THE AFRICAN PARKS ANTI-POACHING FUND
Securing seven of Africa’s last remaining wildlife havens
African Parks is a non-profit company that takes on the responsibility for the rehabilitation and long term management of national parks and other protected areas in partnership with African Governments. By adopting a business approach to conservation, supported by donor funding, we aim to make each park sustainable in the long term, thereby contributing to economic development and poverty alleviation. We currently manage seven parks in six countries – Chad, Congo, DRC, Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia – with a combined area of 4.1 million hectares.
WHAT WE MEAN BY MANAGEMENT

Our management approach involves taking direct day-to-day responsibility for a protected area, all activities in it, the management of all threats to its viability and any commercial revenues flowing from it. Each park management unit is supervised by African Parks head office but carries direct responsibility for the following activities:

- Securing the park with an effective law-enforcement programme
- Building and maintaining park infrastructure including telecommunications, administrative facilities, roads, workshops and housing.
- Restocking the park with founder populations of indigenous species and monitoring species
- Managing relationships with neighbouring people and implementing community projects
- Establishing and collecting tourism and other user fees and monitoring the performance of commercial operators
Across Africa, wildlife populations and wild landscapes are diminishing at an unprecedented rate – so much so that in the next decade or two it is likely that just a few dozen large-scale wildlife refuges will remain on the continent. Over the past five years in particular, flagship species such as elephant and rhino have been subjected to an unprecedented poaching onslaught. The situation is so severe that west and central Africa’s elephant populations stand to be wiped out altogether unless urgent action is taken. The increase in demand for ivory in the east has fueled the price of ivory with the value of raw ivory to the poacher currently as high as $200/kg. Africa’s rhino populations too are critically threatened – with rhino poaching levels in South Africa, which harbours 90% of Africa’s remaining rhino populations, escalating from 30 rhino poached in 2007 to over 550 in 2012.

THE POACHING THREAT

Increasingly poachers in Africa are organised, well-equipped and carry sophisticated weapons; often they are linked into organized criminal networks. Indeed, some of the continent’s most notorious armed groups, including the Lord’s Resistance Army, the Al Shabab and Darfur’s Janjaweed, are hunting down elephants and using the tusks to buy weapons. Crime syndicates link up with them to move the ivory through known hubs, exploiting turbulent states, porous borders and corrupt officials. Members of African armies, like the Ugandan military, the Congolese Army and South Sudan’s military, have also been implicated in poaching elephants and dealing in ivory. As much as 70% of the illegal ivory is flowing to China, where the economic boom has created a vast middle class, pushing the price of ivory to $1,000 per pound on the streets of Beijing.
The demand for ivory has surged to the point that the tusks of a single adult elephant can be worth more than 10 times the average annual income in many African countries. In 2011, poaching levels in Africa were at their highest since international monitors began keeping detailed records in 2002 – with the number of elephants poached running into tens of thousands. The situation in 2012 has been just as severe. Poaching of flagship species often signals the beginning of a cycle of collapse for protected areas. Exploitation starts with rhino and elephant then moves down the value chain – first to predators, often poisoned because of their nuisance, then to antelope and fish for their protein value. Thereafter trees get decimated for timber and then for charcoal. Unless the cycle of degradation is stopped, human settlement finally takes place as the land is settled for subsistence agriculture, its lowest value of use.

Where there is a breakdown in governance, unfettered exploitation results, accelerating this ruinous cycle. Throughout Africa there is a direct correlation between corruption levels and the onslaught in wildlife. At African Parks we believe that the cycle of destruction can be overcome, but only if good management and governance are built into the solution.

Our model, which gives us complete responsibility for the rehabilitation and management of a protected area, is designed to introduce the sound management and good governance required to ensure long-term conservation success.
Against the background of the escalating poaching threat, particularly in parks which provide protection for elephants and rhino, African Parks launched a dedicated Anti-Poaching Fund in 2012. This fund consolidates our anti-poaching activities and budgets across our seven parks, including step-up anti-poaching activities at parks where elephant poaching is a particular threat. The Anti-Poaching Fund requires $12 million to fund anti-poaching activities at our seven parks for three years (2013 – 2015). It provides a vehicle for donors to designate specific funds for our anti-poaching efforts, with 100% of all funding deployed on the ground.

