted, there is inadequate research being undertaken in the country to:

- Determine the impact of land use changes in areas of rapidly growing populations on water resources (both surface and groundwater)
- Assess effects of climate change scenarios and drivers on the country’s surface water and groundwater resources.
- Assess the capacities of treatment plants in the country’s major cities (environmental audit of the treatment plants).
- Seek solutions to some existing societal challenges, including those that utilise indigenous knowledge.
- Assess the amount of available water resources in the country, especially groundwater.
- Answer the ‘How’ question in the implementation of the Water Resources Management Act with regard to;
- Who implements what, so that there is minimal duplication.
- Making operations sustainable.

Therefore, for water to sustain lives and meet the socio-economic needs of the country’s citizens, there is need to:

- (i) support research activities in the acquisition of water data through continuous monitoring,
- (ii) analyse and assess data and information, and
- (iii) provide relevant feedback to decision-makers and stakeholders. ...

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### **Immigration at Vic Falls, Kazungula and Sesheke to be computerized.**

In a report this week, we are told that the three border posts near Livingstone are to be computerized. 20 computers, 15 webcams, 15 fingerprint scanners and 9 printers have been sourced. Zamtel is doing the connection work. The computers will link to Lusaka and it is expected that this will help speed up procedures at the border.

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### **Now we have Prepaid Water Meters**

In an article this week we are told that Lusaka Water and Sewerage Company is to install prepaid metres for water. I assume it won’t be long before they get everywhere ...

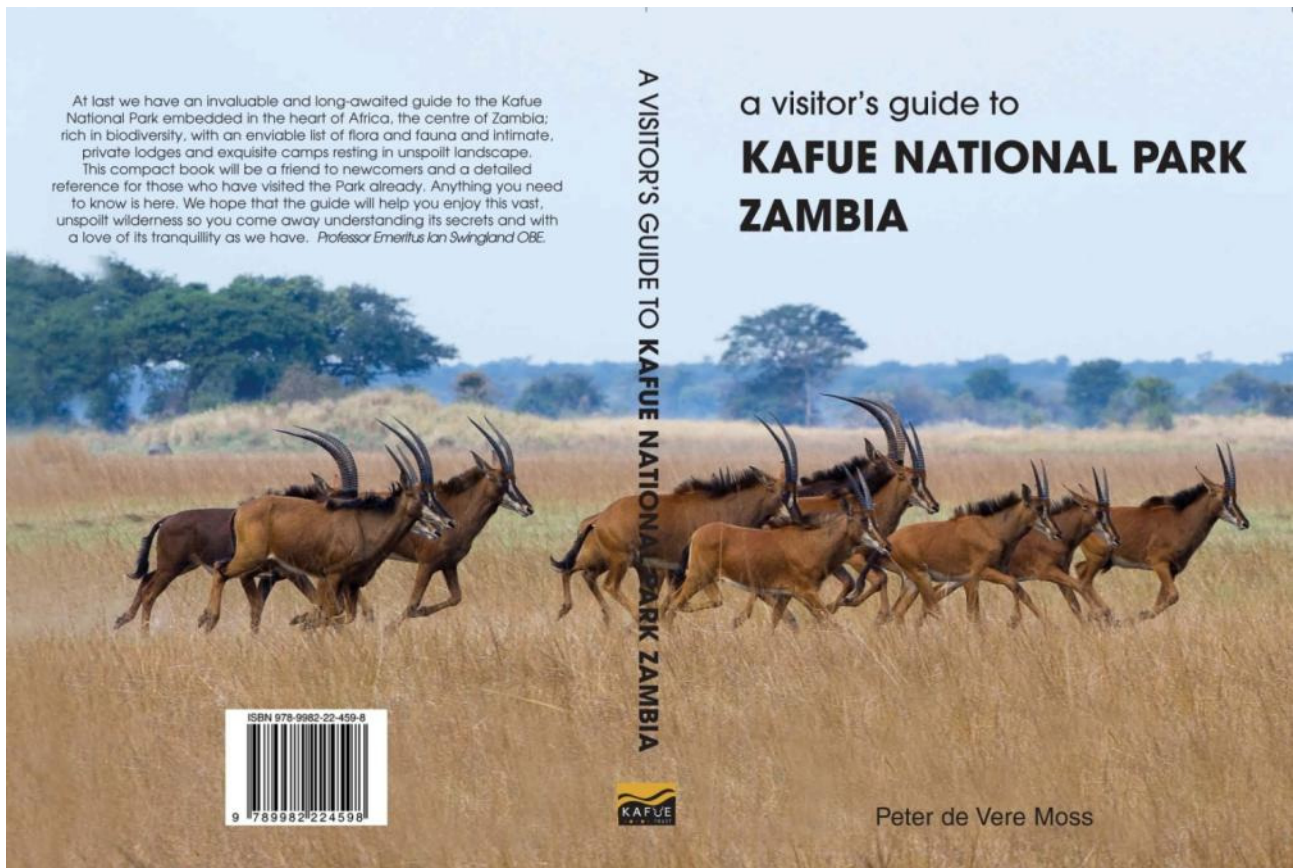
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### **Kafue National Park**

