



Pathways

for People & Predators

*The Annual Report of
Cheetah Conservation Botswana
April 2013 - March 2014*



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Project Vision

A healthy cheetah population nationwide for prosperity.

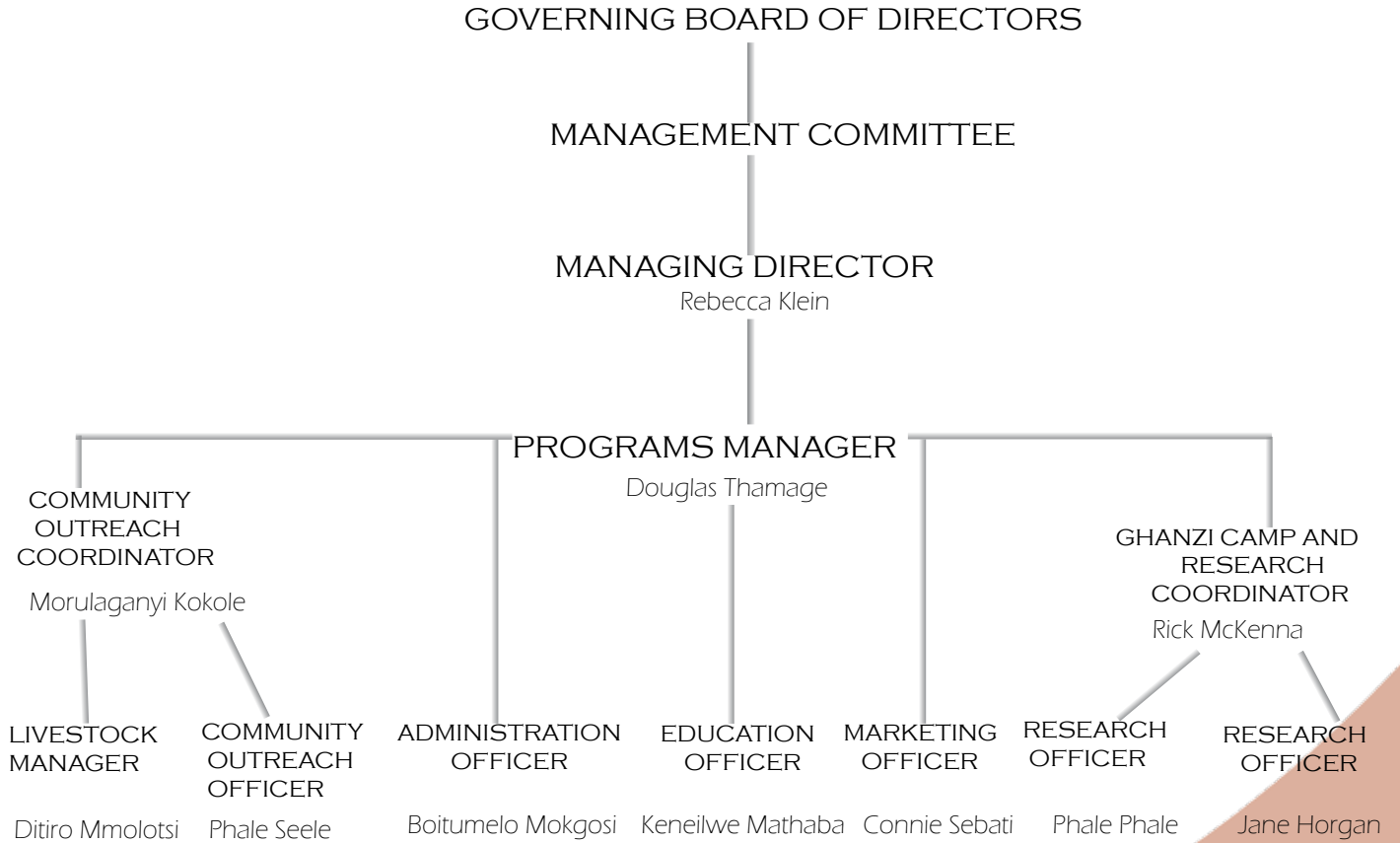
Mission Statement

To maintain populations of free ranging cheetah and other predators, in coexistence with communities, as an integral part of ecosystems of Botswana

Project Goal

Cheetah Conservation Botswana aims to preserve the nation's cheetah population through scientific research, community outreach and conservation education, working with rural communities to promote coexistence with Botswana's rich diversity of predator species.

