

**WILDERNESS**  
FOUNDATION  
**AFRICA**

**Annual Review**  
**April 2022 to March 2023**

Wilderness Foundation Africa is a conservation organisation working to protect and sustain all life on earth for the benefit of current and future generations.

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# 1. Chairman's Report

I'm very pleased to report that whereas the enabling global surrounding for running an NGO stays extremely constrained and demanding because of the diverse economic obstacles globally, we ended this financial year in a steady position with a small surplus. Our programmes are operating at good capacity and have mostly recovered to pre-COVID 19 levels. We launched a new website for WFA, which has improved audience engagement and streamlined our content.

Our WFA 50<sup>th</sup> celebration events between August 2022 and mid-January 2023 were by all accounts highly successful and achieved our main goal of repositioning WFA as a force for social and environmental justice, particularly after two years of COVID-19 and the impacts thereof.

As part of these celebrations, we successfully hosted a series of awareness evenings around South Africa, with over one thousand partners, colleagues (former and present) and supporters attending. These events centred around a story told by Michael Charton, called "Leave some for the Honey Badger" which involves the relationship between (our founders) Ian Player and Magqubu Ntombela. It is a 50-minute story exploring the lives of these two men, how they came together, learnt from one another, and ultimately transformed conservation in South Africa and beyond. The celebrations culminated in two three-day fundraising events with our Global Patrons, Katherine Jenkins and Andrew Levitas, at Sanbona Wildlife Reserve and Shamwari Game Reserve. These events included unique conservation experiences as well as a private performance by Katherine live under the African sky. These events were attended by some of WFA's biggest supporters and long-term friends of the Foundation and proved highly successful in cementing relationships and forging new ones.

Programme highlights over the past year are as follows:

- The IRONMAN for Nature project continues to bring awareness to the work of WFA and is now at breakeven so should start generating revenue for our conservation projects from the 2023 financial year. These funds will go towards WFA conservation projects.
- WFA secured funding from the Lewis Foundation for a three-year project to use experiential education and targeted briefings to influence legislators and policy makers in climate change through the just energy transition.
- Wild Rhino Demand Reduction activities have taken place in Vietnam in person for the first time in three years (due to COVID). We continue to make good progress with key Vietnamese individuals, university students and businesses who are actively engaged in our rhino and conservation awareness activities.

- The Innovative Finance Unit, through the Sustainable Finance Coalition hosted its first Landscape Finance Bootcamp in October. The event was held in Sandton and attracted high-profile attendees from across sectors, such as banking, investment, finance, green projects, SANParks and others.
- WFA secured funding from IUCN for two separate year-long projects, namely buffering South Africa's unique succulent species from the impacts of the illegal wildlife trade, and monitoring of critical endangered seabird populations in the Addo Elephant National Park Marine Protected Area.
- WFA was accredited with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

At our AGM in 2022, we bid farewell to one of our Trustees, Mr Israel Noko. His service to WFA was greatly valued and appreciated.

As always, we are appreciative to our partners and long-standing funders, all of whom enable us to do the work that we do for the future of all species on this planet. In closing, I would like to thank all my fellow Trustees of the Board for their support over the past year as well as the CEO and the full staff compliment at WFA for the uplifting work they do every day and in making this world a better place.

Todani Moyo, Chairperson – September 2023

## 2. Introduction

Wilderness Foundation Africa is an African-based conservation NGO that seeks to protect and sustain landscapes through its agile and innovative approach to conservation.

WFA implements a wide range of interventions that include direct action anti-poaching, landscape wilderness management, developing young leaders from disadvantaged communities, and the development of innovative finance solutions. It is through these initiatives that Wilderness Foundation Africa focuses on making lasting impacts.

## 3. Species

The Forever Wild Conservation Programme uses iconic wildlife species as flagships to draw attention to challenges facing conservation and wilderness areas across Africa. Conservation interventions can then be directed towards these species resulting in the protection of landscapes and the associated wildlife, and the promotion of beneficiation to local communities.

### a. Forever Wild Rhino Protection Initiative

The Forever Wild Rhino Protection Initiative focusses on conserving free ranging and viable populations of black and white rhino in the wild. The initiative has several components that include the establishment of new populations in suitable habitat, law enforcement support, veterinary support for treating injured rhino when needed and rhino horn demand reduction in Vietnam.

The Forever Wild Rhino Protection Initiative **vehicle fleet** for the 2022 / 2023 financial year included 6 Amaroks on loan from Volkswagen Commercial vehicles and an Isuzu K9 vehicle based at Addo Elephant National Park. Apart from normal rhino protection, reserve duties, and transport for the K9 unit, the Amaroks also assisted with anti-poaching training and stop-and-search operations. A highlight for the financial year was the finalization of the satellite free running hound unit in Kruger National Park, where one of the Amaroks has been deployed.



Photo credit (left image): Ray Chaplin



The **Wild Rhino Demand Reduction Campaign** team is motivated by the exceptional year that 2022 turned out to be and are happy to report that all the project targets for 2022 have either been met or exceeded. The campaign had 90 engagements / impacts in Vietnam which varied from in person activities, on-line activities and activities in partnership with partner organisations. It also managed to reach outlying areas outside Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, with the assistance of partner organisations and the newly established Rhino Hero category. The uptake of the Rhino Hero category of supporters has been significant and this provides a fantastic support base that can be used to develop and implement new awareness activities.

By December 2022, the campaign had a total reach through Facebook of 22 665 464 (86% from Vietnam) since 2014, with a total reach directly in Vietnam of 472 293, and a total indirect reach in Vietnam (through activities) of 2 255 115.

The 2022 campaign also saw education and awareness murals completed at bookshops, university and business seminars, school presentations and school visits, video screening events and a rhino poaching message video written, directed and produced by Peter Phan, one of the 2017 Wild Rhino Youth Ambassadors, winning an international film award.



The 2022 / 2023 year was a sad year for the WFA **Forever Wild K9 programme**. Cold scent tracker dog Ziggy unfortunately passed away very unexpectedly due to health complications. Before the sad passing of Ziggy, he completed a total of 32 training tracks totalling 107.45km in this financial year. He also assisted with ranger training sessions and anti-poaching patrols. His impact in the protection of rhino in the Eastern Cape will be missed.

WFA continued to support Addo Elephant National Park's K9 capacity, with the Isuzu K9 vehicle still stationed at the Darlington section of the park to transport the remaining K9 unit. Funding was also made available for handler training of the Section Ranger from the Colchester section.