A new book for visitors to Kafue National Park is being printed. The book is written by Peter de Vere Moss and produced by the Kafue Trust. As I write this it is probably coming off the printing press ... Ready for Indaba ... It is a mine of information.

I love Kafue National Park and thought that I knew all about it, but this book has shown me that there is so much more to learn. Thoroughly researched, the book has all the information you need to know and is a ‘must’ for all tour operators in Zambia and prospective visitors to the park. It lists all the lodges, along with their GPS coordinates, giving details on how to get there and what to see on the way.

I think what I find most interesting is the list of antelopes (as well as other mammals, birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles) in Kafue. There are more species of antelope in Kafue than any other park in Africa. I always knew this, but to have them listed with a photo of each is incredible to see.



The book does, though, itemize the issues which face the park like fires and poaching. It is not one of those books which glamorises the park – it tells it as it is. To me, this makes the book more special.

The book is a collaboration of all the lodges in Kafue and, for that, it is detailed and accurate. The descriptions of the areas of Kafue – from Nanzhila and Busanga Plains, the Kafue River, the Itezhi-Tezhi Dam to the mopane woodland and the tsetse fly – show the passion behind the book.

I do not know the price yet, but if you would like a copy, let me know and I will order some. For those of you going to Indaba, look out for Steve Smith from Nanzhila Plains Safari Lodge because he will be clutching some.

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## ZIM-ZAM

### Free Visas for Delegates

It was announced this week that delegates to the UNWTO would be given free visas to Zambia and Zimbabwe. The announcement was made in Addis Ababa at the African Union's head office.

According to a report, David Phiri, Deputy Minister of Tourism in Zambia, said that a regime had been worked out so that travellers could move easily and not be frustrated at the borders.

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## Great Zimbabwe

Great Zimbabwe has been named by the Zimbabwe government as a place which has to be developed for tourism, along with Victoria Falls Town and Kariba Town. They see that tourism is a way to earn much-needed income for the country. Great Zimbabwe lies near the town of Masvingo to the east of Bulawayo.

The ruins of Great Zimbabwe were part of the Shona Empire built up between 1100 and 1400 AD. During this time there was trade with the east coast - Great Zimbabwe had gold. The end of Great Zimbabwe came when the population grew too much for the environment to cope with – the people needed food, firewood and water, but the land around could no longer support this vast number of people. The incredible structures built over hundreds of years were abandoned, only to be brought to the world's attention in the late 1800s.

Great Zimbabwe is one of five UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Zimbabwe. The others are Victoria Falls, Mana Pools, Khami Ruins and Matobo Hills.

The nearby town of Masvingo receives its water from Lake Mutirikwe (Kyle). The lake was formed when a dam was built on the Mutirikwe River in 1960. At that time the farmers were planting large crops of sugar cane and lots of water was essential. The water levels in the dam fluctuate greatly. In the 1980s the water levels were very low because of low rainfall. Again, now, the levels are low.



In a report this week is the disturbing news that more and more chemicals are required to treat the water from Lake Mutirikwe because raw sewage is leaking into the lake ... and this because of power cuts which plague the town.

Mayor Chakabuda: *The recent increase in power cuts continues to affect operations at our Rujeko sewer reticulation pump resulting in massive pollution of Lake Mutirikwi as raw sewage flows freely into the lake.*

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## Colour-coding Waste

From Environment Africa

Environment Africa, Plastix Inc. and LFT would like to thank all who came on Saturday to the launch of the colour coded bins, bin liners and the Funky bins. We had a great turn out, over 120 people came and shared in a morning of recycling with wonderful teas and eats sponsored by Plastix.

