



**TBCA in Focus**  
Africa's  
first marine  
Transfrontier  
Conservation Area



HANDS ACROSS  
BORDERS



PLANNING FOR  
THE FUTURE  
SURVIVAL OF  
CORAL REEFS IN  
THE GRENADINES

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Transboundary Conservation

# TBeNEWS 10

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# Editorial



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## Welcome to the TB eNEWS!

I am happy to introduce you to the 10<sup>th</sup> issue of the e-bulletin TB eNEWS that is being prepared by the Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group of the IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). We present many stories from all around the world, all showing commitment and great effort of individuals and organisations to advance transboundary conservation. Our regular section, TBCA In Focus, takes us to Ponta do Ouro-Kosi Bay Marine Transfrontier Conservation Area, Africa's first marine Transfrontier Conservation Area, shared between Mozambique and South Africa.

Among other issues, Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group reports on the Hands Across Borders workshop that was held in Glacier National Park in 2016. This capacity building workshop was well appreciated by the participants and we hope to be able to generate new training modules based on the IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guidelines on transboundary conservation (No. 23) and continue with capacity development in different regions, and in partnership with several other institutions. The need to raise the capacity for transboundary conservation was also recognised in Resolution 35, adopted at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Hawai'i in 2016. We would like to encourage implementation of that resolution which sets some important goals for upscaling and strengthening transboundary conservation and cooperation.

It is with great pleasure that I announce that TB eNEWS is being supported by the South African based Peace Parks Foundation (PPF) and IUCN BIOPAMA project in East and Southern Africa. The Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group is very pleased about this new partnership. While in this issue we present PPF, the next issue will provide an overview of the IUCN BIOPAMA project.

Preparation of the TB eNEWS would not be possible without the immense contribution of members and friends of the Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group who recognize this e-bulletin as a valuable means for knowledge and information sharing and distribution.

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue and I look forward to the new stories and updates on your transboundary conservation related work for the 11<sup>th</sup> edition. This and all previous issues are available online at [www.tbpa.net](http://www.tbpa.net).

**Maja Vasiljević**

*Co-Chair, Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group  
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# Africa's first marine Transfrontier Conservation Area

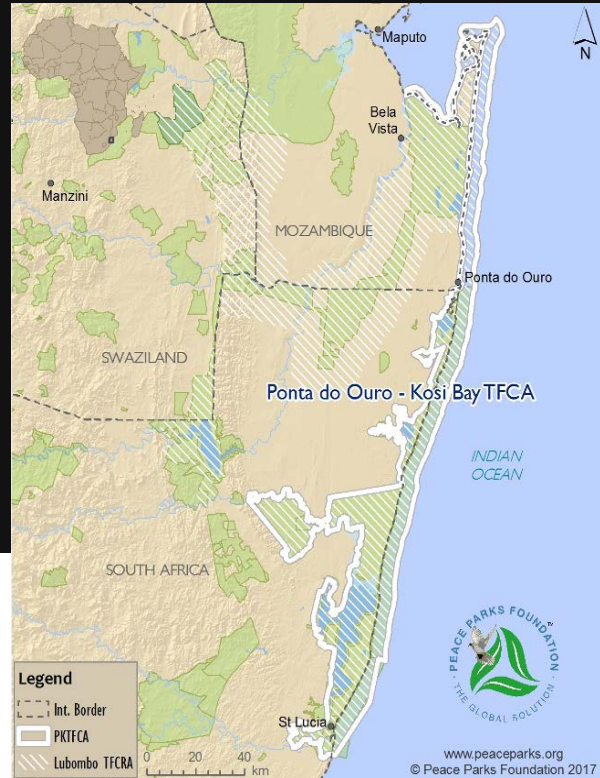
**Name:** Ponta do Ouro-Kosi Bay Marine Transfrontier Conservation Area

**Countries:** Mozambique and South Africa

**Surface:** 4,171.07 km<sup>2</sup>

**Year of formal TB agreement:** 2000  
(Protocol between the governments)

**International designations:** South Africa: iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site, Ramsar Sites: St. Lucia System, Turtle Beaches/Coral Reefs of Tongaland, Lake Sibaya, Kosi Bay



Imagine one hundred kilometres of deserted beach, seeing both elephants and whales in a single glance, and spotting endangered leatherback and loggerhead turtles silently nesting under cover of night. It's not unusual in Africa's first marine Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA).

This marine and coastal TFCA links the Ponta do Ouro-Inhaca coastline of Mozambique with South Africa's iSimangaliso Wetland Park. The area is well known for its biodiversity and combines pristine beaches with major inland lake systems, Africa's largest estuarine system, swamp forests and 25 000 year-old coastal dunes. The TFCA has a rich diversity of marine life and is an important leatherback and loggerhead turtle nesting ground.

In 1994, with the support and mentorship of marine biologists from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, a South African family started a marine turtle monitoring and conservation programme in the southern section of Mozambique's coastline. This became official when, on 14 July 2009, the Mozambican Government declared a 678 km<sup>2</sup> marine protected area, stretching from Ponta do Ouro in the south to the Maputo River Mouth in Maputo Bay in the north.

Community members from both countries are trained as turtle monitors. Throughout the nesting season, stretching from October to the end of March, marine guards and turtle monitors undertake vehicle and foot patrols of the turtle nesting sites to protect the nesting females and their eggs and monitor the number of nesting females. The presence of the monitors is considered vital for the protection of the turtles. The initiative also raises awareness and improves

understanding within the communities in an effort to further protect the turtles.

The reserve's turtle-monitoring programme links up with the one in South Africa's iSimangaliso Wetland Park, where turtles have been protected and monitored since 1963. The iSimangaliso Wetland Park was listed as South Africa's first World Heritage Site in 1999, in recognition of its superlative natural beauty and outstanding global values. iSimangaliso means miracle and wonder, which aptly describes this exceptional place.

New research\*, published in November 2016, indicates that approximately half of the nesting leatherbacks from iSimangaliso do not migrate to distant areas, but rather forage in the coastal waters of the nearby Mozambique Channel. Analyses further indicate that the Mozambique Channel also hosts large numbers of loggerhead turtles. The rare presence of a resident coastal aggregation of endangered marine megafauna highlights the area's importance as a marine biodiversity hotspot.

