



WCS bases its actions on protecting wildlife and the natural environment through science, conservation actions, education, and inspiring communities to value nature.

Dear readers

Welcome to the first WCS Mozambique Newsletter of 2022. The beginning of the year was marked by various achievements, linked to international dates for biodiversity conservation, and also saw the return to some calm in Niassa Special Reserve (NSR) after armed attacks by insurgent groups at the end of 2021. These lead to deaths and destruction of community property, resulting in approximately 4,000 people displaced from NSR alone. REN, in partnership with the Mecula District Government and safari operators, provided logistical support to help people return to their areas of origin. The insurgency severely impacted REN's activities in many ways, and given the attacks happened during the peak season of agricultural production for subsistence farmers, pockets of famine are expected as a result.

In this first quarter, WCS participated in the launch of public consultation on the draft Forestry Law, led by the President of Mozambique, Filipe Jacinto Nyusi. WCS is giving technical scientific input, as part of long-running support to nationwide forest conservation - including updating the national historical vegetation map at a scale detailed enough to be used for territorial planning purposes and the COMBO+ programme's development of metrics to assess the ecological conditions of ecosystems such as miombo and mangrove. WCS is also leading the assessment and development of a jurisdictional REDD+ project covering the NSR, seeking to significantly reduce degradation and carbon emissions in the Niassa landscape. Despite the challenges of the rainy season, WCS continued various NSR inspection activities in conjunction with

REN operators, assistance to communities regarding human-wildlife conflict and technical support for legalisation of Natural Resource Management Committees.

Also in this period, WCS held a two-day training retreat for 25 government technicians on implementation of the new Ministerial Diploma on biodiversity offsets, and initiated a gap analysis to inform the government on the potential improvement of law enforcement in community managed fisheries areas, with a focus on Inhambane Province. WCS also held a meeting with the National Fisheries Administration (ADNAP) and partners (WWF, RARE, World Bank) to discuss impact of the Diploma on community managed fisheries.

Another important activity - preparation of the NSR Management Plan (which was interrupted in 2016), was resumed with a consultation meeting comprising operators, local governments, local communities, and other stakeholders. The plan should be finalised in the second quarter of the year.

All these first quarter activities mark progress towards the macro-objectives that WCS plans to achieve this year. We invite readers to explore this newsletter to learn more about this work. WCS would also like to express special thanks to all the people who, individually and collectively, have provided support to these activities, and to once again reiterate our compliments to the operators of Niassa Special Reserve, who have increasingly demonstrated their selfless commitment to biodiversity conservation.

*WCS Mozambique Country Director,
Afonso Madope*

NIASSA SPECIAL RESERVE HIGHLIGHTS JANUARY - MARCH 2022



LAW ENFORCEMENT

- **7 joint patrol operations** were conducted with Chuilexi, Luwire, Mazeze, Mashambozou and Kambako primarily against commercial bush meat poaching operations, illegal mining, and illegal logging. NSR scouts in conjunction with operators' scouts conducted a total of 143-foot patrols, 15 ambushes and 4 river check points.
- **82 scout training sessions** were conducted totalling over 112 hours. SMART CEDAR, Delorme (how to collect and process data with CEDAR devices in the field), Legislation (elaboration of crime notices) and weapon handling were the focus topics during this period.
- **14 crime notices** were prepared covering 39 individuals arrested for poaching (2 cases), illegal mining (7 cases) and illegal logging (1 case in Mecula, 3 in Cabo Delgado Province. In two of the cases the offenders were captured by NSR concessionaires' scouts, one by Marire and the other by Luwire.
- **10 cases were tried** involving 14 defendants in total. 10 were convicted of crimes related to poaching, with penalties ranging from 8 to 24 years in prison and 3 of the cases covering 4 defendants are waiting for the sentence to be read.



AVIATION

- **5 airfields were registered in Niassa** (Mbatamila, Ariane, Muio, Mariri and Lugenda) through collaboration with the IACM Mozambique Civil Aviation authorities. All 5 have been, pre-approved and had IACM recommendations implemented. Evidence of the repairs on all 5 airfields has been submitted to IACM, support letters from Meteorology Institute (INAM) and Niassa Government submitted to IACM for final approvals.
- **The Bell 407 ZS-RUE helicopter** was involved in humanitarian activities in January, and deploying patrol teams, transporting rations, conducting air surveillance and intercepting offenders during the rest of the quarter. 8,000 litres of JET A-1 were acquired for the helicopter's use.
- **WCS's Cessna 206 aircraft** continued work supporting air surveillance and operational logistics. In this quarter, 73.4 hours were flown for patrol missions covering 13,216 km and 54.5 flight hours for logistic operations corresponding to 9,810 km coverage. 16,000 litres of AVGAS were purchased and 7,273.5 litres used.

HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Insurgent activity forced the suspension of human-wildlife conflict (HWC) mitigation activities in December, with minimal interventions restarted in January by the LE department in conjunction with defence and security forces (FDS). In late January, the security situation improved enabling the HWC unit to return and continue implementation of crop-raiding mitigation methods.

- **Chilli brick repellent** work was continued, with a meeting conducted for farmers from Mecula town, Alassima, Guebuza, Ntimbo II and Lisongole communities to follow up on previous training and reiterate NSR support. It was stated that the NSR would provide chilli and used engine oil, while communities would gather elephant dung and then produce the repellent bricks. WCS delivered 10 liters of used engine oil and 1.5 kg of chilli to farmers from Alassima community who produced 60 chilli bricks for 5 farms.
- **Spotlights** distributed in 2021 were restored or recovered by Natural Resource Management Committees in collaboration with WCS community assistants for use in block farms where they have crops. No rockets were distributed due to the insurgency.
- **Mobile electric fence** installation was evaluated in meetings held with Macalange, Guebuza, Mecula, Ntimbo II, Ntimbo I and Mussoma communities. WCS also held a second meeting with the Agriculture Office (SDAE), District Farmers Association and Natural Resources Management Committee (CGRN-Mungano) concerning the fence allocation plan. It was decided that communities in Mecula town will receive mobile fences in the next period after reconstruction of houses and resumption of farming post-insurgency.
- **Local HWC mitigation strategies** were encouraged in meetings with farmers, including use of loud "mucupheta" horns, "sanja" safehouses for people to sit during the day to chase away monkeys and fences built with local materials to protect crops from bushpigs.
- **HWC management capacity building** included 3 NSR rangers participating in a knowledge exchange with Maputo National Park, covering animal deterrence practices.





ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

- **World Wildlife Day** celebrations were held at Mbatamila HQ led by NSR Warden Terrêncio Tamele with 32 students from Escola Secundária 16 de Junho de Mecula. The event promoted educational activities to raise awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation, highlighting that the future of the wildlife depends on changes in human behaviour and attitude.
- **The International Day of Forests** was marked with a ceremony held at Mecula District headquarters, organized by NSR in conjunction with the District Administration. The event was attended by Mr. António Joaquim Paulo, Administrator of the district of Mecula and Terêncio Tamele, NSR warden, as well as other members of the district government and technicians from NSR community department. Teachers and students from of the Escola Primária Completa (EPC) 16 de Junho de Mecula also participated. In total there were 249 people. The objective of the celebration was to raise awareness about the importance of forest conservation.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- **Assistance to management committees** included meetings conducted by WCS with NRMCM (Comité de Gestão de Recursos Naturais) from Naulala (COGERNA) regarding the 20% community revenue arrangement (derived mainly from tourism) and hunting quotas. The need for all NRMCM to have legal documentation to legitimize their existence was discussed. Also during this period, the sector was invited by COGEMU (Comité de Gestão de Recursos Naturais de Mussoma) to assist the revitalization of the committee, but this activity was postponed due the security situation.



INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Rehabilitation of 14 Water Supply Wells in Mecula** was stopped in November 2021 because of security issues but resumed in March and is now expected to be completed in May, benefitting around 11,175 people. The aim is to encourage communities to centralize agriculture into blocks to minimize HWC and reduce the need to fetch water from rivers where people can encounter animals like crocodiles, hippos, elephants and buffalos. The wells will also enable more intensive agricultural programs such as vegetable gardens under irrigation.
- **Construction of control gates** in Milepa, Mavago district and Msawise, Mavago district, was halted in December due to the rainy season making access roads impassable. Work is expected to resume in late April 2022.
- **Construction work for a new water system** at Maputo camp is being carried out by the NSR construction team under the supervision of the NSR infrastructure manager. The aim is to replace the obsolete system currently in use, improving water supply for all infrastructure as well as minimizing wastage.



MARINE PORTFOLIO HIGHLIGHTS JANUARY - MARCH 2022

Shark and ray conservation program

- **2 Baited Remote-Underwater Surveys** were conducted in Ponta de Ouro and South the region of Baixo Pinda to Mozambique Island
- **Artisanal fisheries landing site surveys** were conducted in Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Zambezia, Sofala and Maputo.
- **Socio-economic surveys** were conducted, interviewing 120 fishermen (Zalala, Pemba, Inhambane and Maputo).
- **eDNA surveys** were conducted, with 8 samples collected in Ponta de Ouro and 20 samples in Baixo Pinda



Coral reef conservation

- **Coral reef ecological condition evaluation toolkit completed** - to be used for biodiversity offsets, ecological restoration and monitoring activities.
- **National Strategy for Coral Reef (ECOR) final revisions** conducted by InOM and WCS. The document has been approved by the Ministry of Sea, Interior Waters and Fisheries (MIMAIP), reviewed by all relevant Ministries and is now ready to be approved by the Council of Ministers.