Through **WFA's aircraft**, the Foundation was able to provide the following aerial support in the 2022 / 2023 financial year: the Bat Hawk (ZU-IDJ), piloted by Brad Fike, flew 56 flights totalling 167.7 hours airborne over the Great Fish River Nature Reserve. The BushCat (ZU-WFA), piloted by Angus Tanner, flew 63 flights totalling 234.2 hours airborne over Addo Elephant National Park in the 2022 / 2023 financial year. ZU-WFA also assisted with a recce flight over the newly formed corridor between Tankwa Karoo National Park and the Cederberg Nature Reserve.

The flight hours mentioned above on both aircraft have been during species monitoring flights accompanied by a monitor from the respective agency who records and identifies all species observed during the flight. After 35 consecutive months without loss of any rhino to poaching activities, the Eastern Cape unfortunately had an onslaught of rhino poaching towards the end of the financial year. With the sudden increase in rhino poaching in the province, aerial support was stepped up even more than before.



Through the **Wildlife Operations Group**, WFA continued to support the South African Police Service Hawks with vehicle hire when required to assist with extensive wildlife crime investigations, as well as access to the SearchWorks platform for wildlife crime investigators. To date 10 917 searches have been completed, assisting with wildlife crime investigations. Support was also provided in the form of boardroom availability for important security meetings to members of the group.

Assistance was also provided to Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT) in flying a reconnaissance mission to Mpande on the Wild Coast of the Eastern Cape. Large scale dune deforestation was reported by community members and photographs and video footage was taken from a helicopter which will assist with the investigations and rehabilitation programme that may follow. Wilderness Foundation Africa contributed towards the fuel for the helicopter.

SANParks has been successful in securing a Wildlife Conservation Bond through the World Bank, which replaced phase 2 of the **Addo Rhino Impact Investment project**. WFA continued to support Addo Elephant National Park with the employment of two black rhino monitors, and the running cost of their dedicated vehicle until June 2022.

WFA was successful in securing a grant from SeaWorld Busch Gardens Conservation Fund for the collection of **black rhino DNA samples**, and the genetic analysis of these samples. The total amount of DNA samples collected from black rhino within the Eastern Cape was 22, exceeding the 20 required. To date WFA have assisted with the collection of 228 black rhino DNA samples and 24 white rhino DNA samples, totalling 252 DNA samples. All of these have been added to the national RhODIS database.



Photo credit (left, middle and right): Ray Chaplin

WFA initiated the **Desert rhino habitat and meta-population management project** within this financial year. The aim of the project is to improve metapopulation management of South Africa's population of *Diceros bicornis bicornis* (*D.b.b.*) (critically endangered South-western Black Rhino) with the following outcomes:

1. Scope, initiate and implement a *D.b.b.* metapopulation management group [Desert Rhino Action Group (DRAG)];
2. Scope, develop and implement a *D.b.b.* metapopulation plan;
3. Develop a habitat expansion and reintroduction potential plan for *D.b.b.* with reference to existing, expanded and new protected areas.
4. Develop a pilot protected area expansion / consolidation and reintroduction plan for South Africa's population of South-western Black Rhino (*D.b.b.*).

By March 2023 outcomes 1, 2 and 3 were successfully completed with outcome 4 initiated. The project is scheduled to conclude in October 2023.

Wilderness Foundation Africa has also been assisting **SANParks** with **their rhino range expansion project**. The project is looking at potential new sites that black and white rhino can be introduced to in order to grow the national population and to secure rhino that are being threatened in the hotspots of South Africa. By the end of the financial year the project was at the stage where a long list of potential sites has been identified, with the list to be taken down to two or three sites on which ground thruthing exercises will be carried out, before a final recommendation on the site(s) will be made.



## **b. Forever Wild African Penguin Conservation Initiative**

Since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the wild African Penguin population has declined with 97%, with the estimated number of remaining breeding pairs being only 14 700 (as at 2021). The species is in crisis and listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. African Penguin is also a flagship species, an indicator of health of the ecosystem, and with this alarming decrease and low numbers the entire marine ecosystem is in danger as well. With all of the above in mind, WFA senior management decided to expand the Forever Wild Programme to include a new initiative, the Forever Wild African Penguin Conservation Initiative. Marine related species projects will in future fall under this new banner.

The first project supported under this banner was **Addo Elephant National Park Marine support** through a discretionary grant received from Oak Foundation, WFA was able to support the marine section of Addo Elephant National Park with the purchase of two brand new outboard motors for their marine patrol vessel which increased boat speed with low noise engines which will assist in abalone poachers not hearing the patrol boat approach; and 50% less fuel usage than the previous two engines. This will result in double the number of patrols that will be carried out in in future using the same amount of fuel as per previous months. The boat engines were donated to SANParks, as per the request from the funder.

WFA, in collaboration with SANParks, was successful in securing a 12-month IUCN SOS grant, co-funded by the European Union, to **enable the continuation of monitoring and appropriate management of threatened seabirds in the Addo Elephant National Park Marine Protected Area.**

WFA assisted with short term contracted seabird monitors who have been assisting with marine patrols, anti-poaching patrols, penguin and gannet monitoring, and rescues during oil spills and severe weather. In this reporting period the following has been achieved:

- 181 days of monitoring with 242-foot patrols (twice daily for September and October; once daily for November to February). No oiled birds detected.
- 27 African Penguin Adults; 11 African Penguin Blues/juveniles; 13 penguin chicks, 2 Cape Gannet adults, and 3 Cape Gannet chicks taken into rehabilitation and removed to mainland for further rehabilitation at SANCCOB.
- 33 African Penguin Adults; 35 African Penguin Blues/juveniles; and one Cape Gannet adult, were released back onto Bird Island after rehabilitation.
- Monitoring of 347 artificial nests on Bird Island documenting occupancy of penguin adults, eggs and chicks.
- Counts of Kelp gulls are undertaken daily to establish population estimates and impact of predation.
- No disease outbreak was detected on Bird Island.
- 34 Vehicle and foot patrols along Woody Cape shoreline, no sick, diseased or oiled Cormorant birds and/or signs of water contamination (oil spills) detected.

Through the appointment of the 7 seabird monitors, the overall conservation capacity within the Marine Section of Addo Elephant National Park has increased significantly.



### **Key impacts achieved**

- **119 flights (401.9 hours) anti-poaching and monitoring hours** flown by WFA aircraft
- **10 917 intelligence searches** to date in support of wildlife crime investigations
  - **11 years** of vehicle support for rhino protection
  - Total of **252 rhino DNA samples** collected to date for management and analysis purposes
  - **22 million people** reached to date through Vietnam Demand Reduction campaign
- Scope, develop and implement a **metapopulation plan for desert black rhino**
- Assisted with **rescue of 51 African penguins** on Bird Island and **release of 68 African penguins** back onto Bird Island

## 4. Spaces

The projects managed under the Protected Area Programme work for the establishment, development and management of new wildlife reserves with an emphasis on corridors and linkages between protected areas. It also includes concept development and implementation of conservation corridors and management support to protected areas with specific attention on management effectiveness, as well as ecosystem rehabilitation.