STAFF ORGANOGRAM



Rebecca Klein



Douglas Thamage



Rick McKenna



Morulaganyi Kokole



Boitumelo Mokgosi



Phale M. Seele



Ditiro Mmolotsi



Jane Horgan



Phale Phale



Keneilwe Mathaba



Connie Sebati

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Operating Bases



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Board Member
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PROGRAMME REVIEW

Scientific Research Review

Tracking Predators

The Kalahari San people are renowned for their intricate knowledge of their environment and their incredible tracking abilities. CCB has a long history of utilizing the skills of San trackers and they are currently assisting us with studies in the farmlands of Botswana. April 2014 saw the conclusion of a 15-month project where CCB's research staff, together with the San trackers, were tracking the spoor of a variety of predators, such as cheetah, leopard, spotted and brown hyena, caracal and jackals. This project enabled us to identify different cheetah groups, find scat and cheetah marking trees and identify spatial relationships between different predator species. We hope that this study will shed light on predator movements, densities and behaviours on both cattle and game farms. Looking at these factors can help us in building mitigation methods to combat the human wildlife conflict that threatens many predator species in this area.

In May 2013, CCB joined the Kalahari Research and Conservation group and a large collaborative team of researchers for a 10-day spoor-tracking event in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP). The aim of this study was to identify predator populations in and around the reserve. The results are currently being analysed and the initial findings suggest high densities of lion in and around the reserve and lower numbers of cheetahs in the area.



San trackers are being utilised by CCB for scouting cheetah and other predators spoor in Ghanzi.

Conservation Strategy Fund Visit

Rhona Barr of the UK-based Conservation Strategy Fund (CSF) visited CCB in July 2013 to help scope the parameters of a new study to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of predator-friendly livestock management practices. Many farmers believe that predator-friendly livestock management techniques such as kraaling and LSGDs are too costly and resource heavy to implement. This study aims to identify the costs and benefits of these predator-friendly techniques and compare them to the costs and benefits of the everyday farmer. The work will be a cooperative effort, with CSF contributing economic analysis expertise as well as funding to the project.



Rhona experiencing the farming delights of livestock guard dog users in Ghanzi farmlands.

Scientific Research Review

Conflict Mitigation Studies

This study aims to measure how successful predator-friendly management tools (namely livestock guarding dogs (LSGDs) and kraals) are in mitigating the conflicts occurring between low-income subsistence farmers and predators. The Kacgae community in the western Kalahari had been identified as a hot spot for predator conflict, mostly due to its location in the movement corridor between the Central Kalahari Game Reserve and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. CCB is monitoring 10 farmers who were chosen by the community and have each received materials to build livestock kraals, a guard dog, a kennel, veterinary services and food for their dog for one year. Follow-up visits are being conducted every two weeks to ensure the conflict mitigation activities are being used in the right way, and to quickly troubleshoot any problems that the farmers encounter. Questionnaires are completed to monitor livestock losses, perceptions and identify problems that farmers are having with predators. Monitoring will continue until 2015. To celebrate the one-year anniversary of the project, CCB hosted a celebratory event in the village on the 6th of April 2013 to show our appreciation of the hardwork that the villagers have put forward in making the pilot study a success. We invited stakeholders from the public sector, the village elders, Ghanzi Farmers and villagers and about 200 people attended the event on the day. By the end of this pilot study in 2015, we will have gained great insights on how to approach conflict mitigation interventions into the future.



Some of Kacgae LSGD's relaxing with their herds.

