



Cinco Grandes Reserve
Conservation Area Management Plan
Coutada 5, Mozambique

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Maputo, Mozambique

www.africafutura-wr.com/coutada5/index.html

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0. Executive Summary

Located in eastern Mozambique, Coutada 5 is the largest and most diverse of Mozambique's Coutadas. The 687,000 ha Coutada is home to around 50,000 people, mostly inhabiting the coastal and riverside towns. This leaves 85% of the Coutada sparsely populated and ready for conservation activities - including establishing the Cinco Grandes Reserve, a 250,000 hectare restored wilderness conservation area.

Although much of the flora within the conservation area is in excellent condition and some species such as Hippo and Crocodile have stable populations, the years of civil unrest have deprived the area of much of its famous megafauna. Lost species include Elephant, Buffalo, Sable antelope, Lichtenstein's hartebeest, Eland, Plains zebra, Blue wildebeest, Reedbuck and Waterbuck.

The overarching goal of this management plan is to develop and utilise the Cinco Grandes wilderness area in a manner such that the seriously depleted biodiversity resources are restored and conserved over time. This ambitious plan will take place with an overall zoning policy so that large-scale wildlife reintroduction can occur in harmony with continued economic development in other parts of the Coutada.

This management plan describes the area, the current status of biodiversity, and the threats and opportunities it faces. It then sets out the following set of 12 conservation actions which are to be implemented through a three-year rolling work plan. The impacts of these actions will be monitored and reported on in annual audited conservation performance reports.

The Cinco Grandes Reserve Conservation Actions

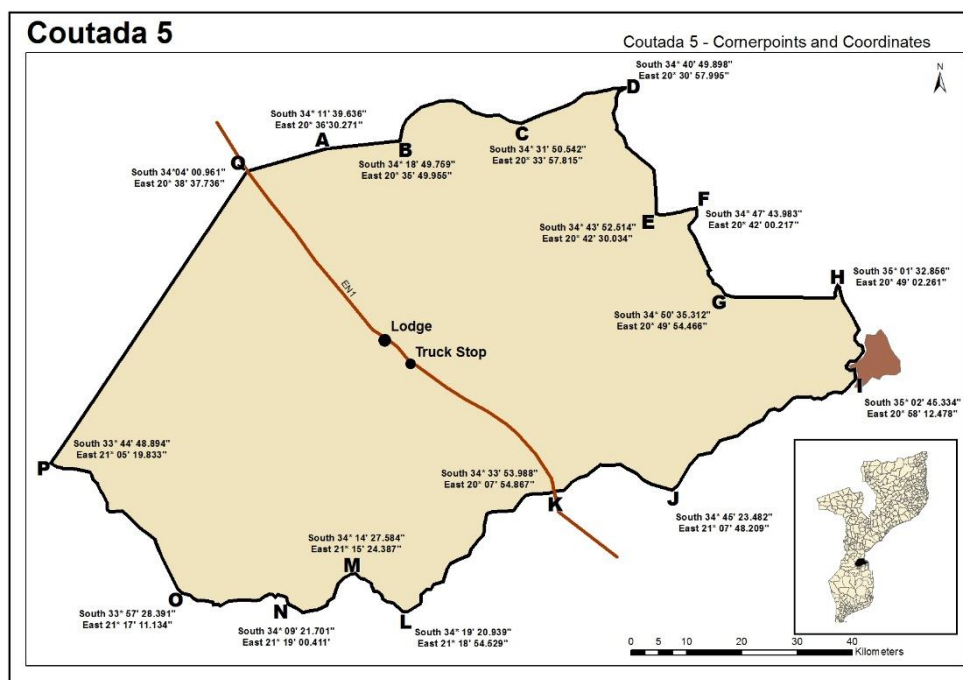
- 1 - Demarcate and secure the wilderness area
- 2 - Identify critical habitats for wildlife and ecosystem services
- 3 - Monitor remnant resident populations of wildlife
- 4 - Establish a low-impact network of roads
- 5 - Identify low-impact sites for hunting and tourism camps
- 6 - Establish low-impact infrastructure for restocking wildlife
- 7 - Implement a habitat restoration programme
- 8 - Implement a phased wildlife restocking programme
- 9 - Establish a sustainable wildlife management programme
- 10 - Support alternative livelihoods for local communities
- 11 - Manage sustainable use by local communities
- 12 - Mitigate the risk of predators on local communities

1. Overview of the Conservation Area

This section sets out the location of the conservation area and its management structure.