Sometime back, I sent out an email asking for input from Zimbabweans to help come up with colour codes for recyclable waste and thanks to all who participated, we have now come up with the colour codes which have been approved by EMA, the Environment Management Agency.

Red = Glass

Blue = Cans

Yellow = Paper

Green = Plastic

Black = General Waste, which will be thrown away and end up on the landfill.

70 sets of the colour bags were donated by Environment Africa to the Monavale Recycling programme which is being run at the BS Leon Trust and we do hope more centres will be created. Lake Chivero will soon have a recycling centre thanks to Mr. Zachary Wazara. Greendale Recycling Centre is operational at 76 Queen Elizabeth Road and the Avondale Recycling Centre will be launched around the 5th June to mark World Environment Day.

Please come and buy your set of coloured household bin liners from Environment Africa. USD2.50 for a packet of 10. Available NOW. Funky bins and wheelie bins also available on order. Individuals, Schools and Businesses are all encouraged to get involved.

Environment Africa encourages all to get involved in recycling and separation at source. One persons waste is another persons income. Reduce - Reuse - Recycle. For more information get hold of Mukundi Mutasa: [recycling@environmentafrica.org](mailto:recycling@environmentafrica.org)

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## NAMIBIA

### **Victor, the very lucky pangolin**

By: MICHAEL DRAKE

**UNDER THREAT ...** A released pangolin fitted with a radio transmitter. Scale damage is visible along its left side.

IN March, life was looking rather bleak for Victor, the Cape pangolin. He had been captured from the wild by a poacher and was being kept in a box while his captor searched Walvis Bay for a buyer. Luckily, a member of the public heard about this illegal plan and alerted the authorities to it.



The Ministry of Environment and Tourism was informed about the operation and set up a sting operation. On 28 March, the seller was arrested as he attempted to sell Victor to an undercover police officer. While his captor was awaiting his chance to apply for bail, Victor was transferred to the Mundulea Pangolin Research Project, located south of Otavi.

The next evening, Victor was fitted with a radio transmitter and released into the nature reserve. Since then, researchers have been tracking Victor to study how he is acclimatising to his new home. Researchers at Mundulea hope that the data collected from Victor's release will benefit future pangolin rescues worldwide and will also contribute to an estimate of Namibia's pangolin population levels. Currently, very little is known about pangolin life history and Victor will have an invaluable future as a research pangolin.

So far, Victor has been doing very well, settling in a territory about 2 km from where he was released and feeding successfully on his own.

"Victor is very lucky, not only that he was rescued, but also that he was found in such good condition," said Mundulea's project leader Bruno Nebe.

"Many pangolins that are rescued from poachers are either severely dehydrated or physically injured from poachers clipping and even pulling out their scales," Nebe said.

Studies in Namibia and South Africa have shown that released pangolins have a high mortality rate, especially if they are not completely healthy when released. ...

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## Mtunzini

I have put in articles about the Fairbreeze mine previously – TLW29July12 and TLW25Sep11. Conservationists are worried about the effects the mine will have on nearby Mtunzini and Nature Reserves. Tronox, the company which wants to start the open pit mine is using all the right words by offering jobs and income for the government. It seems to be going their way, but there is one last effort by conservationists – Tronox has not been given water licences.

Fresh water is in short supply in South Africa and a resource that the government has to take care of. Already I have put in stories about river pollution in South Africa and many people being unable to drink the water nearby – all caused by mining in their regions which has polluted rivers and underground streams.

Here is part of the latest news from Mtunzini:

*We have now been fighting against the mine for almost three years. We have already delayed Tronox to such an extent that it appears the whole Fairbreeze mining project could be under threat. Over this time we have participated in, and are still participating in, all the relevant authorisation processes which include environmental authorisation, water use licences for the slimes dams and the raw water supply and the town planning approval for the rich ore body 100m south of the town.*

*We now have a much clearer idea of what we can expect once mining begins. There will be dust – lots of it. It appears that there could be flooding in the nature reserve as a result of the mine. Mud and silt from the mine will foul the Siyaya River as it runs past Twinstreams on its way to the sea, and could eventually contaminate the sea and the beach.*