Marking Trees for Ecotourism

In light of significant human-carnivore conflict on game farms, this project was initiated to evaluate the potential for increasing the visibility of cheetahs on game farms in an effort to add value for photographic tourism. The idea was to place cheetah scats that have been collected elsewhere onto a suitable tree or artificial platform that can be viewed by tourists. Three trees have been involved in the pilot, serviced periodically by placement of scats, and monitored with motion-activated cameras. One of the trees has begun to attract cheetahs and monitoring is ongoing.



Cheetah caught in camera.

Predator Population Research in the Ghanzi Farmlands

Over the past four years, a number of ongoing CCB studies in Ghanzi District have been using motion-activated cameras that have captured a large number of photos of cheetahs. We have collected over 3000 photos since 2008 from 13 different farms in the Ghanzi commercial farm block. Using unique spot patterns, we have been able to compile a Cheetah ID Book for this area, and at present, we have identified 168 individual cheetahs. Individual identification and recognition will allow us to better understand local cheetah population dynamics. Compilation of the ID Book will be an ongoing task as the various camera projects continue to yield suitable photos.

Phale placing a motion activated camera in Ghanzi.



Scientific Research Review

Scat Analysis

Scat collection and analysis is an on-going activity meant, primarily, to provide insights into diet and prey preferences. This is quite important for a number of reasons, not least of which is our interactions with farmers, some of whom believe that cheetahs and other predators are a significant source of stock loss. Data from ongoing scat analyses can help to clarify the extent of stock depredation. Former CCB research coordinator, Lorraine Boast has completed a paper as part of her PhD analysing cheetah diets using data from about 400 scats collected by CCB over the years. She has found that overall, livestock represent less than 6% of a cheetah's diet profile and that based on the availability of livestock, cheetahs will actually actively avoid preying on domestic stock in favour of wild prey such as springbok and hares.



Cheetah Scat collection by CCB staff members.

Botswana Research Symposium in Maun

CCB's research team attended the Botswana Research Symposium in Maun, the week of the 4th - 7th February 2014. CCB research officers, Phale Phale and Jane Horgan gave a presentation entitled 'Human wildlife conflict: an obstacle to agro-ecological systems'. The CCB team was one of the only participants out of the 200 attendees to highlight the importance of addressing the human side of human wildlife conflict, showing that dealing with the human element is necessary to saving the predators that are so vulnerable to conflict, like cheetahs. The team was encouraged and inspired by the other bright minds at the symposium to continue their fight to save Botswana's predators from extinction.



Jane sharing information at the research symposium.

Arrivals and Goodbyes

The CCB team bid farewell to our Research Coordinator, Andrea Dekrout and Ghanzi Camp Coordinator, Gavin Reynolds in March 2013. Andrea and Gavin are leaving to pursue a job opportunity in Papua New Guinea. At CCB, we wish them the best of luck with their new adventure and thank them for all their hard work! Late in July 2013, Rick McKenna joined CCB in the combined position of Ghanzi Camp Coordinator & Research Coordinator. Since then, he has been coming up to speed with CCB's research program and the general operations of Ghanzi Camp, and so far he has contributed tremendously to the renovations of the Ghanzi camp and planning for future research work. He is proving to be a value added member of the CCB team.



Andrea Dekrout



Gavin Reynolds



Rick McKenna

Collaborative Research

In February 2014, Lorraine Boast, CCB's former Research Coordinator, handed in her PhD dissertation focusing on game farmers and their conflicts with predators in Botswana. As part of this research, she used scat analysis data derived from CCB projects to document cheetah diet profiles and compared those to the availability of all prey species, including livestock.

CCB's Research Officer Jane Horgan, is using farmer questionnaires to assess the effectiveness of livestock guarding dogs (LSGDs) for the completion of her masters thesis. Initial results are showing that LSGDs are very effective at both deterring predators and increasing tolerance of predators by farmers. The study has broken new ground by showing that local "Tswana" dogs can be more effective than expensive purebreeds (such as Anatolian Shepherds), thus making a local LSGD more economically practical to low-income farmers.