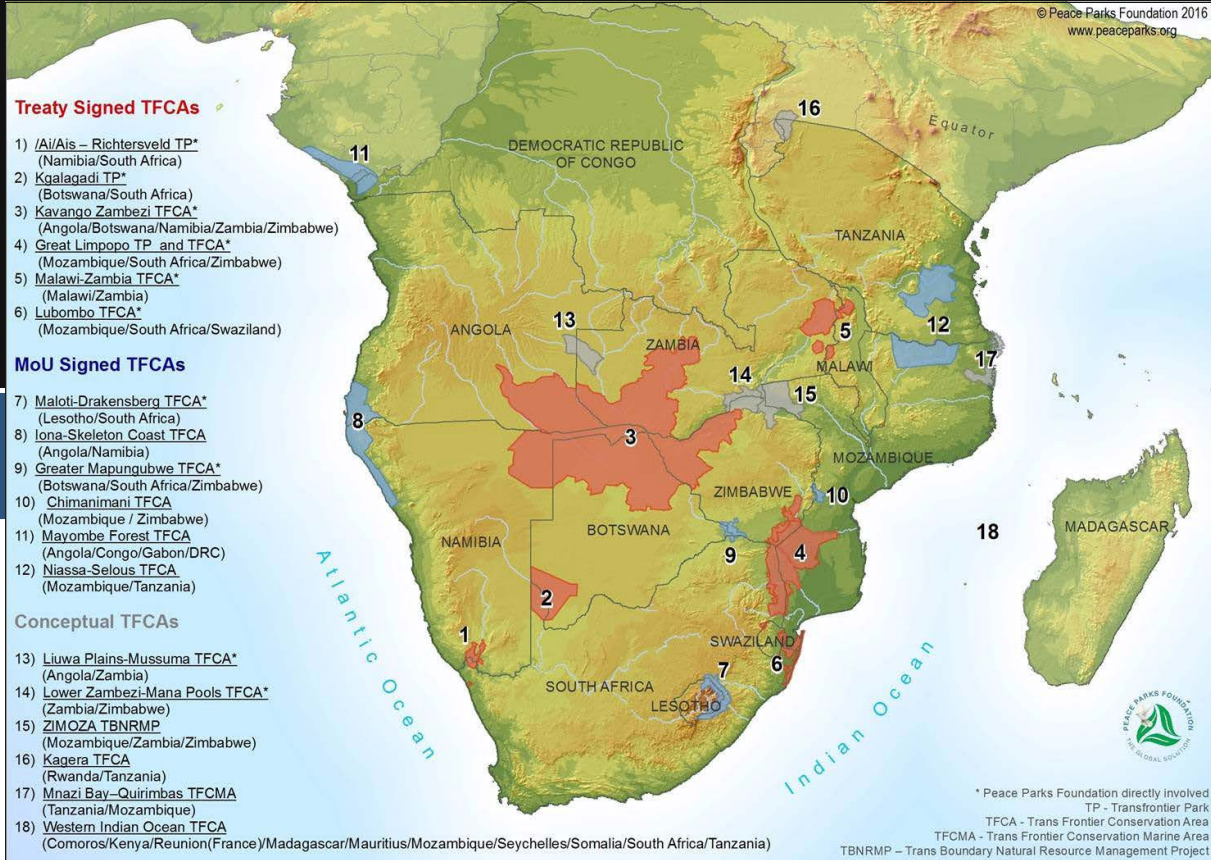
Efforts are ongoing to also list the Mozambican component as a World Heritage Site.

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\* <http://www.nature.com/articles/srep37851>

# Peace Parks Foundation



Since 1997, Peace Parks Foundation (PPF) has facilitated the establishment of Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA), developing human resources, thereby supporting sustainable economic development, the conservation of biodiversity and regional peace and stability. Over the years, the TFCA concept has gained a significant amount of traction and interest from Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, donors, non-governmental organisations, collaborating partners and critics. More than €310 million has been mobilised for TFCA development in southern Africa with promises for substantially more funding becoming available. The financial resources mobilised for TFCAs are by far the largest and most significant source of conservation finance in SADC over the past decade. The SADC region is currently host to 18 TFCAs, with PPF actively involved in the establishment and development of 10 of them.

While the peace park concept is not unique to southern Africa, the region has taken the lead in realising the vision of linking more than one million km<sup>2</sup> of protected areas and ecosystems across international borders in order to create a network that will ensure the preservation of southern Africa's biological diversity, re-open ancient

wildlife migration routes across man-made borders, and promote regional peace and stability between mankind, wildlife and nature.

It is now widely recognised that to save iconic wildlife species, we need not only stronger institutions and law enforcement but also a full assault on poverty, the creation of economic opportunity and the transparent sharing of benefits. To this end, PPF created support programmes to Combat Wildlife Crime, which provides a multi-pronged approach that addresses interventions along the entire supply chain, as well as in Community Development, that addresses those needs that are most threatening to the integrity of TFCAs, such as population pressure on the natural resource base, deforestation due to charcoal production, the need for arable land and illegal hunting for either subsistence or commercial gain. These programmes are being taken to scale by leveraging new technologies.

**Peace Parks Foundation**  
[www.peaceparks.org](http://www.peaceparks.org)

# Transboundary tourism in the /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park



© /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park

The /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park includes the oldest desert in the world and is home to rare flora, archaeological sites, ancient nomadic tribes, and the iconic Fish River Canyon. The /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park has three cross-border tourism products. The Desert Knights Mountain Bike Tour is positioning the park as an international mountain bike destination; the Richtersveld Transfrontier Wildrun is expanding due to demand, and the Desert Kayak Trail has great potential to contribute significant income to the park, with direct benefits accruing to local communities. The Nama people, the oldest people group in the world, live in both South Africa and Namibia. Families and communities were torn apart during the colonial era, but the establishment of the Transfrontier Park has brought families and communities back together and provides sustainable employment opportunities through the development of world class ecotourism products.

The Desert Kayak Trails hosted the first large group of participants down the magnificent Orange River, within the parameters of the /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park, in 2016. This is a fully-catered experience, covering approximately 40 kilometres, camping two nights on the Namibian and two on the South African side.

With funding from Peace Parks Foundation and German Organization for International Cooperation (GIZ), local communities were trained to work as river guides, set up the camps and assist with catering. Between kayaking, participants are taken on short hikes to enjoy the spectacular arid and desert mountain scenery, as well as some of the richest succulent flora in the world. On the river, there are tranquil stretches of still, glassy water, followed by exhilarating rapids. All the while, the river offers a unique perspective on the abundant bird life, riparian forest and animals coming down for a sip of water. Evenings are spent under the stars around the campfire, where Nama guides give participants a fresh take on this alluring area, with colourful storytelling and Nama folklore shared over generations.

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**[Watch a movie here](#)**

# Hands Across Borders



© Maja Vasilijević

Hands Across Borders (HAB): an international workshop on transboundary conservation, held on 13-18 September 2016 in Glacier National Park, USA, gathered about 50 transboundary conservation practitioners and leaders representing 28 transboundary conservation initiatives from six different continents. The workshop built on the IUCN WCPA's Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines *Transboundary Conservation: a systematic and integrated approach* (2015) that were used as a vehicle to build the capacity of the practitioners. Through a mix of presentations, problem-solving clinics, and field trips, the participants shared their experiences in catalyzing, enabling, and sustaining transboundary conservation initiatives across different types of ecosystems, social, economic, and political systems, cultures and languages. The workshop topics focused on cooperative management, transboundary conservation governance, and sustainable financing, while an open space session included discussions on decision-supporting tools, civil society engagement and future leaders.

The HAB workshop was co-organized by the IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, University of Montana, US National Park Service, Parks Canada, International Peace Park Expeditions, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park Association, Glacier National Park Conservancy, Calgary Foundation, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, and supported by

many donors. Among others, the workshop leadership team consisted of a number of members of the WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, including Matthew McKinney, Maja Vasilijević (Co-Chair), Kevan Zunckel (Co-Chair), Michael Schoon (Vice-Chair), Todd Walters and Gary Tabor.