*The shore current will carry this muddy water north to the Mtunzini beach spoiling that too. The mine will be very visible from the entrance to town and also from the beach. While Tronox plays all this down, it is our responsibility to make these threats to our town known and, more importantly, to prevent them.*

*You will be aware that we recently went to court to try and stop Tronox commencing site construction. We lost this case on a technicality, and also received a costs order against us. While this is certainly something we could have done without, in the great scheme of things this is a side show, and by no means reflects the overall strength of our position and ability to stop the mine. The recent Fairbreeze sod turning ceremony, attended by Tronox and local elected officials, was premature and cynical in the face of our rights and all the authorisations which must still be obtained by Tronox.*

*So why do we claim to be in a strong position? Do we really have any chance of stopping the mine? The real issue for Tronox is when will it be able to start mining at Fairbreeze. Their original plan was to start mining at Fairbreeze in 2013 to supply the central processing plant in Empangeni, as the Hillendale mine stopped production.*

*This has not transpired. Mineral extraction at the Hillendale mine has stopped and the Empangeni plant is now being fed by imports from Namaqualand, Mozambique and possibly even Australia.*

*Tronox requires the water use licences for Fairbreeze by July to be able to continue construction, for mining to be in production by July 2015. Environmental law allowed Tronox to start with early site construction at*



*risk, but without the water use licence they cannot do further construction or start mining. The water use licences are absolutely critical to Tronox and we will contest them because there is too much uncertainty and risk. Also, the town planning approval for the Fairbreeze C Ext land right next to town is still required. Tronox cannot mine C Ext without this planning approval by the uMlalazi Municipality. Running a heavy industrial process so close to town is an absolute town planning no-no, and we are confident that we will prevent this approval which will deny Tronox the richest ore body of all. - Barbara Chedzey.*

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## **Fixing a Hippo**

28 January 2013

Vets in St. Lucia braved crocodile-infested waters to give medicine to a two-tonne hippo, one of the most fearsome animals in the world. The pictures show the extraordinary lengths the medics will go to ensure the welfare of the powerful and dangerous mammals.

Dr Dave Cooper, 60, oversaw the risky operation, where experts were trying out a new dosage of drugs on the beast.

Deadly: Hippos kill more people than any other animal in Africa. While veterinary students looked on and took notes, a team of 12 people set about bringing the thrashing animal under control.

The hulking hippo was first shot with a sedation dart, allowing the vets and gamekeepers to pull the blindfolded beast by rope towards the riverbank to carry out the procedure. The exercise was held to teach pupils how to safely give medicine to sick animals without putting themselves or the creatures in harm's way.

The vets used a new mixture of drugs to make the beast docile enough for people to get up close, but not so sleepy that the hippo would drown, a common problem in the past. They showed the students how to top-up the drug combination - to avoid the hippo regaining its senses and attacking the group - how to administer antibiotics and the method for injecting reversal drugs into the muscles under the hippo's tongue to wake it up.

A brave vet then carefully blindfolds the sedated animal.

Dr Kock, a senior lecturer at the faculty of veterinary science at the University of Pretoria, in South Africa, said: 'Hippos can be extremely dangerous and their teeth are lethal. During the night they leave the water and travel up to 20 miles to feed. People and communities who live by the riverbanks and who go to the water to wash and bathe can often bump into them as the hippos return in the morning.'



'Hippos can be very aggressive and they are capable of chomping a person in half.' Hippos are among the most dangerous animals in the world and are responsible for more deaths in Africa than any other species.

'On this occasion we had to be very careful. Although the hippo was sedated it was still awake and could give you a nasty bite,' Dr Kock added. 'There were also other hippos in the water and a few crocodiles about in there so we had to exercise extreme caution.

Treatment: The antibiotics are injected into the hippo.

'You can see from the pictures it is still awake and watching us. We had to approach it from behind and put straps around its jaw. Once this had been done we had a bit more freedom to move around. By doing this it should help us treat the hippos without putting their lives in danger and it can help us to lead hippos away from situations where they come into close contact with humans.

'This new combination of drugs is fantastic because it means we can safely treat the hippos without harming them and causing them to drown.'