### a. Plains of Camdeboo Private Nature Reserve

WFA has had direct management and oversight of the Plains of Camdeboo Private Nature Reserve since 2009 and this arrangement was maintained in this reporting period. The 8 827-ha reserve is situated within the Great Karoo region of the Eastern Cape and managed as a private nature reserve with no public access.

The most important conservation and management activities carried out in this reporting period included:

- Maintenance and servicing of reserve infrastructure:
  - This included bi-monthly monitoring and ad hoc repairs of the boundary fence; monitoring and maintenance of 12 artificial water points which included the installation of one new solar water pump to replace an irreparable windmill; and maintenance of road infrastructure.
- Game management:
  - The reserve did not conduct an annual aerial census during this period due to good rainfall and veld being too thick to accurately count game. All species are however in a very good condition and monitored weekly while rangers move through the reserve
- Veld management:
  - To assist with future veld restoration objectives, staff continued to harvest as much plant seed from inside the reserve as well as outside on the adjacent road reserve. The collected seed is then carefully distributed in the veld by field rangers while they continue with restoration efforts. This program has not been in vain, since better rainfall has been received on the reserve germination and sustained growth has been significant.



## **b. Land Protection and Protected Area Expansion in the Northern Cape**

### **Northern Cape Land Project Phase 3**

Wilderness Foundation Africa's Land Programme has been implementing the 'Northern Cape Land Project Phase 3' since October 2021. Continued pressures from the mining and renewable energy development sectors have been experienced in some of the project's focus areas. In mitigating this imminent threat and aiming to improve land management, the project's focus is to assist the Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform (DAERL, the Department) and South African National Parks (SANParks) with the implementation of the National Protected Area Expansion Strategy within the Northern Cape. Both the Department and SANParks have requested Wilderness Foundation Africa's assistance with the expansion of Protected Areas highlighted in the Strategy. and have committed to be the conservation agency to maintain these Protected Area agreements over the long term.

Over the last year, the project achieved all scheduled (to date) targets and milestones agreed upon with the project funder (WWF and Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust) which includes the following:

- Identifying and assessing twelve top priority expansion properties for SANParks and the Department.
- Presenting the assessed sites to SANParks' and the Province's Protected Area Expansion Review Committees to allocate potential Protected Area status to each site.
- Providing legal support to declaration procedures for candidate Protected Areas.
- Submission of Purchase Applications for three properties for Namaqua and Tankwa Karoo National Parks.
- Hosting one of two Peer Learning sessions scheduled for the Project. The two-day workshop was aimed at training SANParks colleagues and other attendees in conducting Biodiversity Site Assessments and negotiating sites for Protected Area expansion.
- Implementation of the "Technical Assistance" Programme and maintenance of sites worked on during Phase 3 of the Northern Cape Land Project to improve land management in focus areas, increase ecosystem resilience and mitigate for Climate Change. The Technical Assistance program included a recce for an aerial survey over the Tankwa Karoo to Cederberg Wilderness Corridor. The project aims to conduct a full aerial count over the Corridor during Spring of 2023. (WFA pilot, Angus Tanner and the WFA SkyReach BushCat aircraft assisted with the aerial survey recce).

The project staff has also engaged with landowners of a further six sites in securing these sites for protection through contractual/ Stewardship mechanism. Built into the project outcomes, each property will receive a Protected Area Management Plan which will guide the

Management Authorities appointed for each site to manage the site based on sound ecological principles.

In addition to the agreed upon project outcomes, the project has also been engaging with the Northern Cape Department, SANParks, Department Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) and other conservation agencies operating in the Northern Cape in commenting on development applications for properties in priority Protected Area expansion nodes. A further function fulfilled by the project, above what is required by the funder, is to assist with the tracking and following up of the declaration of sites submitted to the Provincial and National departments during previous WFA NC Land Projects. One of these sites is a Contractual National Park site to be declared as part of Tankwa Karoo National Park and is considered the first 'new generation' Contractual National Park to be proclaimed by SANParks and DFFE.

We would like to thank WWF South Africa and the Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust for funding this project.

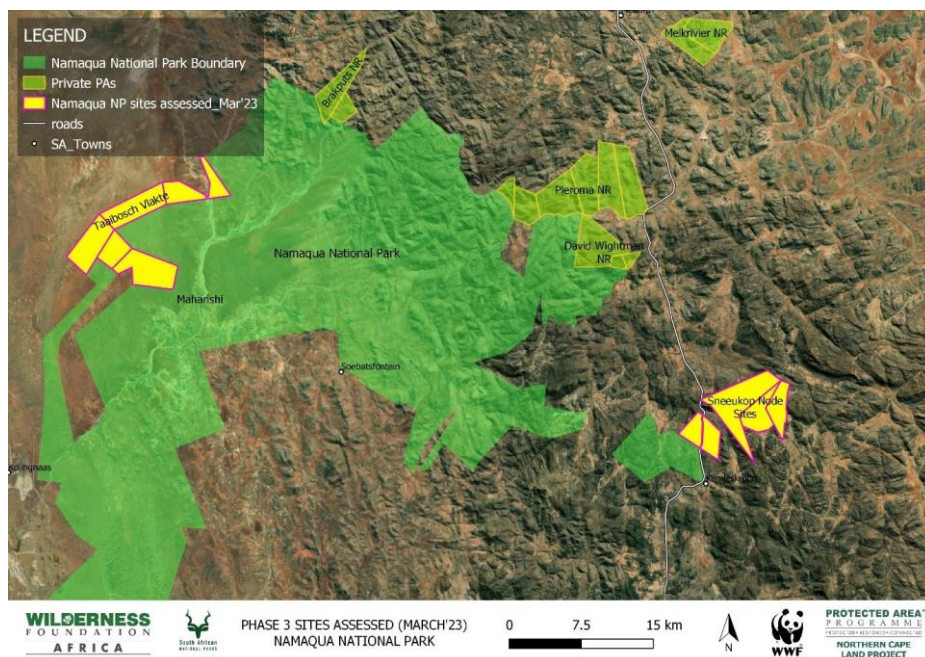


Figure 1: Sites assessed for Namaqua National Park expansion.

