

MALAWI

GOVERNMENT PARTNER
Malawi Department of National Parks & Wildlife (DNPW)

LIWONDE NATIONAL PARK & MANGOCHI FOREST RESERVE

903 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2015

MAJOR FUNDERS Wyss Foundation, Stichting Nieuwgeluk Philosophy, U.S. DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), People's Postcode Lottery & WWF Belgium

MAJETE WILDLIFE RESERVE

715 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2003

MAJOR FUNDERS
People's Postcode Lottery, Wyss Foundation & WWF Belgium

NKHOTAKOTA WILDLIFE RESERVE

1,794 KM² | AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2015

MAJOR FUNDER Wyss Foundation, UBS Optimus Foundation UK, U.S. DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), People's Postcode Lottery, Annenberg Foundation & WWF Belgium

In Liwonde National Park, 2022 surveys revealed healthy populations of fish stocks in the rivers which have created a beneficial spill-over for fishermen outside the park © Naude Heunis

PROSPERITY THROUGH ACTIVE CONSERVATION

majete wildlife reserve Malawi

PARK MANAGER
John Adendorff

MALAWI — With an agreement signed with the Malawi Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) in 2003, Majete Wildlife Reserve is African Parks' longest standing mandate. Nineteen years ago, Majete was an empty forest devoid of wildlife, adding no benefit to the people of Malawi. But, through the management agreement with DNPW, a joint vision to transform the reserve was initiated. Today, Majete is a living example of how sound management and community buy-in transforms a landscape into a mutually beneficial asset for both people and wildlife. After reintroducing 17 new species, including rhino, elephant, leopard, buffalo, cheetah, giraffe, and wild dog, Majete has become a thriving wildlife haven. This year, wild dog and giraffe both produced the first generation of offspring, showing the remarkable success of their reintroduction. Today, Majete is one of Malawi's premier wilderness destinations. Despite being hard-hit by Cyclone Ana and enduring significant destruction, the reserve generated its highest ever tourist income. Over 165 permanent staff are employed and community run initiatives, such as Honey with Heart and a fish farming project, benefit hundreds of community members each year. Majete is a shining example of building resilience and testament to how a well-managed protected area can achieve long-term sustainability.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION — 2022 was a milestone year, seeing the first generation of Majete-born individuals from reintroduced species including nine wild dog pups, with eight surviving; five giraffe calves, three of which survived. After struggling to adapt to Majete's conditions, the cheetah have done well, with four of the cubs born in 2021 surviving their first year, and five new cubs born this year. Using identikits, the 52 lion were accounted for, with 18 cubs born this year. Fifty-three zebra, 48 kudu, 20 eland and 19 Lichtenstein's hartebeest were captured to restock other parks in Malawi. The biennial aerial census counted over 12,000 animals, an increase since 2020, despite the 2021 drought impacting some species. A reserve wide tree survey was conducted, to verify Majete's carbon storage as part of plans to use nature-based financing solutions to further support the park and local communities.

In park protection, a ranger was killed by poachers, a first-ever incident of its kind in Majete since African Parks management. This tragic event reminds us that, despite our successes in reducing poaching levels, the risks related to poaching are constantly evolving and we must continually adapt to mitigate these risks. In response, Majete has increased its focus on community engagement and strengthening the conservation law enforcement team's capability through training and skills development. Thirteen new recruits completed BFR training in Liwonde National Park and joined the Majete team. Eight rangers undertook specialist training in wildlife tracking, four attended a specialist lifesaver course and two underwent training with the Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) programme. The new Investigations Unit had training with an Information for Conservation Network (ICON) mentor. Development of the new unit was initiated to deliver more strategic park protection operations, such as intelligence gathering, ranger deployment and AI monitoring. Majete continued its record of zero rhino or elephant losses to poaching since their reintroduction in 2003 and 2006 respectively.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT — The first quarter of the year was spent assisting communities in the aftermath of Cyclone Ana. This included rebuilding houses and infrastructure, restocking fish farms and providing food, and other items, to households. In response to the 2021 drought, the capacity of irrigation schemes and fish farms was improved by installing new solar panels, pumps and water storage tanks. Five new boreholes were drilled, providing potable water, vital at a time when Malawi is experiencing severe cholera outbreaks. The Honey with Heart project produced 2.9 tonnes of honey, generating US$9,113 in revenue. The year focused on increasing honey yield and quality, while expanding the project to other districts around Majete. The Reading Around the Reserve initiative distributed 6,400 books to primary schools around Majete.



Thawale Camp in Majete Wildlife Reserve. In 2022, tourism revenue in Majete increased by more than 10% compared to pre-Covid-19 records © Gael Vande Weghe

PARK MANAGEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT — Following Cyclone Ana, and three other tropical storms early this year, extensive repairs took place, with grading of 300 km of damaged roads and repairing and reinforcing 35 km of the 144 km fence line. Staff housing was upgraded and two new houses were built. The education campsite was renovated to provide an area for school groups. A honey processing facility was built and certified by the Malawi Bureau of Standards certified, a requirement for honey sales. A new waste management system was implemented at the main staff quarters to improve recycling. Two boreholes fitted with solar pumps were drilled in the south, to improve dry season water availability for wildlife and to distribute elephant throughout the reserve, alleviating pressure on areas close to existing water sources.

TOURISM — The previous 2018 tourism revenue record was broken by an increase of more than 10%. The former Tourism Manager's house was converted to a family unit, increasing occupancy at Thawale to 20 beds. A biopool was built at Thawale, providing a unique guest experience with its natural filtration system using vegetation and wildlife. Although Thawale did well this year, Majete's concessions had some challenges. Mkulumadzi Lodge suffered considerable damage from Cyclone Ana and was closed for the first quarter of the year. Five of its eight units were flooded, while the main reception and swimming pool areas were also impacted.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2023

1. Fit GPS collars on elephant to gain an understanding of their landscape utilisation
2. Upgrade entrance facilities to include a day visitor centre
3. Expand Honey with Heart project to increase harvest to 5,000 kg
4. Continue upgrade of the environmental education facilities
5. Generate income from carbon financing