The hippo is guided back into the water and groggily goes on its way, with minor discomfort and with the vet team perfectly safe



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## WOLFGANG'S COLUMN

### UGANDA LAUNCHES FIRST MOBILE GUIDE APP

Following a flurry of app launches across the border in Kenya has Uganda now pulled level, when The Pearl Guide launched their own Uganda Guide App earlier this week.

The comprehensive guide application can be downloaded on to iPhones from the 'App Store' and avails a wide range of services for visitors to Uganda.

On their website the promoters describe their handiwork as: 'the ultimate travel guide to Africa's most diverse and traveler-friendly country with clear maps and detailed coverage of all the best Uganda attractions'.

Find detailed practical advice on what to see and do in Uganda, relying on up-to-date descriptions of the best hotels, bars, clubs, shops and restaurants of all cuisines.

The Uganda Guide App gives you the key to a memorable experience in The Pearl of Africa.

Key Features of the Uganda Guide App

- ★ A detailed sights section with all the attractions of Uganda.
- ★ Complete background information on Uganda and traveler requirements
- ★ Explore by Map
- ★ Filter the map to show you only the facilities you're looking for near you (Hotels, Restaurants, Bars, Car Rentals and so much more)

★ Smart listing of Points of Interest: See photo and description of place, Tap Phone Number to dial, Tap Email Address to send email, Tap Website to view site and further info and tap Map Pin to see Map Location.

★ Eating out section with Uganda's best restaurants.

★ Discover the nightlife of Uganda! Bars, Nightclubs, Cinema, Cultural Dance and much more.

★ Find services fast using the comprehensive search section! Car Rental, Currency Exchange, Tour Operators, Cabs and more.

★ Smart mini apps! Phrasebook, Trip Journal for sharing experiences, Expense Tracker, Bus Fare Finder and Find A Tour tool that gives you tour options depending on your budget.

Way to go to help promote visits to The Pearl of Africa which for 2013 has been named by National Geographic as among their top destinations in the world. So come visit or at least take a sneak preview via the new Uganda Guide App. Visit their Facebook page via

[www.facebook.com/thepearlguide?hc\\_location=stream](https://www.facebook.com/thepearlguide?hc_location=stream) or their main company website via

[www.thepearlguide.co.ug](http://www.thepearlguide.co.ug) for more information on their services to Uganda's tourism industry, consumers and visitors.

### **UWA COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY NOW SUBJECT TO ENQUIRY**

In a twist of events is information emerging from the Ministry of Tourism that the Commission of Enquiry into the Uganda Wildlife Authority, which dominated headlines for a while in 2010/11, is now itself coming under scrutiny for the apparent failure to account for funds given to them to carry out their work.

The commission was put into place by the notorious self styled Minister of Crocodiles, aka Minister for Tourism Kahinda Otafire, after he installed his personal friend and physician as chairman of UWA who then ran riot with demands for massive increases in remuneration and locked horns with the then management trying to protect the organization from being turned into a personal cash cow. Chaired by former Supreme Court Justice George Kanyeihamba, who is now increasingly seen as a maverick eccentric, the commission itself came under sustained fire over allegations of witness intimidation, appropriating itself powers it did not have, vindictive witch hunts and in the end widely dissenting views by members over their report, which the then minister Prof. Kamuntu – himself at the receiving end of Kanyeihamba's foaming wrath – rejected.

Ministry sources now claim that their auditors have failed to establish accountability for much of the over 280 million Uganda Shillings advanced to the commission, much of it paid in form of allowances, fund for upcountry trips not undertaken and other budget items. The lack of field visits in particular further tore into the substance of the already soiled report, as many of the conclusions now appear purely based on often hotly contested testimonies but not inspection of the locations in question, leaving many now wondering what kangaroo court Kanyeihamba conducted, which left the reputation of many senior stakeholders dented at the time. Notable was the initial budget for a probe committee, later turned into a commission of enquiry, only just over 70 million, but eventually quadrupled on insistence of Kanyeihamba, without however producing tangible results leading to any prosecutions, while the time frame too was at least twice extended to complete the task before tourism minister Prof. Kamuntu shut the door on the commission by rejecting any further requests for time extensions. This fact however was seemingly ignored by Kanyeihamba who outlived his mandate by several more weeks before literally being locked out of his offices at the time. Hunter turned hunted it seems and how the once high and mighty fall.