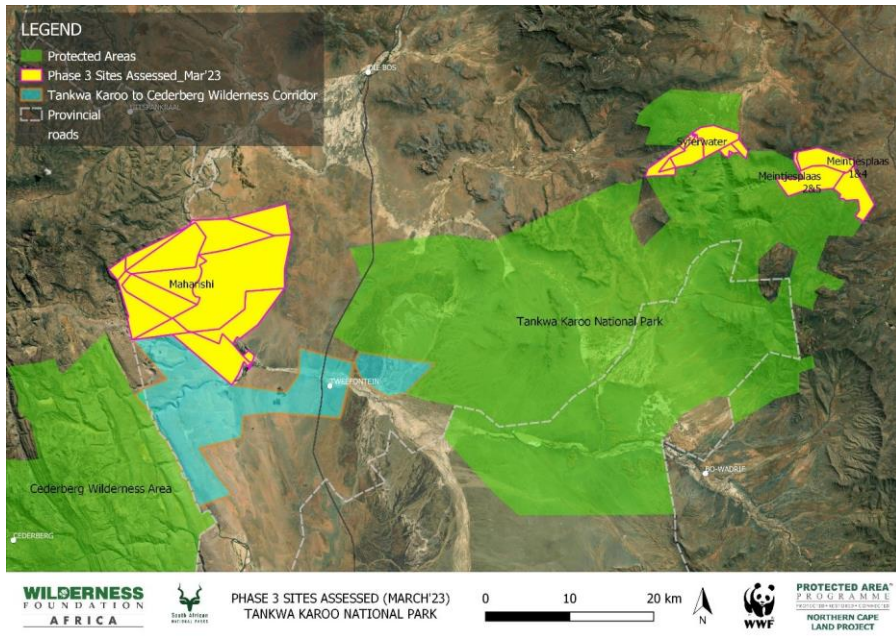


Figure 2: Sites assessed for Tankwa Karoo National Park expansion.

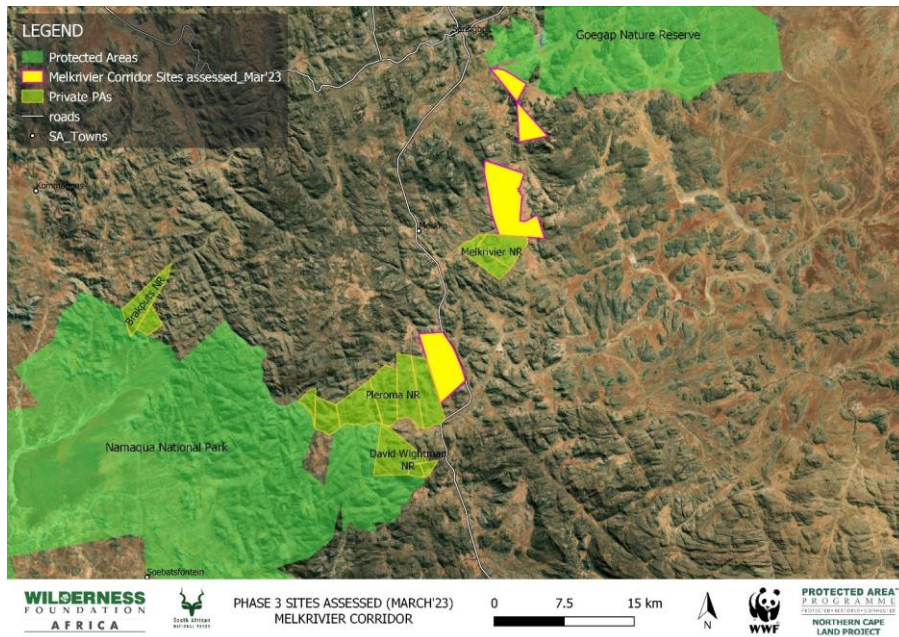


Figure 3: Sites assessed for the Melkrivier Corridor.



### **c. Completing the process to have the Succulent Karoo Protected Areas nominated as a World Heritage Site**

This two-year project is aimed at completing and submitting the nomination dossier to get the Succulent Karoo Protected Areas nominated for World Heritage status under Criteria (ix) and (x) and added to the IUCN World Heritage List, with the following outcomes

- Outcome 1: Establish project team and communication structures and commence gathering of background information.
- Outcome 2: Identification and selection of Protected areas to be included, draft nomination dossier.
- Outcome 3: Submission of final nomination dossier

In this financial year, Outcome 1 and 2 have been completed with the project team appointed, the steering committee established, and meetings commenced, and the draft nomination dossier completed. The following financial year will see the nomination dossier completed and submitted for consideration.

### **d. Lower Gariep Conservation Corridor planning phase**

In partnership with Millennium Trust, WFA embarked on a one-year planning and exploration phase to investigate the feasibility of two conservation corridors in the Northern Cape namely the “Lower Gariep Conservation Corridor” and the “Melkrivier Corridor”. WFA began the Planning Phase in March 2022 and the project ended on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2023.

The feasibility study resulted in a decision to focus on the “Lower Gariep Conservation Corridor” as it is a large and ambitious project with significant conservation gains and WFA are of the opinion that the “Melkrivier Corridor” can be completed and resourced by other conservation organisations operational in Namaqualand.

The completed project report as well as an implementation plan and budget to start securing the “Lower Gariep Conservation Corridor” was submitted to the funder for consideration.

### **e. Buffering South Africa’s unique succulent species from the impacts of the illegal wildlife trade**

The aim of this project, which will conclude in December 2023, and which is supported by IUCN Save Our Species and co-funded by EU International Partnerships, is to pilot emergency conservation interventions for succulent species in the Succulent Karoo Biome of South Africa. The project is being implemented in collaboration with South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), Department Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) Fusion Centre, Botanical Society (BotSoc) and Conservation South Africa (CSA).

To date, the following have been achieved:

- Suitable in situ technology identified for testing and piloting in the Succulent Karoo which will improve the protection of wild populations of succulent plants.
- **First Draft** report **completed** of all available **technologies** that could be piloted in remote location in the Succulent Karoo.
- All 36 single-site endemic species and subspecies have living collections and seed material banked ex situ by March 2024
- To date: **ex situ plant material** of 22 of the 36 target species in the collections within the four Botanical gardens
- Community led response developed to the illegal succulent plant poaching crisis in the Succulent Karoo Biome / Namaqualand region by March 2023
- To date: 5 workshops completed with a total of 90 community representatives and other stakeholders.
- **First Draft** Community driven **anti-poaching and communications strategy** in response to succulent plant poaching **completed**.
- Improved investigation and prosecution capacity in the Namaqualand region
- The draft report summarizing the **trends** and recommend processes that can support investigators conducting ongoing succulent plant poaching investigations in the Namaqualand region, is **currently being finalised**.
- **First Draft** Standard Operating Procedures (**SOP**) **completed** following an analysis of succulent plant poaching arrests and the flow of information within law enforcement agencies.