This was a pilot capacity building project, the first of what the organizers hope will be a series of similar international events for a broad cross-section of practitioners and regionally-based training workshops throughout the world. The event coincided with the annual conference of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park Assembly, in part to recognize the essential role of Rotary Clubs and the private sector in facilitating peace parks and transboundary cooperation throughout the world. It also served to recognize the role of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park as the world's first international peace park, to celebrate Glacier National Park's contribution to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the US National Park Service, and to emphasize the unique role of indigenous peoples in transboundary conservation initiatives.

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**Workshop material and report are available [here](#)**

# Planning for the future survival of coral reefs in the Grenadines



In conjunction with the World Oceans Day in 2016, staff from the Grenadines Network of Marine Protected Areas (GNMPA) met in Carriacou, Grenada, to strengthen coral reef management and promote the sustainable use of the oceans. The GNMPA was established among Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2011. “These annual meetings provide opportunities to share information about coral reef and ocean health and to work together to face common challenges,” commented Orisha Joseph of Sustainable Grenadines Inc., “last year our gathering was especially timely since worldwide we have begun to observe the devastating effects of climate change and higher than normal sea temperatures on coral reefs.”

The recent El Niño weather phenomenon with abnormally high temperatures and extensive coral bleaching is also causing Caribbean nations to brace themselves for a potential coral bleaching event. “This could add to the multiple stressors that our coral reefs are facing from pollution, sedimentation and unsustainable fishing. Fortunately, the GNMPA are taking proactive steps towards the protection and future restoration of corals,” explained Joseph.

Three marine protected areas in the GNMPA have established pioneering coral nurseries which grow fragments of coral to be planted out into the reef to help in response to incidents such as coral bleaching. The meeting examined experiences to date in the establishment of these coral nurseries and exploring next steps in incorporating these efforts into effective, science-based and community led natural resource management across the Grenadines. Ongoing monitoring of ocean health, effective protection of fish, education activities for children and communication with visitors have been part of that work.

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual meeting was made possible through support from the United States Agency for International Development–Caribbean Marine Biodiversity Program (USAID–CMBP) and the CaMPAM/SPAW-RAC/TNC Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Area (ECMMAN) Project.

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# Greek ratification of the transboundary Prespa Park Agreement



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On 14 February 2017, after seven years since the signing of the [Agreement for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area](#) by the Ministers of Environment of Albania, Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the European Union Commissioner for the Environment, the Parliament of Greece decided to ratify the Agreement. This development is pivotal for Greece as it is the first time that the country has approved the official establishment of a system of permanent transboundary collaboration. The Agreement is now ready to enter into force and be implemented through the operation of new permanent and official joint institutions with the participation of local and protected area authorities and NGOs, alongside the states authorities.

A Transboundary Prespa Park was established already in 2000 when the [Declaration on the Establishment of the Transboundary Prespa Park](#) relayed a message of peace and cooperation between people of the region, following the years of great upheavals in the region in the 1990s. The area consists of two lakes shared by the three countries, and having three Ramsar designations; Albanian Prespa

Lakes (Albania), Lake Prespa (Macedonia), and Lake Mikri Prespa (Greece). Prespa is also part of a 4,500 km<sup>2</sup> large Ohrid-Prespa transboundary Biosphere Reserve shared between Macedonia and Albania.

In today's world of insecurity, introversion and new nationalisms, the implementation of the international agreement for the Prespa Park takes on an optimistic symbolism once again, as it will cultivate friendship and peaceful coexistence for the sustainable prosperity of local societies on the basis of nature conservation. It is thus reconfirmed that nature conservation is not a restriction, but rather an opportunity and a means for sustainable development; it is also reiterated that the way forward is not isolationism and hostility, but bridging differences and building synergies for the benefit of all.

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**[Learn more about Prespa here](#)**

# A boost to cross-border conservation between Albania and Montenegro



© Oliver Avramoski

The National Agency for Protected Areas of Albania and Public Enterprise National Parks of Montenegro signed a cooperation agreement in December 2016, with a decision to enhance transboundary cooperation in nature conservation. The Memorandum of Understanding is one of the results of fruitful cooperation established within the framework of a project 'Long term support for sustainable transboundary management of Skadar Lake'. The project was implemented by the IUCN Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia that partnered with the Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania, Green Home of Montenegro, protected areas and nature conservation authorities, to work towards the effective management of the Skadar Lake's biodiversity. Funding was provided by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund.

Besides the signed cooperation agreement, major achievements of the project partners include drafting of the second Management Plan for Skadar Lake National Park (2016-2020), following IUCN best practices and standards, a proposal for new management zoning for Lake Shkodra Managed Nature Reserve, covering the

Albanian part of the region, and a Manual Concerning the Legal Aspects of Lake Skadar Protection.

Covering an area of 5,490 km<sup>2</sup>, Skadar is the largest lake on the Balkan Peninsula. It hosts a high diversity of plants and animals, totalling around 930 species of algae, 497 vascular plants, and 430 zooplankton and microfauna species. It is home to 53 fish and 51 herpetofauna species, 282 bird species, and 50 mammal species. Due to the high diversity of habitats and species, Skadar Lake is designated as a protected area both in Albania (Nature Park) and Montenegro (National Park), as well as being recognised internationally as a Ramsar Site and an Emerald Site, and an Important Bird and Plant Area.

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**[More information is available here](#)**

# The Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape



© Yi Shaoliang

The Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape (HKPL) is a transboundary initiative facilitated by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in collaboration with national partners in Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and Tajikistan. It spreads over 67,506 km<sup>2</sup> at a junction of the three highest mountain ranges of the world—the Karakoram, the Hindu Kush, and the Himalaya. The six protected areas are physically interconnected and cover over 47.4% of the landscape. It is an important biodiversity repository, providing extended habitats for keystone species such as the Marco Polo sheep and snow leopard. The transboundary HKPL is also an important watershed nurturing three major rivers, Amu Darya, Tarim and Indus, which support fundamental livelihood opportunities within the Western Himalaya and provide ecosystem services downstream.

The landscape is dominated by indigenous ethnic groups, the Wakhi, Kyrgyz, Sarakuli, Kho, Burusho, Shinaki, Yashkun, Pamiris, and Kazak, who share strong cultural ties, socio-economic interdependence, religion (Islam), the Wakhi language, and dominantly practice pastoralism. However, the region's entire population lives below the poverty line. The fragile desert landscape is remote and offers limited natural bio-resources. Issues of concern are human-wildlife conflict, unsustainable natural resource management, rangeland and yak population degradation,

poor development of local niche products, energy shortage, frequent natural disasters, lack of alternative livelihood options, solid waste, unmanaged tourism, and geopolitical issues. These issues are further intensified by climate change, globalization, and knowledge gaps that impede judicious decision-making, including limited outreach of conservation and development investments, as well as inadequate institutional skills and capacities.

HKPL is the core of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor and the One Belt One Road framework of China. It is a cultural landscape with rich heritage and relics. There is huge potential for developing a regional cooperation framework focusing on strengthening knowledge sharing and networking, synergizing development plans with common management objectives, establishing a common market for cross-border trade and tourism, strengthening capacity development for livelihood promotion, and adding value to local niche products. These opportunities offer significant scope to increase local incomes and sustainable development.

