

MONTHLY REPORT

JUNE 2022

DID YOU KNOW?

Mountain gorillas spend about a quarter of their day eating, mainly plants. Around 85% of their diet is made up of leaves, shoots and stems, but gorillas can also eat larvae, snails, ants, and even roots, barks and rotting wood (a good source of sodium/salt)



The African CSOs Biodiversity Alliance (ACBA)'s participation during the 4th meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group in Nairobi from 21st to 26th of June 2022.

The African CSOs Biodiversity Alliance provides a platform for Africa CSO voices and perspectives to be heard and this was proven once again when ACBA participated during the Open-Ended Working Group-4 meeting in Nairobi. The Nairobi meeting provides another opportunity for ACBA to continue its engagement efforts to influence the outcomes of the post-2020 GBF ahead of COP15.2 in Montreal Canada.

The objectives of ACBA's engagement at OEWG-4 were to engage key stakeholders and state parties to ensure the outcomes of the negotiations reflect the Africa context and reality. To raise the profile and reputation of ACBA (and ACBA member organizations) through engagement and sharing of perspectives and to coordinate effective ACBA member engagement during the Nairobi meeting. The outcomes from the meeting were that our positions as an alliance was reflected in meeting outcomes, ACBA members contributions in side events were heard, our profile and reputation was visible. The members were able to exchange lessons and intelligence on the negotiations and also members were exposed to alternative perspectives on key issues that can assist in refining its own positions and lastly the meeting informed our preparations for COP15.2.

The African CSOs Biodiversity Alliance members engaged in the meetings through attending negotiating sessions (plenaries, contact groups). They held meetings with partners and parties and had daily ACBA briefing meetings. Some of the members also had opportunities to contribute to articles on the ECO newsletter, also shared updates on social media and published position paper and developed one-pager pieces on our key issues

ACBA had 5 priority issues that we focused on during the Nairobi OEWG-4 meeting which were: Area based Conservation (30x30), Sustainable Use of natural resources, Resource Mobilization, Digital Sequence Information (DSI), Mainstreaming and Business Engagement and Climate Change.

CSO OF THE MONTH

VHEMBE BIOSPHERE RESERVE

The Vhembe Biosphere Reserve is a registered NPC and the biosphere reserve itself was declared by UNESCO in 2009, the organisation has a decade of working with the communities. Since all biosphere reserves operate under UNESCO's Man and Biosphere program, the three main functions of the VBR are conservation, sustainable development and research. The VBR works with implementation organizations to achieve objectives according to the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB).



Our vision is to maximize the VBR's considerable potential for conservation, sustainable development and socio-economic upliftment, as well as research and education in the interests of ensuring long term sustainable benefits for its stakeholders. This can be achieved through building a conservation and sustainable-use ethic, which can then be effectively monitored; promote appropriate and sustainable development; actively spread benefits and opportunities to disadvantaged members of the community including land resettlement communities; and facilitate relevant

The research, education and skills training in the area for the benefit of its stakeholders. The VBR collaborates with various national and international conservation programmes within the biosphere, such as the World Heritage Site, Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA), the Greater Kruger Strategic Development Programme, Ramsar Sites and Stewardship Programmes. As a result, the VBR contributes directly to the following international agreements and conventions: Convention on Biological Diversity; World Heritage Convention; and, African Network of Biosphere Reserves and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

The VBR falls within the Greater Mapungubwe and Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Areas which are trilateral initiatives involving South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana. Termed as 'Smart Biosphere Reserves', the VBR serves as a learning platform for other biosphere reserves through the exchange of knowledge and information. In July 2013, the VBR and WBR hosted the AfriMAB capacity building workshop, with representatives from UNESCO and other African biosphere reserves. Regionally the VBR is also part of the Limpopo Biosphere forum which involves Kruger to Canyons and Waterberg Biosphere, where regular meetings are held to capacitate each biosphere. It is also important to highlight that as the VBR we complement the work of local, provincial and national governments in terms of conservation and sustainable development in communities.

COMMUNITY STORY

Vhembe Biosphere Reserve Youth Network on International Day for Biodiversity and World Environment Day 2022



On 31 May 2022, the Vhembe Biosphere Youth Network (VBRYN) went on a hiking trip to celebrate the International Day for Biodiversity coupled with World Environment day. The hike was held at Medike Nature reserve in the Soutpansberg mountains. Eight (8) members of the youth network together with Mr Makoni the coordinator of VBR were part of the participants who went to Medike. The Soutpansberg mountains are one of the richest biodiversity hotspots in South Africa with Medike nature reserve and its efforts to protect the biodiversity in the mountains from anthropogenic activities from the neighboring communities. Among the successful hiking, there was the knowledge that benefited many of the youth, particularly as far as Biodiversity is considered. Rangers also showed their interest in providing

opportunities to the VBRYN. For example, The Field Guides Association of Southern Africa, which is the association that sets the standard and level of professionalism in the guiding industry, through different private wildlife institutions e.g bushwise, oluvane environmental, training, and many more. The experience was interesting because of the new knowledge which was enhanced through interaction. Rangers displayed a fundamental principle of conserving nature for future generations. Through hiking, individuals can learn and observe how the environment interacts with nature.

The theme for the International Day for Biodiversity 2022 was “building a shared future for all life” and that of World Environment day was “Only One Earth”. The two themes teach us that we cannot engage in a journey that potentially limits the existence of other lifeforms in the future and while we only have one earth it is our utmost responsibility to take good care of it. As a youth Network, it is our responsibility to ensure that the future generations will continue from where we leave and share the privileges of nature without degrading them. We are so thankful to the Medike for ensuring that our biodiversity does not continue to be lost and for educating the nearest communities about conservation and sustainability. We hope to visit Medike Nature Reserve again and share the experience with the world for awareness to build a better shared future.

POLICY UPDATES

INTERESTING NEWS FROM THE REGION AND BEYOND

IUCN, Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC)

The IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) is the first ever continent-wide gathering of African leaders, citizens, and interest groups to discuss the role of protected areas in conserving nature, safeguarding Africa's iconic wildlife, delivering vital life-supporting ecosystem services, promoting sustainable development while conserving Africa's cultural heritage and traditions. The congress will take place from 18th to 23rd of July 2022 in Kigali Rwanda.

UPCOMING EVENTS



ACBA online Training Seminar on Submission of Voluntary Commitments on the CBD online Platform

5th July 2022

OUR CONTACTS

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