## f. Tanglewood Conservation Area

The Tanglewood Conservation Area (Tanglewood) lies within the “Bushman’s River Corridor” in the Eastern Cape of South Africa and focuses on restoration and research of ecological infrastructure and the benefits this holds for ecosystem-based adaptation. Through this, sustainable development is supported by improving climate resilience for both ecosystems and communities. Tanglewood forms part of a broader vision, developed by Wilderness Foundation Africa, to link Addo Elephant National Park to the Great Fish River Nature Reserve through the formation of connected conservation land via a series of biodiversity and nature corridors and the expansion of protected areas.

In this financial year focus was largely on getting Tanglewood ready for future restoration and research activities, removal of extralimital and alien vegetation species, soil erosion control, general reserve maintenance activities, the start of piloting various rehabilitation methods on the old farmlands, establishing plants within the plant nursery, baseline surveys, camera trap deployment and monitoring thereof.



Wilderness Foundation Africa signed a management agreement with Conservation Landscape Institute to assist with the implementation and management of activities on the property.



## g. Western Cape projects

WFA continue to support the City of Cape Town's Biodiversity Branch and South African National Parks with smaller projects. In this reporting period the following projects have been supported:

- The Blaauwberg Large-scale Ecological Restoration project (Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust): follow up clearing.
- Assessing climate change adaptation in corridors for Table Mountain National Park (Table Mountain Fund): this project has completed the deliverables of the project but has been granted a no cost extension for another year as there are unspent funds. This will allow the project to deliver more than what was initially expected.
- Securing 67% of Cape Town's Biodiversity Network by 2027, through Drafting of surveyor diagrams by a surveyor when portions of a property is being conserved, Preparing of title deed endorsement by a notary, Change of zonation to Open Space, Valuations to inform acquisitions and vesting of public land, Conclude special conditions imposed by landowners selling their land to the City, Procurement of signage for new Conservation Areas, Technical assistance/ incentive funding for protecting biodiversity, Projects will be allocated firstly as incentives for new entrants to conserve, but also to support existing stewardship landowners in implementing their management plans.

### **Key impacts achieved**

- **12 Sites Biodiversity Sites identified** for expansion
  - **12 Biodiversity Site Assessments** conducted
  - **12 Sites presented** for potential Protected Area status
- **3 Purchase Applications submitted** for priority expansion properties
- **1** Partner development and capacity building **Peer Learning Workshop**
- **Draft nomination dossier completed** for Succulent Karoo Protected Areas nominated as a World Heritage Site
- **Draft report completed** regarding available **in-situ technology** for the protection of succulent plants
- **Draft report completed** summarizing the **trends** and recommend processes that can support investigators conducting ongoing succulent plant poaching
  - **First Draft** Community driven **anti-poaching and communications strategy** in response to succulent plant poaching **completed**.
  - **First Draft** Standard Operating Procedures (**SOP**) **completed** following an analysis of succulent plant poaching arrests and the flow of information within law enforcement agencies
- **Ex situ plant material** of 22 of the 36 target critically endangered succulent plant species banked

# 5. Innovative Finance

The work of the Innovative Finance team continues to grow and expand in both impact and scale through the Sustainable Finance Coalition (Coalition). The Coalition is a driving force for the incubation and implementation of finance solutions for effective and enduring natureescapes across Africa.

The Coalition follows a Finance Solution Approach<sup>©</sup> allowing for the development of new finance solutions in a strategic and dynamic manner, whilst fostering the incubation of innovation. The Coalition provides strategic advice regarding the viable application of finance solutions to support sustainable natureescapes at organisational, national, and transboundary levels and supports the implementation of finance projects with its Strategic Partners. The Coalition advances innovative finance solutions for nature and fosters a conservation finance sector in Africa through its model of Find (finding the right finance solution for the right places and the right people), Design (the Finance Solution Approach as described above) and Mobilise (providing capacity building and training through Sustainable Finance Bootcamps and webinars).

## a. Design

### Incubation:

1. Finance Facility for Extension Support Incubator was started and concluded. This incubator investigated the viability of embedding extension support into sustainable agriculture (RSA) and is planned to be extended to other sectors such as forestry.
2. Biodiversity Credits Incubator has been launched. This incubator will investigate the viability of new finance flows from the private sector for biodiversity conservation, protection and restoration (Southern Africa).
3. Human-Wildlife Conflict Insurance Premium and Compensation Scheme is being incubated with a partner in Kenya and is looking to be replicated in Uganda and Namibia (East and Southern Africa).

### Implementation:

1. The Biodiversity Management Agreement (BMA) Tax Incentive was piloted for rhino and lion managers with funding from the Rhino Recovery Fund. This finance solution is expected to be scaled to other threatened species and ecosystems shortly (RSA).
2. The Finance Facility for Extension Support is due for implementation at various levels, including a collaboration with SANBI and a private sector investment platform for sustainable agriculture.
3. Conservation Trust Fund Enhancement is underway for Namibia.

4. Corporate Finance for Biodiversity Offsets with Webber Wentzel is ongoing and provides for best practice corporate biodiversity offsets that includes the provision of a minimum of 30 years management costs for offset receiving sites in a sustainable finance investment vehicle. (RSA)

#### Amplify (Impact):

1. The section 37D protected areas tax incentive is being implemented on an ongoing basis and has secured R226 million in tax deductions.
2. The Green Outcomes Fund (under WWF-SA) continues to support green bankable businesses.
3. The Municipal Property Rates finance solution is implemented for landowners on a case-by-case basis and is ongoing.

## **b. Collective Action**

The Coalition has continued to grow and hosts an impressive array of expertise and a diverse collection of actors all collaborating to support the flow of finance into conservation efforts. It requires all sectors and skills to combine if we are to answer the enormous conservation finance gaps that exist across the continent. If the conservation finance gap remains, conservation efforts remain limited, and our land and seascapes cannot be safeguarded effectively and with enduring intent. The Coalition network is summarised below:

- A. Steering Committee: Chair and 8 members
- B. Specialist Contributors: 25 – skill set range includes accelerators, agri finance, bonds, carbon finance, climate finance, conservation finance, debt instruments, development finance, environmental economics, environmental law, environmental policy, fintech, fiscal policy, innovative finance, tax incentives.
- C. Associate Contributors: 2 (new category to support young professionals enter conservation finance)
- D. Council members: 20 - AB Entheos Insurance Kenya, AFD (French Development Bank), African Leadership University, AgriEnterprises, Banking Association of South Africa, British International Investment, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Development Bank of Southern Africa, H&M (Private Sector), International Finance Corporation World Bank, National Treasury of South Africa: Public Spend, National Treasury of South Africa: Fiscal Policy, Nedbank, Prudential Auhotory (Reserve Bank), Rand Merchant Bank, South African National Biodiversity Institute, South African National Parks, Southern African Private Equity and Venture Capital Association, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, WFA, WWF-SA.