Community Outreach Review

Workshops

CCB's community outreach department staged a series of workshops and awareness-raising events over the past 12 months as part of strengthening its working relations with various stakeholders. In the year 2013 – 2014, CCB has hosted a total of 12 farmers' workshops around the country and invited over 400 participants. Various stakeholders have helped facilitate these workshops, including the Departments of Forestry, Wildlife and National Parks, Tourism, Animal Production, Labour, Botswana's Police Service, and farmers associations. The main topics for discussions centred on the extra commitment needed by farmers to protect their livestock from disease, theft and predation. Farmers were advised to utilise appropriate methods of livestock management such as kraaling, herding, LSGDs and encouraging game species on their farms, all of which help reduce predation on livestock. Farmers were also encouraged to view their livestock farming as a business that requires a management plan to ensure its success and thorough record keeping was encouraged as an important aspect of this.

CCB joined forces with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) by conducting a collaborative workshop at Zutshwa in Kgalagadi South on April 10th 2013. This workshop was conducted as part of a series of mobile workshops started in 2012 in order to assist in an area of acute human-wildlife conflict. The workshop was conducted with the aim of sensitizing communities about the importance and value of wildlife, establishing the root causes of human-wildlife conflict, the mitigation measures to address conflict and identifying project demonstration sites. Five individuals were selected to host demonstration sites where predator proof kraals will be built, LSGDs introduced, and improved livestock herding implemented. It is hoped that the success of these demonstration farms will inspire other farmers in the area to adopt these mitigation techniques.



Mobile farmers workshop with Ghanzi Department of Wildlife and National Parks.



Maokatuma farmers workshop with Serowe Department of Wildlife and National Parks.

Demonstration Farm

CCB's demonstration farm manager, Ditiro Mmolotsi (DT), has done a wonderful job of managing our smallstock herd in Ghanzi. The goatherd has grown significantly and this January we witnessed the birth of 24 goat kids, bringing our total number up to 84 goats. The money from sales will be used to buy different items needed at the demo farm such as vaccines, parasite dips and lucerne. CCB continues to use the farm to showcase recommended farming techniques to protect livestock and improve livelihoods. Everyone that attends bush camps or farmers workshops at Ghanzi's Tiisano Education Center makes a visit to our demonstration farm to see firsthand how easy it can be to run a predator-friendly and productive farm.



Ear tagging young goats at the demo farm.



Gavin sharing with demo farm visitors on the care of goats and LSGD's.

Community Outreach Review

Staff Training

Ghanzi Community Officer, Mr Phale Seele, with support from the Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN) had an opportunity to attend the Advanced Human Wildlife Conflict Training Workshop in Arusha, Tanzania in May 2013. The workshop looked at analyzing and transforming conflict to create sustainable solutions for people and wildlife.

CCB's Community Coordinator, Mr Morulaganyi Kokole has begun pursuing a Masters Degree in Community Conservation through the University of South Africa supported by the Sydney Byers Scholarship through the Wildlife Conservation Network. Kokole's research is investigating the socio-ecological factors influencing human-carnivore conflict around Jwana Park in Jwaneng, Botswana.

Farmer Support Visits

CCB's community staff conducted nine repeat farm visits to monitor cheetah and other predators' problems and to assist farmers with the adoption of improved livestock management techniques to ensure good husbandry, herd health, fertility and reduced livestock losses, and also provided information on training and caring for LSGDs.



Advanced HWC workshop participants in Tanzania.



A site visit interview by Connie Sebati, CCB PR Officer around Jwaneng farms.



Max checking the health status of an LSGD during a site visit around Ghanzi farmlands.



Herd manager at Lopapa cattlepost, Costa posing with his herd and LSGD.



Kokole at a site visit in Kgatleng District discussing with a farmer on the use of LSGD's.