1.1 Area Location & General Characteristics

The Cinco Grandes Reserve lies within the western half of the Coutada 5 concession area. The overall concession area is 687,000 ha (6,870 km²) and lies north of the Rio Save mostly in the Sofala province of Mozambique.



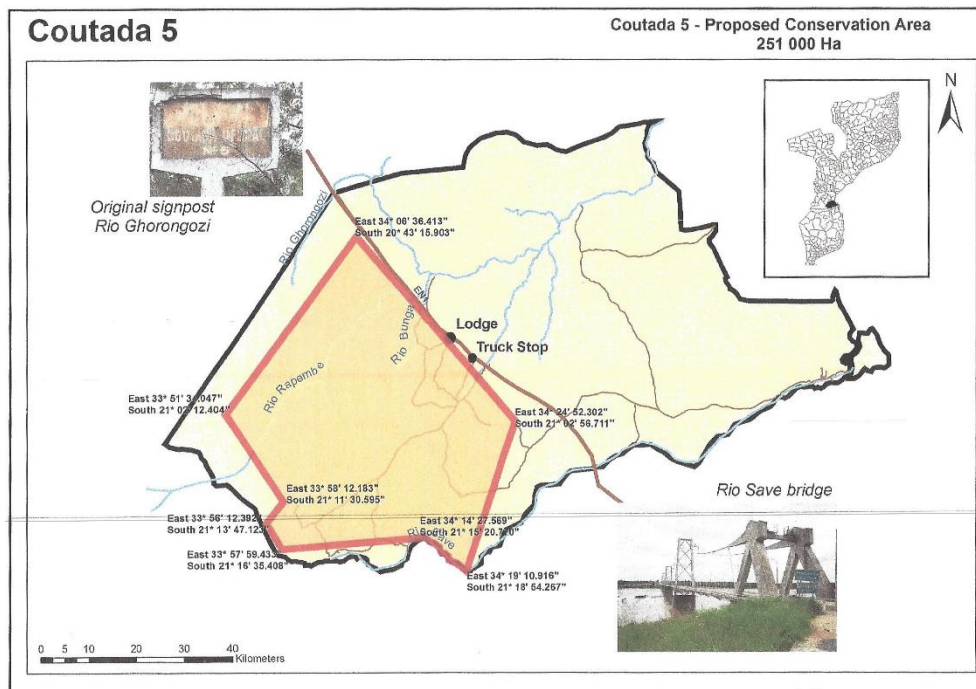
Map of Coutada 5

Within this concession area a number of sustainable development projects are under consideration or development including crop farming, agroforestry, livestock and game ranching, fishing tourism, highway services and rural enterprises. The main wilderness conservation area being planned is the Cinco Grandes Reserve which will cover approximately 250,000 Ha (2,500 km²) of the concession area to the west of the national highway, EN1. The exact size will only be determined once it is fully set up.

The wilderness conservation area is predominately tropical and subtropical moist broadleaf forests. Within this area, a major restoration project is proposed based primarily on the reintroduction of all forms of now scarce wildlife from insects to elephants. Key game species will be introduced in such a manner that the other species - predators, birds, reptiles and insects - will in turn naturally re-establish themselves in the area.

The headquarters of the operation is at the concessionaire's Buffalo Camp alongside EN1, at 20°54'06.2"S and 34°17'23.0"E. The exact boundaries of the conservation area will be depend on ecological, social and logistical factors and thus will be finalised in

consultation with local authorities and communities during the first phase of restoration.



Location of the Conservation Area

1.2 Area Manager

In August 2012, the Government of Mozambique granted a 20-year renewable concession to Africa Futura Wildlife Restoration Lda (AFWR) to rehabilitate, conserve and develop Coutada 5 has in August 2012. The contractual agreement includes clauses such as the following:

- “The rights to exploit, develop and conserve are granted, the objective being to offer safari hunting and ecotourism activities”
- “Other activities or practises of exploitation, development and conservation of natural resources may be motivated by AFWR and approved by government”
- “AFWR has the right to re-introduce suitable species, according to an approved re-introduction plan and relevant legislation”
- “The prescribed 5-year Management Plans will become part of the contract between AFWR and the GoM, and each subsequent MP must be submitted 12 months prior to the expiry of the plan
- “Annual Plans of Activities must be submitted before February 28 each year”

The wilderness conservation area, to the west of EN1, will be developed and managed by AFWR on a long-lease contractual basis (DUAT) which enable the company to attract impact investors into restoring and conserving the area for safari hunting and ecotourism activities.