- E. Sectors: 18 - academia, agriculture, banking, capital markets, civil society, conservation, development finance, insurance, legal, private equity, public sector environmental and public policy, venture capital, private sector.
- F. Stakeholders: >2 100
- G. National Governments: 12 – including Eswatini, Namibia, RSA, Uganda, Rwanda, Botswana, Mozambique, Malawi, Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe (some through assistance to transfrontier conservation areas)
- H. Strategic Partners: 9 - AB Entheos Consultants, Anchor Capital, AFRGI Lemang, Climate Neutral Group, Indalo Inclusive, International Land Conservation Network, IUCN WCPA, K2C, Living Lands.
- I. Sister Networks: Business for Nature, CAFÉ, Conservation Finance Alliance, Conservation Finance Network, 1000 Landscapes.

### **c. Mobilise**

The Sustainable Finance Coalition hosted Africa’s first Landscape Finance Boot Camp and Lions’ Den on 4 and 5 October 2022. The event provided a platform to accelerate “finance for nature” throughout multiple sectors, bridging the gap between conservationists, nature positive projects, and finance specialists. Attendees of the Boot Camp spanned the financial, conservation and entrepreneurial industries across 5 African countries representing more than 12 professional sectors.

There is a clear indication from the Coalition’s post event report that this event instilled a knowledge base and set of skills upon attendees. This allows them to engage confidently with others on matters pertaining to finance for nature. The Coalition will be hosting similar events in future across Africa’s land-and-seascape to further enhance finance solutions for nature and nature-positive investments.

Bootcamps are planned to be hosted twice a year, including a Sustainable Blue Finance Bootcamp aimed at the marine space, and an East African Bootcamp.

The Coalition participated in the Africa Protected Areas Congress in July 2022, hosting numerous events on sustainable finance. Notably, the IUCN WCPA Sustainable Finance Specialist Group was launched, of which Candice Stevens (Chair of the Coalition) is the co-chair.

### **d. Finance Strategies**

The Coalition developed Finance Strategies for Namibian Conservation, for the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and for Sustainable Land Management in South Africa.

### **Key impacts achieved**

- **Two Finance Solution Incubators** launched.
  - **Four Finance Solutions** implemented.
  - **Three Finance Solutions** amplified.
- **Two finance strategies** completed and delivered, with implementation to follow.
  - **Two Sustainable Finance Bootcamps / Congress** completed.
    - **Twelve African Countries** impacted.
    - **>2 000 stakeholders / followers.**

## **6. Coral Tree Conservation**

Coral Tree Conservation (PTY) Ltd is the commercial, conservation services consulting arm of Wilderness Foundation Africa. Coral Tree Conservation provides a full suite of conservation services from financing, taxation, protected area planning and management, staff capacity building and feasibility and specialist studies.

In this financial year clients have been assisted with the following:

- Development of Alien Invasive Plant and fire management plan for a proposed private nature reserve
- Development of a management plan for a proposed private nature reserve
- Section 37D Tax services
- V&V Tax services
- Municipal Property Rates Services
- Technical advisory on:
  - OECM
  - Rewild Biodiversity 101 Training
  - Biodiversity Finance overview advisory

# 7. People

Environmental education has never been as important as it is right now. The world is experiencing unprecedented climatic changes with extreme weather conditions and natural disasters, which contribute to food shortages, which in return lead to political instability, sickness and conflict. The poorest South African households face a daily struggle for survival and vulnerable young people in developing countries like South Africa face the greatest risks of all, because poverty limits their ability to respond. Empowering young people, our future leaders, to be pro-active and resilient, as well as educating them about the importance of protecting wildlife and wilderness areas are thus of utmost importance should we wish to mitigate the damage that has already been done.

WFA's Youth Development programmes are crucial tools towards not only building resilient, socially and environmentally conscious young South Africans, but also for mitigating the impact of Climate Change, which has highlighted and magnified the inequalities in our societies, rendering the poor even poorer. The aim of WFA's Youth Development initiatives is to encourage within our beneficiaries a relationship, a feeling and a bond with the wild. The intention is to develop young South Africans who are aware of and respect the value and power of nature and who will, as they grow older, influence others positively with this knowledge.

The projects managed under the Youth Development Programme for the 2022 / 2023 financial year included:

- a) Imbewu Wilderness Nature Trails
- b) Siyazenzela Employability, Wellness and Leadership Training
- c) Umzi Wethu Vocational Training and Scholarships

## a. Imbewu Wilderness Nature Trails

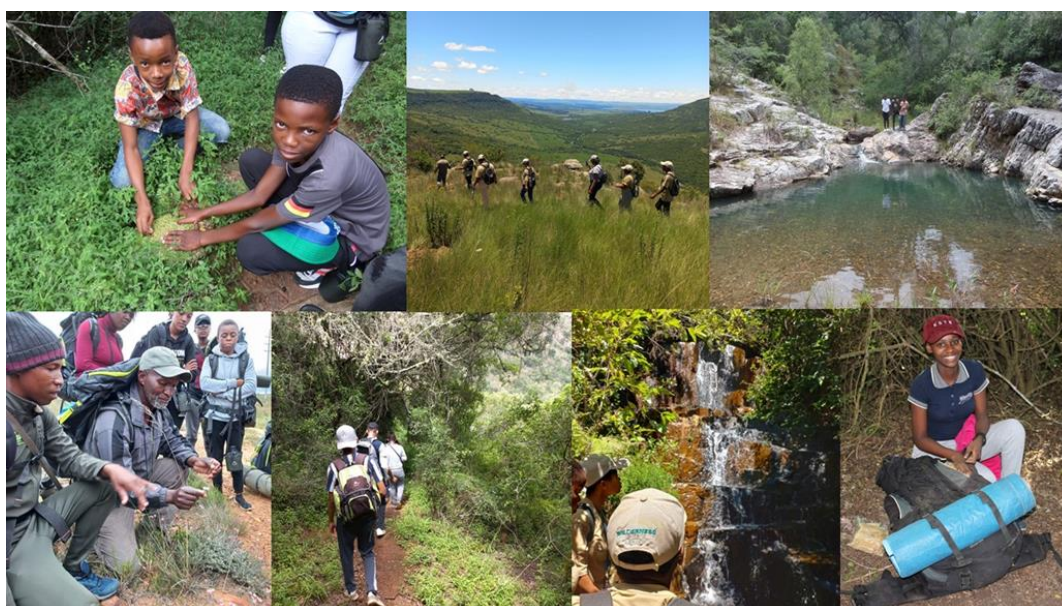
The Imbewu Wilderness Nature Trails project (Imbewu meaning "seed" in the local isiXhosa language), introduces school going youth from disadvantaged communities to wilderness trails and their natural environment. These trails provide opportunities for disadvantaged youth, who would otherwise have limited opportunities to access wild and natural spaces, to explore the natural environment and to become environmentally conscious citizens. The trails provide an entry level introduction to environmental education and the healing power of nature; "planting the seed" for a passion for wildlife, wilderness areas and conservation.