Conservation Education Review

School Talks

School presentations conducted by CCB continue to stress the importance of predators in a healthy ecosystem, while at the same time, strengthening the students' understanding of predator behaviour. CCB conducted 18 school talks for a variety of school groups including the Experiment in International Living Youth group from the USA, and a class of deaf students from Ramotswa Community Junior Secondary School. This was a first for CCB and thanks to their two teachers, who helped with the translation through sign language, it went very well and the students were very participative throughout the presentation.



Kumakwane CJSS in a group picture after a visit from CCB at their school.



Ramotswa Junior School hosted by CCB at Mokolodi Education Centre.



Keneilwe conducting a bush camp at Ghanzi's Tiisano education centre.

Bush Camps

During the past 12 months, four bush camps took place at CCB's Ghanzi camp at the Tiisano Education Centre. The objectives of these bush camps were to motivate and inspire students and teachers to develop positive attitudes towards the environment and conservation issues. The lessons were based on wildlife conservation, human wildlife conflict, waste management, water conservation, the importance of birds in the ecosystem and sustainable livestock management practices.

In May 2013, the University of Botswana Wildlife Conservation Society (UBWCS) brought a group of 30 students to visit our Tiisano Education Centre in Ghanzi. The students combined learning about the environment and conservation issues with helping CCB with crucial maintenance needed on the education centre and the CCB camp. The students were very keen to learn about conservation issues and very hard working when it came to digging, painting, cleaning and fixing our camps. We are very thankful for the help of the UBWCS students and look forward to forging a good relationship with the society in the future.



Jane sharing with UB students CCB research and education activities.

DT discussing information on how the demo farm is run on a daily basis, with UB students.



Conservation Education Review

Networking and Partnerships

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) under its National Environmental Education Committee (NEEC), of which CCB is a member, has developed a National Environmental Education Strategy and Action Plan (NEESAP). CCB attended their workshop on the 6 – 7th November 2013 to further discuss the contributions to NEESAP made by member organisations and a way forward on the development and implementations of activities outlined on the NEESAP. CCB has contributed to the plans to be implemented and the various stakeholders will report back on their activities by February 2014.



Food Security workshop participants.

The Food Security and Climate Change workshops were held on the 17th- 18th of October 2013 in Gaborone, and 28th–29th November 2013 in Palapye respectively. These two workshops were organised the BOCONGO sector of the Arm of the Church. The objectives were to address climate change and farming issues, to help communities identify their vulnerabilities and develop coping mechanisms or resilience strategies and to create a platform for NGO's, Community Based Organisations (CBO's), community leaders, and farming communities to develop sustainable adaptation strategies for their communities.



Lekgolobotlo EE club members together with UB Wildlife Conservation Society members clearing the bio-park space.

SADC - REEP Change Project

Southern African Development Community - Regional Environmental Education Programme under the jurisdiction of Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), National Environmental Education Committee (NEEC), members have initiated a "change project" in their area of choice. CCB education officer, Keneilwe Mathaba is part of this project and in 2012 she chose to start an environmental club with Lekgolobotlo Primary School in the Ngwaketse District. To commence the project, she first held a bush camp for the school in to introduce them to predator conservation, ecology and to equip them with the necessary knowledge and information to run the club.



Currently, the school has completed and sealed their School Environmental Policy document that will guide them when implementing different environmental activities and projects. Keneilwe has been making several trips to the school to monitor their progress.

Among the activities for the newly formed club is the establishment of a bio park that will have exotic and local shade and fruit trees planted, a small vegetable garden, water pond to attract different species of birds to the school ground and a roundavel where it will act as an information center on conservation and environmental education.

CCB Executive Director, Ms. Rebecca Klein sharing a word of advice at Lekgolobotlo before planting her tree.



A group photo with trees ready to be planted.