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# Biodiversity conservation and sustainable use strategies in the Puyango-Tumbes Binational Watershed



Biodiversity strategies for conservation and sustainable use constitute one of the most important aspects in the agenda of international organizations. The Puyango-Tumbes Binational Watershed is composed of the neighbouring territories of the Tumbes Region in north-western Peru and the Loja and El Oro counties in south-eastern Ecuador. This important watershed, inhabited by diverse species, is being actively managed according to a Regional Planning and Ecological Zoning Plan. The area includes three protected natural areas; Tumbes Mangrove National Sanctuary, Tumbes National Reserve and Amotape Hills National Park. To avoid deterioration of certain areas and extinction of species, the Plan prioritises the management of the most sensitive aspects, considering it indispensable to design conservation and sustainable use strategies with participation mechanisms for local populations.

An evaluation grid was applied by the National Service for Protected Natural Areas (SERNANP) according to the system of categories and approaches for the IUCN Red List, determining that in three vegetation types; dry thorny shrublands, deciduous forests and semideciduous forests;

the native forest species of *Centrolobium ochroxylum*, *Laxopterigium huasango* and *Zizipus thyrsoiflora*, are in danger of extinction; *Bursera graveolens*, *Myroxylon peruiferum* and *Alseis peruviana*, are vulnerable; and *Triplaris cumingiana* is unknown.

The evaluation concludes that an important aspect of the conservation strategies is the systematization of biogeographic territory and taxonomy identification of different native species that form part of the biodiversity and possess ethno-botanic value. The conservation and sustainable management of this significant watershed should be considered as part of the agenda for the Peru-Ecuador Binational Plan, in order to share experiences and lessons learnt, and strengthen the capacity of local residents. In this process, education is a very important strategy for changing the attitudes and aptitudes of the population in terms of rational biodiversity management.

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# Management plan of Bia-Diambarakro Transfrontier Conservation Area\*



© Sebastien Luc Kamga Kamdem

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) mandated an international expert in 2016 to develop a management plan for Bia-Diambarakro Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) shared by Côte-d'Ivoire and Ghana, and to facilitate the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries. The tasks fit into the framework of the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) project 'Development of a TFCA Linking Forest Reserves and Protected Areas in Ghana and Côte-d'Ivoire', with FAO as prime contractor and implemented by the Forest Development Society (SODEFOR) in Côte d'Ivoire and the Forestry Commission in Ghana; under the overall coordination of the Conservation Alliance. The overall project benefits include improving the biodiversity conservation and landscape production in the TFCA, and reducing barriers to the sustainable management of forests and land.

The project adopted a participatory approach by involving the main stakeholder groups (governmental institutions, local communities, international conservation support agencies and organisations, NGOs and civil society, research and education institutions, and private economic operators) who participated in almost all the steps of the process, including the data collection and analysis, the critical review of the management plan drafts and its approval at the steering committee meeting in November, 2016 in Ghana.

The management plan's objective is to contribute to the collaborative establishment and sustainable management of Bia-Diambarakro TFCA for securing the habitat and roaming corridors for elephants. Twelve specific objectives have been identified and regrouped into four management programmes. The document contains six sections, namely: Introduction, Description of Bia-Diambarakro TFCA, Considerations for Management, Management Measures, Implementation Mechanisms, and Monitoring, Evaluation and Revision of the Management Plan.

This management plan is considered an important marketing tool for advocacy, while there is further need for technical and financial support for its implementation.

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\*This article reflects only the point of view of the author and not that of FAO.

## Cooperation along the Balkan Green Belt



\*in accordance with UNSCR 1244 and opinion of ICJ  
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The project 'Protecting Biodiversity in the Balkans - Strengthening cooperation along the Balkan Green Belt' is being jointly implemented by the IUCN Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia and the EuroNatur Foundation, and funded by the German Environmental Foundation (DBU). It aims at the conservation of a transboundary ecological network along the border of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Turkey through the enhancement of cooperation along the southernmost part of the European Green Belt.

The project will work towards increasing awareness and visibility of the Balkan Green Belt, and improving cooperation and exchange between the partners. Project partners, in collaboration with national NGOs and relevant governmental organizations (ministries responsible for environment, protected area agencies and managers) are also aiming at the following results, to be achieved by the end of 2017:

Development of an interactive web platform on biodiversity and protected areas along the Balkan Green Belt as part of the European Green Belt website

Analysis of management effectiveness of protected areas along the Balkan Green Belt

Assessment of the potential for transboundary conservation using the Diagnostic tool for transboundary conservation planners (developed by IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group in 2012)

Conducting a spatial analysis regarding ecological connectivity along the Balkan Green Belt.

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## WCC Resolution on transboundary cooperation



The Members Assembly adopted [112 resolutions and recommendations](#) at the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC), held on 6–10 September 2016 in Honolulu, Hawai'i, USA. One of them was the resolution number 35 on Transboundary Cooperation and Protected Areas, through which the members endorsed the IUCN WCPA [Best Practice Guidelines No. 23 on transboundary conservation](#). The resolution calls IUCN, WCPA, Members and partners to strengthen support for transboundary conservation initiatives with special focus on enabling capacity development, knowledge sharing and cooperation. It emphasizes the need to develop and maintain a comprehensive global database of Transboundary Conservation Areas and a transboundary legal resource centre, both of which would serve as a primary knowledge hub, the key resource of essential information for transboundary conservation practitioners, enabling also scientific research and global analyses. The resolution also stresses the need to develop tools for fostering and measuring transboundary cooperation.

Future implementation of WCC resolution 35 was discussed during a recent meeting between Korea National Park Service (Hagyong Heo, Jaewon Lee), WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group (Maja Vasilijević), and IUCN Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Boris Erg and Tomasz Pezold). The meeting, held on 20 March 2017 in Belgrade, Serbia, concluded that the elements noted in the resolution are essential for furthering transboundary conservation and the expertise and network of the Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group needs to be built on in the implementation of the resolution.

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# Alberta's Government prioritizes conservation of Castle



© Stephen Legault

"The first call to protect this land came in the late 1970s," says Stephen Legault, Yellowstone to Yukon's (Y2Y) Program Director for Crown, Alberta and Northwest Territories. This place? Alberta's Castle. It is one of the area's most bountiful, productive, and fragile landscapes. It also narrows the gap of largely unprotected lands between Waterton and the Central Canadian Rockies national parks.

Serving as a water tower to southern Alberta, its headwaters provide a third of the water in the Oldman Watershed, supporting Lethbridge and other cities and towns. It also has profound cultural meaning to the Nakoda, K'tunaxa, Nitsitapii, Piikani, Siksika, Kainaiwa and Blackfeet First Nations, all of whom have sacred ties to the land.

Rich in life, many rare and at-risk species call this area home, from the vulnerable white bark pine to the enigmatic wolverine. It is also key grizzly habitat. After a period of consultation, in January 2017, Alberta Premier and Environment Minister made an announcement and released a [draft management plan](#). The boundaries of two parks, Castle Wildland Provincial Park and

Castle Provincial Park, were set and a plan to phase out off-highway vehicles in the area was released. The announcement was welcomed by generations of Alberta ranchers, hunters, guides, hikers and nature lovers who worked for decades to support this designation.