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## **OTHER STUFF**

### **Can You Have Too Much Solar Energy?**

Germany's little-guy suppliers are destabilizing big power companies.

by Andrew Curry

Andrew Curry is a freelance foreign correspondent based in Berlin. He covers science, culture, and politics for a variety of U.S. and European magazines.

It's been a long, dark winter in Germany. In fact, there hasn't been this little sun since people started tracking such things back in the early 1950s. Easter is around the corner, and the streets of Berlin are still

covered in ice and snow. But spring will come, and when the snow finally melts, it will reveal the glossy black sheen of photovoltaic solar panels glinting from the North Sea to the Bavarian Alps.

Solar panels line Germany's residential rooftops and top its low-slung barns. They sprout in orderly rows along train tracks and cover hills of coal mine tailings in what used to be East Germany. Old Soviet military bases, too polluted to use for anything else, have been turned into solar installations. Twenty-two percent of Germany's power is generated with renewables. Solar provides close to a quarter of that. The southern German state of Bavaria, population 12.5 million, has three photovoltaic panels per resident, which adds up to more installed solar capacity than in the entire United States.

With a long history of coal mining and heavy industry and the aforementioned winter gloom, Germany is not the country you'd naturally think of as a solar power. And yet a combination of canny regulation and A worker mounts solar panels on the roof of a barn in Binsham, Germany, in March 2012. Widespread public support for renewables have made Germany an unlikely leader in the global green-power movement—and created a groundswell of small-scale power generation that could upend the dominance of traditional power companies.

Twenty years ago, it was clear solar power wasn't going to get anywhere by itself. Photovoltaic panels were expensive and inefficient. Even solar systems designed to heat water, a far less technologically tricky task, were bad buys on the open market. Producing electricity from sunlight costs 10 times more than generating power using coal or nuclear energy. "The early systems might as well have been made out of gold," says David Wedepohl, a spokesman for Germany's Solar Industry Association.

In 1991, German politicians from across the political spectrum quietly passed the Erneuerbare Energien Gesetz (renewable energy law), or EEG. It was a little-heralded measure with long-lasting consequences. The law guaranteed small hydroelectric power generators—mostly in Bavaria, a politically conservative area I like to think of as the Texas of Germany—a market for their electricity. The EEG required utility companies to plug all renewable power producers, down to the smallest rooftop solar panel, into the national grid and buy their power at a fixed, slightly above-market rate that guaranteed a modest return over the long term.

The prices were supposed to balance out the hidden costs of conventional power, from pollution to decades of coal subsidies. Investors began to approach solar and wind power as long-term investments, knowing there was a guaranteed future for renewable energy and a commitment to connecting it to the grid. Paperwork for renewables was streamlined—a big move in bureaucracy-loving Germany. The country invested billions in renewables research in the 1990s, and German reunification meant lots of money for energy development projects in the former East.

Now German companies lead the world in solar research and technology. The handful of companies that make inverters, the devices that reverse the flow of electricity and feed power from rooftop solar panels back into national grids, are almost all German. On a sunny day last May, Germany produced 22 gigawatts of energy from the sun—half of the world's total and the equivalent of 20 nuclear power plants.

The "feed-in" laws and subsidies pushed innovation to the point where solar panels are cheap enough to compete on the open market in Germany and elsewhere. The price for solar panels has fallen 66 percent since 2006, and the cost of solar-generated power may be competitive with coal in a few years, according to a study by UBS. Already, solar projects are thriving in places like India and Italy despite a lack of government subsidies or support, and a recent Deutsche Bank report predicted "grid parity" in Bavaria by next year.

You might think Germany would be smug about all its solar success. But, as usual, folks here are full of doubts. Part of the reason solar panels are getting cheaper is competition from China, which is threatening to push more expensive German producers out of business. Last year, German conservatives tried to end solar subsidies entirely, arguing that plummeting prices were encouraging too many people to install solar

panels. They said that the subsidies come at the expense of city dwellers without solar-ready roofs, low-income electricity consumers, and investments in other forms of renewable energy. Even environmentalists have begun to grumble about the solar boom, which sucks up half of Germany's funding for renewables but provides just 20 percent of green power.

The proliferation of privately owned solar has large power companies in Germany worried. For two decades, they've been forced to facilitate and finance their competition, helping turn customers into producers. Soon, rooftop solar and other small-scale, locally owned renewables could upset the market for coal and nuclear power.