Public Engagements Review

In May 2013, CCB joined a South African-based not-for-profit organization, Walking for Lions (WFL) in their mission to support and raise awareness for lion conservation. WFL founder, Marnus Roodbol, together with a group of four brave volunteers tackled the challenge of walking from Windhoek to Ghanzi to raise funds and awareness for the plight of the lions. On their approach to Ghanzi, the WFL team were joined in by CCB staff members, Botswana's Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) staff, and farmers from the district and an escort from the Ghanzi Police Service. This collaboration paved the way for forming relations between carnivore conservation organizations and the community. CCB and WFL both maintain a strong belief that the key to helping solve human-carnivore conflict is to find solutions that benefit both the wildlife and communities.

The theme for 2013 World Environment Day (WED) celebrations was Think. Eat. Save – Reducing Your Foodprint. This year's campaign rallied everyone to take action and reduce food waste, save money, minimize the environmental impact of food production and force food production to become more efficient. CCB attended the celebrations in Gaborone, Botswana on the 5th June 2013 at Botanical Gardens with other stakeholders to showcase Botswana's stand in reducing their foodprint. CCB staff also attended WED celebratory event in Ghanzi hosted by the Department of Environmental Affairs at the Kalahari Arms Hotel.



Walking for lions in Ghanzi.

CCB attended the 2013 Ghanzi Agricultural Show with a stall showcasing our education, research and community outreach programs. The event also provided opportunities for interaction with community members and farmers. The general response from the farmers was very encouraging with more farmers coexisting happily with predators without any livestock losses. CCB also attended the 2013 Botswana Consumer Trade Fair with a mission of raising awareness for predator conservation and to showcase the services we provide to farmers and schools. As one of the biggest fairs in Botswana, it attracted visitors and exhibitors from throughout Southern Africa. CCB was awarded third place for the fair's best stall competition, in the category of non-government organisations (NGOs).



Keneilwe during WED 2013 in Gaborone informing students on the cheetah status in Botswana.

The public relations unit of the Ministry of Agriculture organised a filming event to raise awareness of CCB's LSGD program in August 2013. The resulting video was subsequently aired on Botswana Television during the same month and CCB has received a lot of positive feedback about the program.



CCB volunteer, Amanda Tiffin at the Ghanzi show sharing CCB predator identification sheet with students.

Public Engagements Events

Staff Training

CCB's education officer, Keneilwe attended the Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa Conference (EEASA) from the 10th to 12th September 2013 in Malawi, Lilongwe. The conference theme was "Green Economy: Insights and Perspectives for Environmental Education in Southern Africa".

CCB's Program Manager, Education Officer and Public Relations Officers, Douglas Thamage, Keneilwe Mathaba and Connie Sebati, visited Zimbabwe for a benchmarking trip at the Painted Dog Conservation (PDC) from 11-14 November 2013. The Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN) supported the ideas-sharing visit, as CCB and PDC are both WCN partners. The aim of the visit was to learn, share ideas and experiences with the implementation of bush camp activities and community outreach activities at PDC. The CCB staff came back with new ideas to incorporate into CCB's education programs.



Keneilwe engaging with another participant at EEASA in Malawi.



CCB and Ewaso Lions (Kenya) on a benchmarking trip to PDC in Zimbabwe. Classes range from computers, ecology, game drives and research. The team also had a chance to experience some of the local primary schools water conservation projects.

DONORS & SUPPORTERS

2013- 2014

CCB continues to benefit from the contributions of funding organizations, volunteers, individual donors and also businesses, here in Botswana and around the world. We wish to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has, in some way, supported the project during this review period of April 2013 to March 2014.

ORGANISATIONS

Wildlife Conservation Network
Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund
Houston Zoo
Love Animals
Conservation Strategy Fund
Zoological Association of America
Zoofari Inc.
Southwick Wild Animal Farm

National Geographic Big Cat Initiative
Rufford Foundation
Predator Conservation Trust
Tapeats Fund
Banham Zoo
Wild Cat Education & Conservation Fund
Pittsburgh Zoo
Safari West
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Handsel Foundation
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Project Survival
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Animal Ark

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