Long considered a jewel of the Crown of the Continent ecosystem, this 1,030 km<sup>2</sup> area is an important section of the Y2Y landscape. Partners such as the Castle Crown Wilderness Coalition, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and others have worked tirelessly with Y2Y, local communities and scientists for decades to support this designation.

Due to the sensitivity of this area, part of protecting it means the province will transition the use of certain types of recreation, such as snowmobiles and quads, out of the new Castle Parks over the next three to five years.

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# Wildlife translocations



© Peace Parks Foundation

As part of developing the Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation and Resource Area, the governments of Mozambique and South Africa, with support from Peace Parks Foundation (PPF), began a wildlife translocation programme to Maputo Special Reserve in Mozambique in 2010. The translocations reintroduce animals that were historically found in the area to enable the fast recovery and subsequent increase of the Reserve's wildlife populations, essential to developing the Reserve as a tourist destination. This multi-year endeavour has been made possible thanks to the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife's donation, capture and transportation of wildlife to Maputo Special Reserve. Altogether 1,115 animals have been translocated since 2010, including kudu, warthog, impala, nyala, zebra, giraffe and blue wildebeest.

At the end of September 2016, the Maputo Special Reserve/Tembe Elephant Park management committee conducted an aerial census to determine the status of the large herbivore species in the reserve, with a focus on the species that had been reintroduced. The census was made possible thanks to funding from the National Administration for Conservation Areas (ANAC) and PPF, who signed a cooperation agreement to develop and

manage Maputo Special Reserve in 2006. The species found to be most abundant in the reserve is reedbeek, with strong populations of hippo, elephant, grey and red duiker, blue wildebeest and zebra, while the giraffe population is increasing steadily.

Maputo Special Reserve conserves the exceptional biodiversity of a coastal zone that lies in the Maputaland Centre of Endemism and enables linkages between marine, coastal and inland components. At 1,040 km<sup>2</sup>, it is a spectacular area that combines coastal lakes, wetlands, swamp forests, grasslands and mangrove forests with a pristine coastline that supports a wide variety of birds, including aquatic, terrestrial, migratory and endemic species. Situated in the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany Biodiversity Hotspot, it is part of one of Earth's 36 biologically richest and most endangered terrestrial ecoregions.

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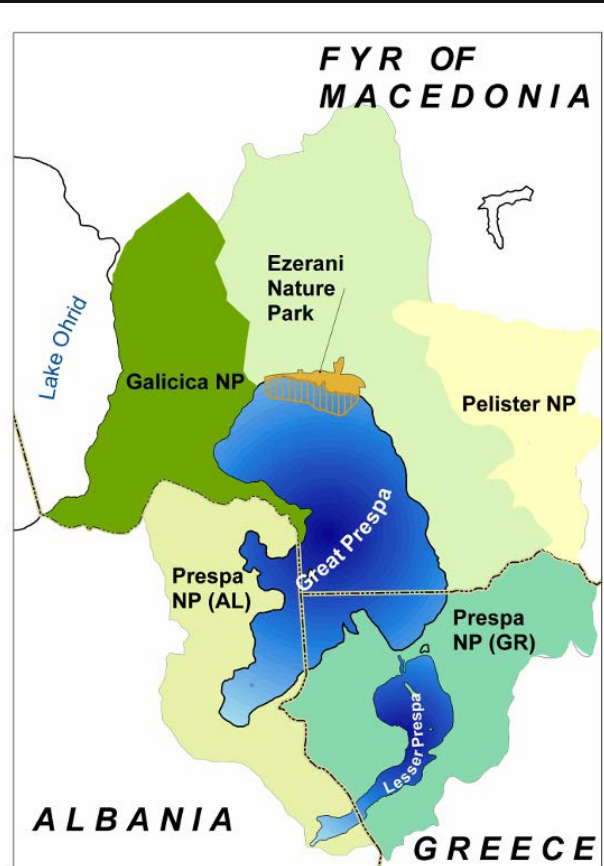
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# Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust

Prespa Lakes, including the associated wider region, is located in the south-western Balkans and recognized for its high ecological, cultural and historical values. While Prespa Lakes are spread across three countries, Albania, Greece, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), a nearby Ohrid Lake is shared between Albania and FYROM. The area encompasses multiple international designations, such as Ramsar Sites, a transboundary Biosphere Reserve, and a mixed World Heritage Site.

In 2017, the Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust (PONT) was established to serve as a Conservation Trust Fund, recognized as a private, legally independent grant-making foundation under German law, designed to provide sustainable co-financing to meet its mission to: *“provide long term financing for the conservation and sustainable management of biological diversity, natural processes and ecosystem services in Prespa and its wider area for the benefit of nature and people in the region.”*

PONT is neither a government-affiliated agency nor an implementing agency. Its role is to raise and manage funds for the allocation of conservation grants supported by a rigorous monitoring and evaluation programme, as well as to leverage political commitment and co-funding towards the achievement of its mission. Current funding comes from: the Swiss-based MAVA Foundation, and the German Development Bank (KfW), mandated by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).



© PONT

The beneficiaries of PONT's initial phase are protected area management authorities, and environmental actors such as NGOs working on conservation in the identified region, allowing for a potential programmatic and geographic expansion of focus in the future. In accordance with the ecoregional approach of its mission, PONT will also promote transboundary cooperation.

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## Regional Water Conference in Jordan



© EcoPeace Middle East

EcoPeace Middle East, a unique environmental organization that brings together the Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian environmentalists, with the primary objective of promoting cooperative efforts to protect the region's shared environmental heritage, organized a Regional Water Conference, held on 22-23 November 2016 on the Dead Sea coast, Jordan. The conference, entitled Water Security and Sustainable Development for our Common Future, was organized under the patronage of the Jordanian Minister of Water. It brought together over 300 participants, including Jordanian and Israeli Ministers, members of the Jordanian Parliament and Israeli Knesset, Palestinian, Jordanian and Israeli mayors, water and river authorities, municipal staff, local residents from EcoPeace's 'Good Water Neighbors' programme, senior diplomats, development agencies, academia, and other water experts.

Access to water and water security were the main topics of the first day of the conference, with special focus on Israeli/Palestinian water issues. The second day of the conference particularly explored the Jordan Valley and River rehabilitation issues. Experiences and lessons were shared from other transboundary water basins from around the world, including the European Sava River and the Rhine River basins, southern African Orange-Senqu River basin, and transboundary waters in Mexico and the USA.

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## Participate in a survey on Transboundary Conservation Areas, Law and Peace

IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group members and friends of the network are invited to participate in an online survey on Transboundary Conservation Areas, Law and Peace, being conducted by Elaine Hsiao as part of her PhD research at the University of British Columbia. The online survey is designed to solicit the experiences and feedback of protected area managers and experts within Transboundary Conservation Areas (TBCAs) on the law and policy of transboundary collaboration for peace, security and conflict transformation. The collected information will serve as a basis for developing recommendations for peacebuilding, peacekeeping and peace-making in and around TBCAs.