Wilderness trails form an important component of all the youth development programmes provided by WFA, including the Siyazenzela Employability, Wellness and Leadership training. All Siyazenzela beneficiaries are taken on trail and guided in a "light touch" process to connect with the peace and resilience found in the wild. Apart from being an environmental education experience, trails have a way of revealing certain important traits in participants and are therefore used to facilitate various other discussion points during training.

Where courses are implemented in reserves which house predators e.g., Kruger National Park, beneficiaries are taken on hosted game drives to facilitate a similar nature experience.

The following Siyazenzela and one-day Imbewu Wilderness Nature trails were conducted between April 2022 and March 2023:

Name of trails	Imbewu	Siyazenzela	Game Drives	Total
Number of trails completed	8	3	2	13
Number of schools/org. reached	10	n/a	n/a	10
Number of youth reached	53	45	41	139
Black participants	42	38	41	121
Coloured and Indian participants	11	7	-	18
Male	28	16	15	59
Female	25	29	26	80



## b. Siyazenzela Employability, Wellness & Leadership Training

Siyazenzela (meaning “We are doing it for ourselves”) courses are modularised basic employability, wellness and leadership skills interventions targeting vulnerable youth between the ages of 18 – 28. Launched in 2011, this project is centred on drawing out the resilience of young people facing the daunting reality of adult life often riddled by societal ills and the continuing challenges of unemployment and a worsening South African economy.



Youth participating in the 3 to 4-week programme gain job preparedness skills whilst also developing personal insights and understanding of themselves. The overriding objective of the Siyazenzela courses are to see vulnerable young people progress from unemployment to employment by providing them with skills and vocational education opportunities leading to new pathways i.e., paid employment, post-secondary education and/or entrepreneurial initiatives. Siyazenzela provides opportunities for these young people to gain personal mastery together with valuable employability skills, transforming de-motivated job seekers into highly motivated students or employees.

During the period April 2022 to March 2023, the Youth Development team implemented 5 Siyazenzela courses, covering four South African provinces namely the Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Mpumalanga and Kwa-Zulu Natal.

A summary of the courses completed between April 2022 - March 2023 are found below:

<b>Number of courses completed</b>	5
<b>Number of youth selected</b>	93
<b>Number of youth graduated</b>	86
<b>Black participants</b>	79
<b>Coloured participants</b>	7
<b>Male</b>	31
<b>Female</b>	55
<b>Found employment*</b>	45
<b>Studying / Internships</b>	24

\* This number includes temporary / part-time positions

Above statistics indicate an 80 % placement rate of the Siyazenzela graduates that completed their training between April 2022 – March 2023.



## c. Umzi Wethu Vocational Training & Scholarships

Umzi Wethu is a vocational training programme which prepares youth for positions in the conservation, hospitality and eco-tourism industries. The Umzi Wethu (meaning “Our Home”) youth development training courses not only provide accredited training for previously disadvantaged youth but ensures that graduates enter the working world with hands on experience and resilience to further themselves in their respective fields.



The following vocational training courses were completed between April 2022 – March 2023:

<b><u>Capsicum Culinary Studio</u></b>		<b><u>Ulovane Environmental Training</u></b>	
<b><u>Skills Programme in Assistant Chef (NQF 2)</u></b>		<b><u>FGASA Apprentice Field Guide (NQF 2)</u></b>	
<b>Number of students enrolled</b>	2	<b>Number of students enrolled</b>	3
<b>Number of students graduated</b>	2	<b>Number of students graduated</b>	2
<b>Male</b>	0	<b>Male</b>	2
<b>Female</b>	2	<b>Female</b>	1
<b>Black</b>	2	<b>Black</b>	2
<b>Coloured</b>	0	<b>Coloured</b>	1
<b>Secured Employment*</b>	2	<b>Secured Employment*</b>	0
<b>Studying</b>	0	<b>Studying / Internship</b>	3

\* This number includes temporary / part-time positions



### Key impacts achieved

- More than **67 746 youth** have to date accessed their natural environments for the first time on WFA's experiential Wilderness Nature Trails
- Since inception **1 695 youth** have had wellness & job readiness training through the Siyazenzela Intervention
- **80 %** of Siyazenzela Graduates who completed training between April 2022 – March 2023 have been placed in employment or further training opportunities.
- To date **533 vulnerable youth** have graduated with an accredited qualification from the Umzi Wethu Vocational training programme

## 8. Advocacy and Awareness

WFA's Advocacy programme continues to build political will in order to improve global environmental governance and coordinate interactions between policymakers and stakeholders. In addition to this, WFA is committed to advancing its reputation as a leading African force for social and environmental justice.

### a. Portfolio Committee on Environment, Forestry and Fisheries

In April 2022, WFA led a successful field trip with seven South African Members of Parliament (from the Portfolio Committee on Environment, including the Chairperson) to Nairobi, Kenya. The goal of this exchange was seeing first-hand how Kenya has transitioned from single-use plastics, to share challenges and best practices in reaching targets for a circular economy within the countries and for Kenyan representatives to share and highlight national achievements in combating plastic waste.



In June 2022, Members from the Portfolio Committee visited Nelson Mandela Bay in the Eastern Cape to engage with organisations and institutions in NMB who innovating solutions to marine plastic pollution are and increasing global collaboration and knowledge-sharing to conserve ocean environments.



In October 2022, Members of the Portfolio Committee embarked on a clean-up mission in Cape Town to raise awareness of the negative impact single-use plastics have on waterways and oceans in South Africa. This was widely covered by national media, with Members discussing legislative solutions to the plastic pollution crisis.