Anti-poaching activities form the core of African Parks’ management practices at park level and are integrated into the five-year Business Plan which is an essential requirement for the management of each park. These activities include the training of game guards, the effective deployment of patrols, the installation of park-wide communication systems and the wise use of equipment and technology. Effective anti-poaching ensures that wildlife species are protected and flourish, that bio-diversity is maintained and that the natural resource rights of local communities are protected. At our parks our success is largely measured by our anti-poaching efforts - the trend in numbers of species poached, arrests made, snares removed, and growth in numbers of wildlife species. As a result, we have taken parks that were on the brink of collapse and restored them to their former glory, often in dangerous and remote locations.
Our anti-poaching methods differ from park to park and are constantly being improved to meet new challenges. At Zakouma National Park in Chad, Garamba National Park in DRC and Odzala-Kokoua National Park in Congo-Brazzaville, we are facing increasingly militaristic threats and are having to gear up with equipment, technology and the grooming of Rapid Response Units to address the onslaught on our elephant populations. At Majete Wildlife Reserve in Malawi, we have deployed a rhino monitoring unit to ensure the protection of the highly endangered black rhino population which the park provides protection for. At Bangweulu Wetlands and Liuwa Plain National Park in Zambia we have reduced the poaching of lechwe populations and harnessed traditional regulatory systems to protect productive fisheries that safeguard the livelihood of tens of thousands of people. At Akagera National Park in Rwanda, high poaching levels would have decimated the remaining populations of buffalo, elephant, hippo and antelope species were it not for our anti-poaching presence.

Whilst anti-poaching often forms the core of our park operations, it is important to stress that good conservation management embraces other critical dimensions, such as infrastructure development, habitat management, research and monitoring, community development and sound financial management. It is only by adopting a holistic approach according to best practice business and conservation principles, that we can succeed in the long term.
WHAT WE MEAN BY ANTI-POACHING?
**Infrastructure:** The development of proper park infrastructure is a pre-requisite to anti-poaching success. This includes building law enforcement offices, holding cells, an ammunition store and a park-wide radio or telecommunications system.

**Training:** Traditional game guard training programmes are increasingly being augmented by advanced anti-poaching training conducted by external security advisors. At several of our parks we are training an elite core of rangers to comprise a Rapid Response Unit which will deal with critical security situations.

**Patrolling:** Game guard patrol techniques are constantly refined to ensure that patrol patterns are correlated with wildlife movements as well as addressing potential sources of threat.

**Equipment:** Uniforms, arms and ammunition, and specialist equipment such as helmets and body vests are increasingly required to ensure the safety of anti-poaching personnel.

**Technology:** As the poaching threat escalates, we are introducing enhanced technology solutions, including satellite technology, sophisticated wildlife tracking collars, and unmanned aerial drones to monitor poaching incidents. Geo-spatial mapping technology is also being used to develop security master plans for some of our parks.

**Criminal Intelligence and Investigation:** In 2012 we commenced working with Interpol and investigative NGOs in order to solve wildlife crimes associated with our parks. We offer substantial rewards for intelligence that leads to the prosecution of poachers and we work with investigative media to research poaching incidents and to apply pressure to governments to take more effective action. We are also establishing genetic references for our elephant populations through the storage and analysis of elephant dung samples at our parks, which can also prove valuable to poaching investigations.

It is important to note that, as a conservation organisation, our responsibility for anti-poaching ends with the collection of evidence and apprehending of poachers. Ultimately the Government agencies in the countries where we operate are responsible for criminal prosecution.
HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US

We invite you to support our Anti-Poaching Fund, and in the process make a substantial contribution to the protection of 4.1 million hectares of land for wildlife in Africa.

If you choose to support us, we will encourage you to get as involved as possible with our conservation work and to visit our parks to witness our work in action. From time to time you will also be invited to participate in specific conservation projects such as the collaring or translocation of wildlife, as well as research projects and educational safaris. You will be kept up to date with our conservation and anti-poaching activities via our quarterly and annual reports, as well as regular news updates and operational reports.

All our parks are underpinned by a five-year business plan which identifies what needs to be done, the resources required and the expected results. Each business plan is made available to our funding partners to ensure that that they can readily identify with our parks and follow their progress against measurable objectives and budgets. Our business plans articulate our specific anti-poaching objectives, strategies and plans over five years within the context of our overall park management plan.

Most importantly though, if you choose to support us, we offer you the opportunity to associate with an organisation that is delivering tangible conservation results through the direct hands-on management of protected areas – ensuring the protection of not only Africa’s wildlife but also the ecosystems on which we all depend on for survival.
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT US PLEASE CONTACT:

Netherlands and Europe:
Robert Jan Van Ogtrop, Chairman, Stichting African Parks, Foundation at ivanogtrop@4-tune.eu

USA:
Nicole Mollo, Director Philanthropy, African Parks Foundation of America at nicolem@african-parks.org

Africa:
Peter Fearnhead, CEO, African Parks Network, at peterf@african-parks.org
Jane Edge, Director Marketing and Philanthropy, African Parks Network, at janee@african-parks.org