The survey can be accessed at <https://survey.ubc.ca/surveys/citizenof1world/tbpas/> and is expected to take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is deeply appreciated as it will contribute to the greater understanding of TBCAs, transboundary legal frameworks and their contribution to peace. You are welcome to circulate the survey link to other colleagues or TBCA managers and practitioners for their participation.

### Elaine Hsiao

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# Dawna Tenasserim Landscape: an intact, connected and protected habitat



© Wayuphong Jitvijak

The Dawna Tenasserim Landscape (DTL) straddles the Dawna and Tenasserim mountain ranges defining the international boundary between Myanmar and Thailand. It represents the Kayah Karen and Tenasserim Moist Forests Global 200 ecoregion, including some of the largest remaining areas of contiguous tropical moist and deciduous forests in Southeast Asia. Over 83% of the landscape is still forested and supports a rich biodiversity. The landscape also includes a World Heritage Site.

DTL is the last stronghold in the Mekong for the tiger and other globally significant endangered species including Asian elephant, gaur, banteng, clouded leopard, Malayan tapir, wild dog, fishing cat and Siamese crocodile. Several endemic species that represent the region's irreplaceable biodiversity include the Fea's muntjac, Gurney's pitta, Burmese yuhina, and Kitt's hog-nosed bat. This last species is one of the smallest mammals in the world.

The forests of the DTL are under pressure from deforestation due to agricultural expansion and logging, forest fragmentation, poaching for the illegal wildlife trade, unsustainable harvesting of non-timber forest products and wild meat, and major infrastructure development such as roads, pipelines and dams. Joint collaboration in

planning, enforcement and monitoring between the two countries is therefore critically important for long-lasting conservation and for the survival of these key species. A transboundary agreement will provide not only political commitments but also the enabling conditions for technical government agencies, NGO's and other stakeholders from both countries to jointly address illegal poaching, timber and wildlife trade across the border. WWF is working with its partners to define initial milestones, including biological and social data gathering, communication and advocacy plans with the goal of a transboundary agreement being signed and implemented within the next few years. Recent developments with partners have ensured that momentum is being generated, and there are some exciting plans in for the DTL. This is an important step towards building a collaborative approach to achieving ambitious conservation goals at multiple scales in the landscape.

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# Thickening the US-Mexico border and what it may mean for wildlife and security



© Jamie McCallum

The United States (US)-Mexico international boundary stretches for more than 3,000 kilometres. After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2011 the US Government constructed 560 kilometres of steel wall along its southern border, which fragmented sensitive desert ecosystems. Environmental laws were waived on the pretext of security. A further 560 kilometres of porous vehicle barrier was also built, designed to prevent four-wheel-drive incursions.

The strategy behind these fences, which only cover one third of the international boundary, was to drive migrants and smugglers away from urban areas, into more forbidding terrain, thereby providing a deterrent. However, people facing violent crime and insurgency at home (so-called push factors), combined with the lure of economic opportunity (pull factors), mean that such barriers provide but a small obstacle. Desperate people will find a way.

Some members of the IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group (TBC SG) conducted a [study](#) in 2014, which concluded that in Arizona the wall made a significant impact on mountain lion (*Felis concolor*) abundance as well as coatimundi (*Nasua narica*). The study also appeared to show that the wall had no effect

on human presence. In other words, the wall seemed to provide the worst of all worlds.

A further [study](#) by members of the TBC SG suggested that protected area managers believed that improved cooperation across international boundaries, in conjunction with technological solutions, could improve both law-enforcement and ecological management.

Now in 2017, with further walls planned and high level political cooperation between the USA and Mexico on this issue a long way off, scientists and civil society groups on both sides of the border continue to cooperate in spite of the aforementioned difficulties. Their ongoing activities provide the best hope for ecological and social connectivity, in turn providing the foundations of a greater balance between security and the environment.

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# Great Limpopo expands its conservation area



© Piet Theron

Mozambique's National Administration of Conservation Areas (ANAC) and Licoturismo signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 22 February 2017 in Maputo, Mozambique, to formalise the establishment of the Greater Libombos Conservancy, the first privately managed area to be included as part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA). Mozambique has thus become the first of the three countries, including Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, since the signing of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park International Treaty in 2002, to add an area to the Great Limpopo TFCA.

The Greater Libombos Conservancy, including 2,400 km<sup>2</sup> comprises a total of nine properties in Mozambique on the eastern boundary of the Kruger National Park. It is significant in terms of its environmental attributes, as well as its geographic location. The Greater Libombos Conservancy protects and conserves diverse natural and cultural assets. The area is largely devoid of infrastructure or anthropogenic impacts, and includes vast unspoilt areas that provide opportunities for the development of true wilderness experiences. The Conservancy is also a key component of the largest rhino refuge in Mozambique

and, together with its neighbours, is at the forefront of the combat against the current rhino poaching epidemic.

This development will pave the way for the establishment of a Joint Park Management Committee between the Greater Libombos Conservancy and Kruger National Park. The activities of the Joint Park Management Committee will be guided by a Joint Operations Strategy, which will outline strategies and plans guiding cross-border collaboration on activities relating to conservation management, wildlife crime, tourism, and community development. These will be developed to support the on-the-ground implementation of key Great Limpopo TFCA strategies and plans, especially those promoting the conservation and protection of the natural resource base, effective governance and diversification of local livelihoods.

**Piet Theron**

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# Milestones in transfrontier conservation



© Peace Parks Foundation

The Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA), situated in the Okavango and Zambezi river basins where the borders of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe converge, is the world's largest terrestrial TFCA, spanning approximately 520,000 km<sup>2</sup>. It includes 36 protected areas, the world's largest Ramsar Site and three World Heritage Sites.

In September 2016, traditional leaders from four of the five KAZA partner countries met in Livingstone, Zambia. Chief Mukuni welcomed the gathering, saying "This is the first time that we meet as a collective grouping of traditional leaders, not confined to the sovereign boundaries of our individual countries, but along common challenges facing the communities that we represent." Senior Chief Inyambo Yeta said, "The successes of our various projects need to be broadcast, especially as a collective. This, I believe, we as traditional leaders, can carry to the symposium. We have success stories. We have methodologies, deeply embedded in our culture and heritage practices. We have lessons that can be shared with government agencies, donors and NGOs. Let them hear our voices."

The meeting of traditional leaders was held in advance of the State of the KAZA Symposium, which took place on 31 October-2 November 2016 to:

- Celebrate KAZA's 10 years of existence;
- Demonstrate progress towards attainment of the objectives of KAZA as listed in the treaty;
- Highlight what is working well and why, and possibilities of replicating these successes;
- Highlight what is not working well and why, and possible remedial actions;
- Harness recommendations for future direction; and
- Provide a platform for engagement and collaboration for KAZA stakeholders.

During that period, Botswana's Minister of Environment, Natural Resources, Conservation and Tourism signed a hosting agreement with the KAZA Secretariat, allowing it to be registered as a legal entity, making it the first peace park in Africa to have its own legal persona. In 2016 Peace Parks Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the KAZA Secretariat to formalise the longstanding partnership to further KAZA's development.