Here's why that's a problem: Renewable energy sources like wind and solar generate power intermittently, dependent on the sun or fickle breezes. Until researchers can find a way to store energy at a large scale, coal and nuclear plants—which can't simply be switched on and off at will—must be kept running to guarantee a steady stream of electricity when the sun isn't shining.

That means overproduction of power during daylight hours, as the country's ample solar energy floods onto the grid along with electricity produced by power plants. Power companies traditionally charge more during the day, when offices are full and manufacturing plants are in full swing, so the glut of daytime solar power reduces their profit. The proliferation of solar panels on homes also takes high-margin residential customers off the grid at peak hours. And the energy surplus has driven prices for traditional coal and nuclear power down, even as renewables are still guaranteed more-than-competitive rates. As power companies try to pass the costs to consumers in the form of higher bills, that just encourages more people to put solar panels on their roofs.

Already, Germany's power companies are closing power plants and scrapping plans for new ones. Germany had a national freak-out after the Fukushima disaster and decided to abolish nuclear power by 2023. Meanwhile, energy prices continue to sink, and solar installation continues to grow. By decentralizing power generation, the renewables boom could do to the power industry what the Internet did to the media: Put power in the hands of the little guy, and force power companies to rethink how they do business. As soon as the sun comes out, that is.

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## Overbooked: The Exploding Business of Travel and Tourism

Elizabeth Becker

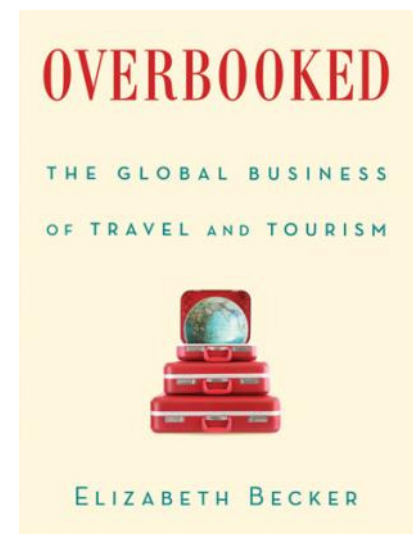
From The National, USA

For too long, argues the author Elizabeth Becker, the tourism industry has been treated as anything but. Tourists, she writes in her highly readable new tome, *Overbooked: The Exploding Business of Travel and Tourism*, rarely think of travel "as one of the world's biggest businesses, an often cut-throat, high-risk and high-profit industry". Instead, they're thinking about suntans, new locales, "and the liberating freedom of taking a break from their own lives", Becker maintains.

It may surprise many of the sunburnt beachgoers out there that tourism is the biggest - that's right, the biggest - industry in the world. In 2007, the first global accounting system revealed that tourism contributed US\$7 trillion to the world economy and was (and is) the largest employer, with 250 million associated jobs.

Clearly, "global" becomes "local", because tourism can have a huge impact on the economies of the world's poorer nations, such as Zambia, Cambodia and Sri Lanka - all of which figure into *Overbooked* - as well as richer nations such as the United States, China and France (now the planet's number one destination).

Travel, moreover, has global political and philanthropic implications. "Tourism is the greatest modern voluntary transfer of wealth from rich countries to poor countries," declares David Hawkins of George



Washington University in Washington, DC. Hawkins, who is the institution's Eisenhower professor of tourism, once represented the US before the UN World Tourism Organization - yes, there actually is such a body - until the US pulled out for political reasons, but more on that later. ...

Zambia is a good example (of boosting tourism), given its elephants, baboons and hippos, which bring in safari-minded tourists. Copper is still king in Zambia, but tourism to this African nation contributes \$1 billion a year and that figure is growing. Becker focuses on South Luangwa National Park, where from 1975 to 1989 the elephant population was decimated, until conservation became a priority, not only to save these magnificent creatures but to save tourism.

Read more: <http://www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/books/book-review-tourism-the-biggest-industry-in-the-world-is-rarely-thought-of-that-way-author-elizabeth-becker-says#ixzz2SLDLGX7Y>

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## THE SMILE

A blonde man spies a letter lying on his doormat. It says on the envelope "DO NOT BEND". He spends the next 2 hours trying to figure out how to pick it up.

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Have a good week

Gill