In December 2022, WFA secured funding from the Lewis Foundation for a three-year project to use experiential education and targeted briefings to influence legislators and policy makers in climate change through the just energy transition.

## **b. Policy support and development**

Since 2021, the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DFFE) has been developing two concurrent policy documents – a policy position paper and White Paper – which seek to clarify South Africa’s approach to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. This follows a recommendation by the High-Level Panel in 2020, which urged Minister Creecy to initiate the policy process in order to address challenges and promote inclusive and synergistic growth.

WFA has been supporting the development of both policy documents, as the lack of a consistent and overarching policy has resulted in the blurring of definitions and conflicting approaches to conservation and sustainable use. This has included coordinating with aligned members of the conservation sector and submitting comments on the draft policy documents. The White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa’s Biodiversity was approved by Cabinet on 29 March 2023, which marks the most significant development of environmental legislation in South Africa since the dawn of democracy in 1994.

## c. Awareness

To celebrate WFA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, WFA hosted a series of events around South Africa between August 2022 and mid-January 2023. WFA hosted a series of awareness evenings with over one thousand partners, colleagues (former and present) and supporters attending. These events centred around a story told by Michael Charton, called "Leave some for the Honey Badger" which involves the relationship between (WFA's founders) Ian Player and Magqubu Ntombela. It is a 50-minute story exploring the lives of these two men, how they came together, learnt from one another, and ultimately transformed conservation in South Africa and beyond.



The 50<sup>th</sup> celebrations culminated in two three-day fundraising events with our Global Patrons, Katherine Jenkins and Andrew Levitas, at Sanbona Wildlife Reserve and Shamwari Game Reserve. These events included unique conservation experiences as well as a private performance by Katherine live under the African sky. These events were attended by some of WFA's biggest supporters and long-term friends of the Foundation and proved highly successful in cementing relationships and forging new ones.



In September 2022, WFA was accredited with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). This will enable WFA to engage in the region and globally, through participating and contributing to regional consultations, the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, intergovernmental meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the UN Environment Assembly.

## d. IRONMAN for Nature

IRONMAN for Nature is a fundraising platform for IRONMAN athletes, associated individuals and corporates to support the conservation work of Wilderness Foundation Africa. In the 2022 / 2023 financial year the initiative had 41 athletes representing the Foundation in 7 IRONMAN events. Funds raised through this initiative are allocated to the work of the Conservation Programme.



### Key impacts achieved

- **One international field visit and two domestic field visits** hosted with **ten key Members of Parliament** from five different political parties
  - **Over 1 000** people attended WFA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary awareness evenings
  - **WFA accredited** with the **United Nations Environment Programme**
- The **White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity** approved by Cabinet on 29 March 2023

## 9. Acknowledgement of donors, sponsors and partners

All the projects of Wilderness Foundation Africa completed in the 2022 / 2023 financial year were made possible through the support from the following donors, sponsors and partners:

### Donors and sponsors:

Beare Foundation	Nedbank Wealth Management
Beck Family Philanthropy	Oak Foundation
Beck Family Education Trust	Olsen Animal Trust
BirdLife South Africa	Oprah Winfrey Charitable Foundation
Caleo Foundation	Richard and Lynda Leonard
Comav Risk Services (discount donation on insurance)	Rhino Recovery Fund
Community Conservation Fund Africa	Rooiberg Winery
E'zethu Development Trust	Save the Children South Africa
Graham and Rhona Beck Development Trust	SeaWorld & Bush Gardens Conservation Fund
Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust (HHCT)	South African National Parks
ICCF	SpecSavers
Isdell	Table Mountain Fund
IUCN Save our Species, co-funded by European Union	Taiwan Forestry Bureau
Joron Charitable Trust	Tread Right Foundation
Lewis Foundation	Tusk Trust
LC Packaging / LC Supports Foundation	United Nations Development Programme
Mai Family Foundation	Volkswagen Group South Africa (use of vehicle donation)
MediVet	Woolworths
Millenium Trust	WWF Nedbank Green Trust
Mix Telematics / Matrix (donation on vehicle tracking)	WWF South Africa
Mrs Minnaar	WWF South Africa: Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust
Mrs Unite Family Trust	



**Conservation partners:**

Botanical Society of South Africa	Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (Eastern Cape)
Cape Leopard Trust	Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency
CapeNature	Indalo Private Game Reserve Association
City of Cape Town	Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs & Rural Development
Conservation South Africa (CSA)	South African National Parks
Conservation Landscape Institute (CLI)	South African National Biodiversity Institute

**Sustainable Finance Coalition Partners:**

AB Entheos (Kenya)	International Finance Corporation (World Bank)
Afgri	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
African Leadership University (ALU)	Lemang Agricultural Services
Agent Francaise De Developpement (AFD)	National Treasury
Agri Enterprises	Nedbank
Anchor Capital	Old Mutual Investments
Banking Association of South Africa	South African National Biodiversity Institute
British International Investment (BII)	South African National Parks
Climate Neutral Group (CNG)	Southern African Venture Capital and Private Equity Association
Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and Environment	Stellenbosch University: Sustainability Institute
Development Bank of South Africa	United Nations Development Programme
FirstRand	United Nations Environment Programme
H&M Group	Webber Wentzel
Indalo Inclusive	

**Youth Development Strategic Partners:**

Capsicum Culinary Studio	Nathi Foundation
Claim Your Throne	Nyosi Wildlife Reserve
Dlalanathi Foundation	Platform 62
Eco Study	South African National Parks
Flowe-Pac	SPAR Distribution Centre Eastern Cape
Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator	The Gem Project
Indalo Indigenous Nursery	Ulovane Environmental Training
Jock Safari Lodge	United Through Sport
Love Life	WESSA
KFC Eastern Cape	

# 10. Financials

Wilderness Foundation Africa (WFA) is a registered Public Benefit Organisation (PBO Number 130000632), a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO number 009-437) and a BBBEE Status level 2 contributor. The socio-economic development beneficiaries of WFA are all 100% black as defined by the BBBEE Act of 2003.

Please find below a snapshot of the Audited Financials for the period April 2022 to March 2023, with the full audited financials available on request.

FINANCIAL		ASSETS		EQUITY AND LIABILITY	
Income	R 39 306 547.00	Cash and Cash Equivalents	R 23 654 734.00	Retained income	R30 406 301.00
Expenses	R 32 630 790.00	Property Plant and Equipment	R 4 342 374.00	Non-Distributed Reserve	R0.00
		Investments	R 2 563 810.00	Sundry Creditors	R154 617.00
<b>SURPLUS FOR 2023</b>	<b>R 6 675 757.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>R 30 560 918.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>R30 560 918.00</b>