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# Solutions for Transboundary Protected Areas



A new booklet entitled *Solutions in Focus: Transboundary Protected Area Solutions* was published by IUCN in late 2016 under the initiative 'PANORAMA–Solutions for a Healthy Planet', led by the German Organization for International Cooperation (GIZ) and IUCN. Seventeen solutions being implemented by protected area managers addressing conservation and economic challenges in transboundary regions are featured in the booklet. Eight of them focus on parks that have been certified through the EUROPARC Transboundary Certification programme. These were developed in collaboration with protected area professionals and members of the Institute of Silviculture at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Vienna, Austria through the European Union funded 'ForAdapt' project. Others were developed as solution case studies following recommendations from members of the IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group.

PANORAMA is a partnership initiative to find and promote examples of inspiring, replicable solutions across a range of conservation and development topics. It allows practitioners to share their stories, get recognized for successful work, and learn how others have tackled problems across the globe, by encouraging reflection on and learning from proven approaches. PANORAMA

is supported by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Within PANORAMA, the IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme leads on assembling solutions that showcase how protected areas provide solutions to a multitude of challenges, such as climate change, and food and water security. It also promotes innovative approaches to protected area management itself. These case studies are published on the Protected Areas portal of the PANORAMA web platform. The transboundary solutions featured in the new booklet are summaries of more detailed versions published on the platform.

An associated PANORAMA webinar 'Transboundary Protected Area Solutions' was held on 7 December 2016. You can access the entire webinar recording and all presentations.

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# Wilderness Academy Days in Slovakia



With the exception of a few countries, wilderness preservation has a relatively short history in Europe. Finland, Iceland, Italy and Russia all have references to wilderness in their legislative systems. However, the focus on wilderness started to increase across the continent when the European Parliament adopted a special resolution on 3 February 2009, which resulted in the approval of the Agenda for Wilderness and Wildland, including 24 recommended actions.

The Wilderness Academy Days is a unique European event, organized as a response to one of the European Parliament's actions: to promote the exchange of best practice and bring together conservation professionals to transfer knowledge on the last remaining wilderness areas. The registration for the [3<sup>rd</sup> European Wilderness Days 2017](#), to be held on 24-26 May 2017 in the Tatras, Liptovský Hradok, Slovakia, is now open.

Participants will learn about the status of European beech forest and the European Beech Forest Network, the new WildIslands, WildRivers and WildCoasts on

the continent, continued deforestation, and wilderness educational programmes. As the Tatra National Park is a Transboundary Protected Area between Slovakia and Poland, there will be special attention paid to sharing best practices and lessons learned from transboundary wilderness areas such as the cooperation between Finland and Russia to protect Oulanka-Paanajarvi national parks.

The European Wilderness Society aims to present the [Pan-European Green Corridor Network](#) project, which aims at creating a mountain mega-corridor across nine countries, and progress linked to the [European Wilderness Preservation System](#). The European Wilderness Days will also enable hands-on experience of Slovakia's wilderness by organizing a day-long hiking trip into the heart of the wilderness.

**Zoltan Kun**

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# International Peace Park Expeditions Update



2016-2017 were exciting years of growth for International Peace Park Expeditions (IPPE). IPPE continued with its expeditions; the 6<sup>th</sup> Academic Expedition to the proposed Balkans Peace Park in the Bjeshkët e Nemuna/Prokletije Mountains of Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro, in partnership with Ohio University, and using the IUCN WCPA [Diagnostic tool for Transboundary Conservation Planners](#), and the 4<sup>th</sup> Academic Expedition in Parque Internacional La Amistad, in partnership with the Center for Global Affairs, New York University, learning Transboundary Peace & Conflict Impact Assessment methodology. Two new Academic Expeditions in partnership with Ohio University were developed: an expedition to Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park and the transboundary Blackfoot Native American and First Nation tribe, and an upcoming expedition to the Republic of Korea and the proposed World Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) Eco Peace Park, and Hiroshima Peace Park in Japan.

IPPE published the second [Transboundary Peace & Conflict Impact Assessment](#) focused on La Amistad, and documentary film, the third in the Transcending Boundaries series: [Perspectives from Parque Internacional La Amistad](#). It developed the first corporate partnership with

Faction Skis and Gear4Guides through a Transboundary Ski Expedition with professional skiers, reporters and videographers, highlighting potential for sustainable backcountry winter tourism activities around Hajla peak on the border of Kosovo and Montenegro. A number of [magazine articles](#) were written and a documentary film was also produced; [Breaking Boundaries in the Balkans](#).

Finally, IPPE began the professional capacity building programme for transboundary conservation practitioners. The first programme was a [National Park Capacity Building Expedition](#) for a delegation from Kosovo that visited USA at a meeting with National Park administrators, rangers, scientists and volunteer groups. IPPE also led a workshop for transboundary conservation practitioners at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Hawai'i; and co-led the [Hands Across Borders](#) workshop for transboundary conservation practitioners in Waterton Glacier International Peace Park in September 2016.

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# Youth awareness raising in Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park



© Peace Parks Foundation

Twenty young learners from four villages adjacent to Limpopo National Park, the Mozambican component of Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe), participated in a pioneering conservation awareness programme in August 2016 that aims to empower local communities, create awareness and promote sustainability of key natural resources. This 7-day pilot programme was implemented in collaboration with Peace Parks Foundation and Laureus Sport for Good Foundation and was hosted at the Skukuza Science Leadership Initiative.

The curriculum utilised hands-on learning activities to help empower youngsters by using sport as a tool to educate and inspire positive change. They also participated in a number of science experiments. These included vital role model engagements with field rangers, researchers, teachers and their peers, which provided invaluable insights on career opportunities in conservation and natural sciences.

A core focus of the pilot programme was to instil a steadfast philosophy of *Hlawula Vutomi*, meaning to *Choose Life* for themselves, their communities and nature. They were taken on game drives and guided

walks in the Kruger National Park, South Africa, bushveld and educated on the interconnectedness of humans and nature. Another key message was that their actions have direct consequences, not only on the environment, but on themselves and their communities. The message was brought home that rhino are not the only victims, as many of the youth themselves are often exploited as victims of organised wildlife crime.

The overarching goal of the programme was to bring these young participants one step closer to understanding these challenges, while empowering them to choose life and enabling them to become ambassadors for conservation back in their own communities. This pilot programme is the first step in the development of a long-term vision for youth interaction and education between the partner countries of Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park and the larger, surrounding the Transfrontier Park.

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**[Watch a movie here](#)**

# Educational campaign to refrain Boda Boda drivers from poaching



© Boris Erg

Boda Boda is one of the most popular forms of transport in both urban and rural areas of Tanzania and wider Africa, a cheap form of motorcycle transportation providing employment for youth living in rural communities. At the same time, Boda Boda are used to enable poaching, wildlife crime and transport of illegal goods including ivory and bushmeat.