Program COMBO+: Conservation, Mitigation and Biodiversity Offsets

- In coordination with Portucel Mozambique, a case study report developed under COMBO+ phase 1 on how the company applied the mitigation hierarchy to biodiversity impacts was printed and shared.
- A technical webinar was held to update and standardize the application of the IUCN global typology on the historical vegetation/terrestrial ecosystem map of South Africa and Mozambique.
- Participation in the IMEC Thematic Group Webinar on "Biodiversity conservation in Madagascar: Do no net loss commitments help?"
- Exchange of experiences between FIAES from El Salvador and BIOFUND from Mozambique, focusing on how to turn BIOFUND into a viable financial mechanism for biodiversity offsets in Mozambique.
- Two young professionals recruited through BIOFUND's Leadership Program for Conservation in Mozambique (PLCM) for a 6-month internship in the COMBO+ program.
- Technical advisor hired to be seconded to DINAB to provide continuous support to the new Division on Monitoring and Assessment of Biodiversity Offsets (RAACB) at the Environmental Licensing Department.
- Two-day training retreat in Macaneta provided to 25 government technicians focused on implementation of the new Ministerial Diploma on biodiversity offsets.
- In collaboration with CEAGRE, a baseline study on ecological and socio-economic characterization of Licuati Forest Reserve was conducted, which will be used for the pilot project being developed by BIOFUND and WCS through the COMBO+ program.

Marine Protected Areas support program

- **Marine Atlas** developed compiling all relevant and public information collected or produced during the scenario development program for the strategic expansion of the national network of Marine Conservation Areas (MCAs).
- **Technical working group** created to develop the national strategy and action plan for the expansion of MCAs, with the first formal meeting of the group held on zoom.



Strengthening the capacity of the focal points of the biodiversity conventions

- **Training retreat** conducted with the objective of establishing/defining the Mozambican position for the COP-15 of CBD.

Key Biodiversity Areas

- **Third phase** of the Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) program began, focusing on 3 main areas: mainstreaming KBAs, piloting blue carbon, and strengthening coral reef fisheries in Mozambique.
- Development of inception reports and kick off meeting with SPEED.
- Launch of the voting process of the new directorate committee of the National coordination Group of KBAs and Red lists (GNC).

Sustainable Artisanal Fisheries Program

- Initiated a gap analysis to inform the government on potential improvement of law enforcement for community-managed fishing areas with a focus on Inhambane Province.
- Meeting with the National Fisheries Administration (ADNAP) and partners (WWF, RARE, World Bank) to discuss the status of the new Ministerial Diploma on community managed fishing areas.



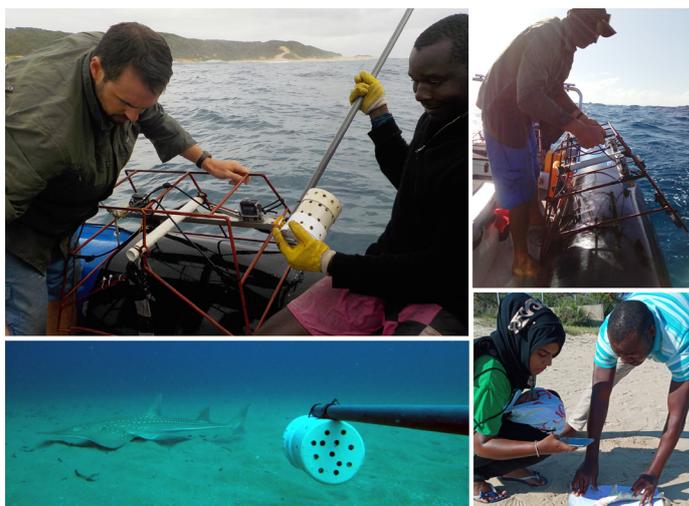


Building a Blue Future for Ecosystems and People on the East African Coast

Nine meetings were held with different stakeholders, involving a total of 98 people to share information about the project and its Environmental and Social Safeguards.

Marine biodiversity baseline surveys conducted:

- 34 coral reef sites were assessed through dives by a team consisting of scientists from WCS, Lúrio University Faculty of Natural Sciences and InOM.
- 119 rapid assessment sessions were conducted using Remotely Operated Underwater Vehicle (ROV) and snorkelling.
- 110 samples were collected via underwater video (BRUVs) between Mozambique Island and the north-eastern end of the Lower Pinda River in Memba, for assessment of shark and ray populations.
- 62 eDNA samples were collected.
- Several Marine Mammal observations and Acoustic/ultrasonic stations were carried out between Mozambique Island and the north-eastern end of the Lower Pinda River.



Many thanks to our donors and partners