As noted above, the development of the wilderness conservation area will be complemented by a number of other sustainable development projects. Hence, the conservation area will be a key component of a series of activities to enhance and secure local livelihoods and to develop the local economy sustainably.

The conservation area manager and his contact details are as follows:

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2. Biodiversity Baseline Conditions

This section reviews the current biodiversity status of the conservation area against the criteria set out in IFC Performance Standard 6.

2.1 Habitats

The wilderness conservation area is a degraded natural habitat. It was once abundant with wildlife but following years of civil unrest, desperate rural poverty and neglect, the wild fauna has all but disappeared. The wild flora, however, is for the most part intact though it is unusually overgrown because of the lack of grazers and browsers. In some areas, it has also suffered from illegal logging and subsistence agricultural practices.

The terrain is gently undulating, varying between 70 and 85 m above sea level. As evidenced by the flora, the soils seem most suitable for sustaining a large wildlife population.

The climate is tropical to sub-tropical. It is predominantly tropical humid with elements of a warm semi-arid climate. The average rainfall is probably in the range of 700mm to 800 mm. Periodic droughts, often severe, can be expected. The company is measuring rainfall daily at Buffalo Camp.

A preliminary biodiversity survey has been undertaken. The following vegetation types have been identified:

- Miombo Savannah
- Grassland/Hyphaene Palm savannah
- Mixed Deciduous Woodland
- Mopane Woodland/Scrub
- Thickets
- Riparian Woodland

These vegetation types exhibit signs of frequent severe wild fires, but are otherwise in good and even near-pristine condition. Illegal hardwood logging and subsistence farming in the conservation area will need to be addressed. As well, local resource utilisation - such as distilling a 'wine' from the Hyphaene palms -will need to be managed to ensure sustainability.

The preliminary survey and continued observations of fauna indicate little evidence of resident large herbivore and carnivore species, as well as smaller mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians. It is unlikely that the wildlife populations will recover without a well-planned reintroduction of key species, such as buffalo. In the face of many years of unrest, subsistence exploitation, and neglect, it will be necessary to manage this reintroduction sustainably.

2.2 Legally Protected Areas

The planned Cinco Grandes Reserve, as part of a licensed hunting and ecotourism concession, is a legally-recognised conservation area under the laws of Mozambique. It borders another such concession, Coutada 4, as well as Zinave National Park, to the south of the Rio Save.

These conservation areas, in turn, have the potential to link to the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park which includes the Limpopo National Park in Mozambique, the world-renowned Kruger National Park in South Africa and the Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe. Through Cinco Grandes and other potential conservation areas with Coutada 5, there is the possibility one day of linking conserved landscapes from Kruger and Gonarezhou all the way to the Indian Ocean.

2.3 Invasive Alien Species

Preliminary observations have identified at least one resident alien invasive species. This species as well as other invasive aliens will need to be managed and, if possible, removed.

The introduction of wild species from other locations may also present a risk of bringing in invasive alien species and this risk will need to be addressed within the reintroduction programme.

2.4 Ecosystem Services

The conservation area has been providing provisioning ecosystem services to local communities such as wild meat and eggs, berries and honey, construction timber and thatching, fuel wood, and non-timber forest products. Though these services can continue with the wilderness restoration, they will need to be managed to ensure sustainable and responsible use.

The area provides regulating ecosystem services such as carbon storage in its standing forests. Carbon storage, in particular, is a global service which will be enhanced by the restoration and conservation of the reserve. Cultural ecosystem services in the reserve, if any, will need to be identified and managed.

2.5 Production of Living Natural Resources

As wildlife will be restocked in the area for both consumptive and non-consumption use, this constitutes a type of 'production' of living natural resources. The use of this wildlife will need to adhere to national regulations and international best-practice with respect to wildlife management.

Already within and near the planned wilderness area, the company is farming honey and the locals, as noted above, are harvesting fauna and flora. These ‘production’ practices will need to be managed sustainably.

As well, if game ranching develops elsewhere in the Coutada 5, the stocking and harvesting of the ranched species vis-à-vis the conservation and sustainable use of the wild species in the wilderness area will need to be management to ensure healthy and resilient stocks.

3. Conservation Impact Assessment

Potential impacts on nature within the conservation area and in the broader landscape have been assessed. This assessment has included stakeholder consultation.