Each day about 30 elephants are killed in Tanzania. Poverty, lack of education and not gaining enough benefits from conservation programmes are only some of the stimuli for local communities to be involved in illicit ivory trade and other wildlife crime. Shooting the animals, cutting off the tusks and selling them further has become a way of life for many villagers. The recent capture of Boda Boda drivers carrying illegal goods in Maswa Game Reserve near the Serengeti National Park re-emphasized the severe ecological, social, economic and political impacts of elephant poaching.

Peace for Conservation is a Tanzanian-based organization that advocates the education of Boda Boda drivers in terms of the adverse impacts of poaching and the importance of conserving elephants and other wildlife. Peace for Conservation aims to establish a

training programme which would identify and promote alternative livelihoods for Boda Boda drivers, such as becoming guides for sustainable safari tours. This would be accomplished through the launching of an Eco-Tour Motorbike to Fight Poaching and Local Poverty initiative. It is planned to organize a competition around the theme of elephant conservation, inviting villagers and Boda Boda drivers surrounding Maswa Game Reserve and the Serengeti National Park (forming a Transboundary Conservation Area with Kenyan Masai Mara National Park) to take part in the event. The 20 winners will be invited to sign an agreement to become ambassadors for elephant conservation.

While this local-scale action hopes to raise awareness about the need to stop poaching of elephants and also to provide alternative income to Boda Boda drivers; at the national level, law enforcement and political will are needed to reduce the extent of this problem.

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# Applying the diagnostic tool for transboundary planners in Djibouti and Ethiopia



© Kevan Zunckel

The Awash River in Ethiopia drains into a land-locked delta in the arid Afar Region and into a series of freshwater and salt lakes. One of these, Lake Abbè, straddles the border between Djibouti and Ethiopia, providing impetus for the countries in the Horn of Africa to agree, through the Biodiversity Management Programme of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), on the need to plan for the establishment of a Transboundary Conservation Landscape (TBCL) in the Lower Awash - Lake Abbè area. For this purpose, IUCN office in Nairobi, Kenya, worked with Kevan Zunckel (Co-Chair, IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group) and Dominique Verdugo (IUCN WCPA Tourism and Protected Areas Specialist Group) to get this process going and develop a joint management plan for the area.

Following the principles set out in the [WCPA Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines for transboundary conservation](#), the [Diagnostic tool for transboundary conservation planners](#), developed by WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, was used in May 2016 to take the stakeholders through a process of systematically assessing if they have a compelling case for the TBCL. It took a full day to ensure that all the questions were well

understood and answered as three-way translation was required, but all the participants contributed positively throughout. Ultimately, the diagnostic tool revealed that there is a compelling case, many opportunities and few risks for this initiative, also providing good insight and information for components of the joint management plan. An additional outcome was the shared understanding that was developed and the sense of team work and ownership for the initiative amongst the stakeholders. This made the process of developing the framework for the joint management plan, i.e., a shared vision and prioritised management objectives, relatively straight forward.

The diagnostic tool proved to be a great mechanism to use at any point in a transboundary conservation process and it needs wider application by more practitioners to ensure that it can be fine-tuned and improved.

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# Eastern Plains: the landscape of hope and potential



The Eastern Plains Landscape (EPL) is a contiguous forested habitat comprising several protected areas including the Cambodian wildlife sanctuaries Srepok, Phnom Prich, and Lomphat, Seima Protected Forest; and Yok Don National Park in Viet Nam. The EPL covers about 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> and is a Transboundary Protected Area complex of global biodiversity significance within the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot. It is one of the Global 200 ecoregions (Central Indochina Dry Forests) also comprising multiple Key Biodiversity Areas.

The EPL's rich biodiversity is under threat due to uncontrolled logging, illegal forest clearance, hunting for trade, economic and social land concessions, and other unsustainable uses of natural resources. Economic development including mining and hydropower constitute additional serious threats to forest and wildlife. Despite these problems, EPL maintains sufficient forest cover to potentially support significant populations of large mammals. It presently supports resident populations of many threatened species including Asian elephant, leopard, banteng, Eld's deer and Siamese crocodile, as well as several endangered large water-birds and vultures. Nevertheless, range restricted and once locally abundant species like the kouprey, Cambodia's national animal,

have already gone extinct, while iconic species like tigers are functionally extinct, if not completely extirpated. Asian elephant, wild water buffalo and Eld's deer are threatened with extinction in the next few years unless immediate and effective action is taken.

This landscape still provides hope because it has the largest extent of quality tiger habitat left in Southeast Asia and is extremely important in terms of being among the highest potential carrying capacities for tigers and prey in the region. Large expanses of deciduous dipterocarp forest with patches of semi-evergreen forest provide ideal conditions for recovery of large tiger prey populations, and thus provide much needed optimism and potential for an ambitious goal of bringing back the lost denizens of the forest. Success will, however, be largely contingent on effective landscape level conservation which will require effective transboundary conservation initiatives, including coordinated action between protected areas, provinces within participating countries and across their international borders.

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# Conservation gains in Montana's Badger-Two Medicine



© Stephen Legault

In December 2016, a cheer heard across North America rose from the heart of the Crown of the Continent in Montana. The reason for celebration? Badger-Two Medicine land being free of the threat of oil and gas drilling for the first time in more than 30 years.

This 526.09 km<sup>2</sup> area located in northern Montana, USA, near the Canadian border, is hugged by Glacier National Park, the Blackfeet Indian Reservation and the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. It is central to the cultural and spiritual identity of the Blackfeet. From a conservation perspective, it is important for wildlife connectivity as grizzly bears, elk, bighorn sheep and wolves call it home. It is also a headwaters region, with Badger Creek and the South Fork Two Medicine River feeding the Blackfeet Nation and the Missouri River system.

Working together with partners in conservation including Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance, Montana Wilderness Association, The Wilderness Society, Earth Justice, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative and many others, the Blackfeet worked to defend their land.

Recently, the US Federal Government determined that leases awarded in 1981 were illegally sold to companies wishing to drill in the area. At the time, federal land managers failed to consider the environmental impacts of drilling or consult with tribes such as the Blackfeet. In 2015, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation declared the Badger-Two Medicine a Traditional Cultural Area. Then, in a series of announcements late in 2016 and early in 2017, US Secretary of the Interior stated the remaining 17 leases on Blackfeet Nation had been canceled. Devon Corporation, the largest leaseholder in the region, voluntarily surrendered their leases.

Looking ahead, partners hope the area will gain higher level permanent protection, and that bison, an animal currently missing from Badger-Two Medicine, may be restored to the area.

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# Guidelines for contributions

The TB eNEWS contains information on the activities and projects relevant to the mandate of the WCPA's Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group. You are welcome to send us updates of transboundary conservation-related initiatives you are involved with, review relevant past and announce future events, and provide information on publications or funding opportunities.

We welcome contributions that contain up to 320 words in length. Please also include graphic additions (e.g. photograph, logo, map) in size of minimum 500 kB, and indicating the credits. All articles should contain the name of the author, contact email and website link (if applicable).

This newsletter is prepared by the WCPA's Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, which reserves the right to edit and shorten the texts as appropriate. The authors of the articles are responsible for accuracy of the content of their contributions.

Thank you for your cooperation.

*Maja Vasilijević*

*Chair, Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group*

*IUCN WCPA*

