

Project Summary

Pathways for Peace

Restoring Nature's Balance in Southeastern Angola

The elephants of northern Botswana make up the single largest surviving elephant population in the world. These elephants once used migratory routes that were historically contiguous with that of northwestern Zimbabwe, the Caprivi Strip of northern Namibia, southern Angola and Zambia. Unfortunately, landmines sown during Angola's 26-year civil war have now made critical access corridors used by the elephants between northern Botswana and prime wildlife regions in Angola impassable.

Landmines and unexploded ordnance have formed deadly barriers for both man and animal in the Cuando-Cubango Province of Angola. As a result, Angolans cannot walk safely on much of their land, nor cultivate agricultural fields. Large numbers of people have left the province, further burdening other parts of war-weary Angola. Similarly, landmines have affected the elephants of northern Botswana blocking access to historical foraging areas in Angola and Zambia.



Much of the river vine vegetation in Chobe National Park in Botswana has been destroyed by the elephants

Landmines act as a manmade barrier separating the Chobe region of Botswana from the upper Cuando and Zambezi Rivers flowing through Angola. The ranging area of these elephants within the proposed multi-country Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (Kaza TFCA) has been reduced to a fraction by the divisive effects of this lethal barrier. The region currently is faced with a highly distorted distribution and impact of elephants. Already in excess of 130,000, the elephants are increasing in number at approximately 5% per annum, a totally unsustainable rate of increase given the current area of confinement. This growing herd is creating increasingly severe conflicts with local human populations and is destroying the local environment due to excessive impact on grazing areas. Regional authorities now face a number of unappealing options including culling the herd by as much as half.

Working Together

Roots of Peace and Conservation International are collaborating to implement a program to open elephant pathways for peace, conserve wildlife and stimulate economic development that is much needed in war weary Southeastern Angola. Roots of Peace will lead the effort to remove landmines from historical elephant migratory routes in coordination with the Conservation International, National Government of Angola, the Provincial Government of Cuando-Cubango, and the U.N.



Development Program-Angola. Roots of Peace will contract directly with demining organizations and work with Angola-based staff funded by the U.S. Department of State. Conservation International will then take part in ecotourism development based on wildlife conservation within the Luiana reserve, thereby contributing toward social and environmental well-being in the region.



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Restoring Spectacular Wilderness Areas

Opening up traditional wildlife migration routes will ultimately link National Parks and Game Reserves within the Kaza TFCA. These corridors help protect the region's biological diversity and aid the study and preservation of endangered species and habitats. The movement of elephants from northern Botswana should reduce conflict between human and elephant populations. The migration of those elephants back into historic habitats in Angola and to Zambia should help stimulate economic development through tourism in those areas.

Clearing of landmines in Luiana is a critical for regional tourism development in southeastern Angola, and for meaningful implementation of the entire Kaza TFCA. Integrating southeastern Angola into the ecotourism-based regional economy will stimulate and significantly improve the quality and standard of life amongst people living in the region. This initiative has the potential to make a significant contribution to job creation and poverty relief in this part of Angola through training and capacity building, with emphasis on long-term sustainability and the promotion of a sense of community ownership.



Your Opportunity for Support

This ambitious project will raise \$10 million over the next three years. Roots of Peace and Conservation International will work in concert through a three phased approach. The first phase will involve mechanical/ground preparation, mechanical and manual demining, mine risk education and permanent minefield marking, employing Angolan citizens, following an initial period of training, wherever possible.

Concurrent to demining activity, Conservation International will initiate a planning phase to identify key development opportunities that can be supported through the joint program. These plans will include an Integrated Regional Land Use Plan, Tourism Plan, Infrastructural Development Plan, and Socio-economic Development Plan.

In the third phase, Roots of Peace and Conservation International will build the necessary infrastructure and establish and monitor baselines of socioeconomic and ecological change. Conservation International will recruit, equip and train rangers and wardens from the area; identify potential community ventures and strengthen skills to integrate into development plans; identify and integrate partners capable of mainstreaming gender and addressing HIV and malaria prevalence in the region.

The anticipated long term impact of the project will be profound, restoring nature's balance in Southeastern Angola for the benefit of both human and wildlife populations. Please consider joining with us to restore the beauty and vitality of this important region of Angola.

The target area to be demined lies in a strip of roughly 10km by 150 km within the Luiana Partial Game Reserve of south-eastern Angola. (Suspected minefields are indicated by blue dots on the map and known minefields are indicated by red.)

This area is part of the Kaza TFCA, a huge transboundary conservation and development initiative that straddles five countries and has every promise to become a regional tourism hub, building on the existing Okavango Delta tourist node.