3.1 Stakeholder Consultation

According to the Coutada 5 concession agreement, the 5-year management plan “must be prepared in a participatory way, involving local communities, local state institutions and other stakeholders.” Accordingly, the company has maintained on-going consultations and communication with the local authorities and local traditional leaders as well as with decision makers in Maputo and stakeholders in the academic and NGO communities.

Stakeholder consultation commenced prior to an application for Coutada 5 being lodged with the GoM in late 2012. The process involved meetings with the local, provincial and national government structures, as well as with some of the local communities and traditional leaders. These consultations culminated in the submission of an official Management Plan to Government for approval which, in turn, led to a process of wide ranging consultations.

Numerous informal meetings have taken place with local representatives of communities, and with local government structures. Several formal meetings have taken place with the District Administrator and her staff and a number of traditional leaders, the most recent of which took place in April 2015 at her offices in Machanga.

Local stakeholder consultations and engagement will be an integral component of the restoration and development plan for the wilderness area. As well, particularly with respect to securing impact investors, the company will engage with international stakeholders from the public, private and NGO sectors.

3.2 Conservation Area SWOT Analysis

A ‘SWOT’ analysis seeks to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats of a project. For a conservation area, a SWOT looks at the area’s internal strengths and weaknesses and its external opportunities and threats to maintaining and enhancing conservation performance.

This SWOT analysis addresses Habitats, Legally Protected Areas, Invasive Alien Species, Ecosystem Services and the Production of Living Natural Resources as discussed above. It takes into consideration the views of key stakeholders, particularly those living in Coutada 5.

The SWOT includes an ‘inside-the-fence’ analysis of Strengths & Weaknesses (SW) with respect to establishing and maintaining the wilderness area. It also includes a broader landscape analysis of Opportunities & Threats (OT) with a particular focus on the communities living within Coutada 5 and nearby conservation areas.

The following lists of internal strengths and weaknesses, and external opportunities and threats provide an overview of the many issues which need to be addressed in the establishment of the wilderness area restoration and management plan. These are addressed through the conservation actions and monitoring set out in the last section of this plan.

Internal Strengths

- AFWR commitment to restoring and maintaining the wilderness area;
- Government support, and notably from the local authorities;
- Long-term leasehold DUAT for a private conservation area;
- Presence of dedicated, professional AFWR staff and consultants;
- Large size of the wilderness area allowing for an incremental restoration programme to ensure ecological integrity;
- Eminent suitability of the natural flora for reintroducing a diversity of wildlife;
- Ability to plan and develop the area based on international best practice; and
- Attractiveness of a sizeable unspoilt wilderness area re-stocked with wildlife to impact investors, sustainable hunting and ecotourism.

Internal Weaknesses

- Scarcity of all forms of wild fauna in Coutada 5;
- Scarcity of founder wildlife populations from elsewhere in Mozambique;
- Current lack of wildlife conservation capacity and knowledge amongst local people;
- Current lack of government capacity to track down and prosecute poachers;
- High costs of the wilderness restoration project vis-à-vis the company’s resources; and
- Challenges of having the capacity to build public and private partnerships nationally, regionally and internationally to secure the support and resources needed.

External Opportunities

- Develop one of the largest private wilderness conservation areas in Africa;
- Support the Government of Mozambique in implementing its new Conservation Act and its international commitments under the CBD Biodiversity Strategy;
- Engage impact investors - public and private, philanthropic and commercial - in a large-scale biodiversity conservation project;
- Collaborate with local authorities to resettle people living in the wilderness areas elsewhere within Coutada 5 and provide new, alternative livelihood opportunities;
- Build local awareness of wildlife conservation and strengthen local sustainable use and employment opportunities within the wilderness area;

External Threats

- Possible local resistance to the wilderness area project;
- Possible reluctance of local law enforcement agencies to deal with illegal logging and poaching;
- Paucity of healthy wildlife populations elsewhere in Mozambique threatening the supply of ungulates and predators for re-introduction;
- Lack of security on use rights and responsibilities over the re-stocked wildlife;
- Inability to raise sufficient funds to ensure large scale, successful restoration;
- Remoteness of the area vis-à-vis more developed alternatives to attract safari hunting and ecotourism; and
- Political instability and challenges of governance.

3.3 Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)

The Cinco Grandes Reserve is established as a DUAT in accordance with the Conservation Areas Act of Mozambique. In this respect, it will abide by national laws and regulations regarding the mitigation of environmental and social impacts.

As required by investors, the project will also abide by international requirements regarding environmental and social impact assessment and management. In this respect, the project is guided in particular by the IFC Performance Standards for environmental and social sustainability.

4. Conservation Area Actions & Monitoring

The set of conservation actions should address conservation priorities within the proposed wilderness area. These actions aim to restore and maintain the wilderness in a manner that enhances the status of biodiversity conservation in Mozambique and the livelihoods of local communities. The efforts will also provide an opportunity for impact investors nationally, regionally and international to support biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in a remote and impoverished region of Africa.

In accordance with IFC hierarchy for biodiversity mitigation and management, the actions are organised into four categories:

- Avoidance;
- Minimisation;
- Restoration; and
- Offset.

Importantly, the actions listed under offset focus specifically on social offset/compensation for the local communities which were either living in or utilising the resources of the wilderness area before the establishment of the reserve. The conservation area does not require a biodiversity offset.

This action plan focuses specifically on establishing and restoring the wilderness reserve. After a period of 3-5 years, the plan will be updated to reflect the work required to complete the restoration phase and to manage the area sustainably and responsibly going forward.

The actions set out below will be implemented through a rolling three-year work plan. The actions will also be monitored, and yearly audited performance reports will be produced.

4.1 Avoidance Actions

These actions focus on establishing the wilderness area and identifying any critical habitats or remnant wildlife within the area.

Action 1 - Demarcate and secure the wilderness area

Key components include:

- Identify the exact boundaries of the wilderness area
- Explain these boundaries to local authorities and communities to ensure their acceptance and support
- Establish a perimeter road and, where needed, a game fence

Action 2 - Identify critical habitats for wildlife and ecosystem services

Key components include:

- Identify areas of particular importance for wildlife such as watering spots and breeding/nesting spots
- Identify important areas for providing services to neighbouring communities such as non-timber forest produces
- Identify areas which are overgrown and may need to be opened up with selective burnings to create habitat for specific species

Action 3 - Monitor remnant resident populations of wildlife

Key components include:

- Record observed wild mammals, birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and fish
- Survey local communities for their knowledge of resident populations
- Collaborate with adjacent areas to understand what wildlife may move naturally into the wilderness area

4.2 Minimisation Actions

These actions focus on minimising the footprint of planned developments in the wilderness area.

Action 4 - Establish a low-impact network of roads

Key components include:

- Identify existing roads to be maintained, removed or rerouted
- Determine access roads from the national road

- Develop an interior network of dirt roads and tracks

Action 5 - Identify low-impact sites for hunting and tourism camps

Action 6 - Establish low-impact infrastructure for restocking wildlife

4.3 Restoration Actions

These actions focus on restoring and managing the wilderness area.

Action 7 - Implement a habitat restoration programme

Key components include:

- Reverse bush encroachment through managed burns and grazing
- Manage or remove invasive alien species

Action 8 - Implement a phased wildlife restocking programme

Key components include:

- Establish holding/breeding camps
- Establish an expanding rewilding area for key species
- Introduce supporting species outside the rewilding area

Action 9 - Establish a sustainable wildlife management programme

4.4 Offset/Compensation Actions

These actions focus on protecting and enhancing the livelihoods of local communities, particularly those who had lived or are living in the wilderness area or are living nearby. In this respect, they provide a set of social offset/compensation offsets in response to restricting and regulating access to the area. The wilderness area does not require a biodiversity offset

Action 10 - Support alternative livelihoods for local communities

Key components include:

- Create local employment opportunities within the wilderness area
- Create local employment opportunities elsewhere in Coutada 5
- Support local priorities such as access to fresh water and schooling

Action 11 - Manage sustainable use by local communities

Key components include:

- Raise awareness and understanding of the wilderness area
- Regulate access to the area for local resource utilisation
- Engage local participation in anti-poaching efforts

Action 12 - Mitigate the risk of predators on local communities

Key components include:

- Educate local communities about the risks of predators
- Support local efforts to minimise these risks

4.5 Monitoring & Reporting

A robust monitoring programme of the above actions and their various component tasks will be established. This monitoring programme will focus, in particular, on the impacts of the habitat restoration and wildlife restocking. As the sustainable utilisation programme gets underway, this too will be monitored to ensure the integrity and diversity of the wilderness area.

The conservation management plan will be adapted continuously through a rolling three-year work plan based on insights from the monitoring and lessons learned on the ground.

The company will also produce a VCA-compliant audited conservation performance report on annual basis. This report and its audit will be publically available on the VCA Registry.

For more information, please visit:

v-c-a.org/areas/mz/cincograndes