



Mapungubwe National Park & World Heritage Site is a Cultural landscape which resemble the interaction of man and wildlife from time immemorial and thus what makes it unique throughout the world and the only park that accommodate different types of land-use in South Africa.

The outstanding universal values for the cultural properties listed in Article 24(a) of the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and identified for the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape (MCL) in the World Heritage nomination dossier amongst others are:

- (ii) it exhibits an important interchange of human values, over the time period between AD 900 and 1300 in Southern Africa, on developments in technology and town-planning
- (iv) it is an outstanding example of traditional human settlement and land-use which is representative of a culture that became vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change
- Under Article 39, as a cultural landscape it falls into the category of:(ii) an organically evolved landscape.

The interaction and trade within this cultural landscape never knew colonial boundaries and man-made structures like fences etc. in order to restrict wildlife and domestic livestock to feed/graze together within their ecosystem. The free movement of both wildlife and livestock existed from AD 900 since Mapungubwe is a live cultural landscape which we all need to appreciate and enjoy for what it is and don't need to compare it with the famous Kruger National Park since they were both declared for different purpose.

Together they provide evidence for a richly layered tangible and intangible history of people and landscape in this part of the Limpopo Valley that covers millions of years and places the MCL in historical and geographical perspective. The dynamic interaction between society and landscape laid the foundation for a new type of social organisation in the region. The site illustrates important interactions between people and the landscape. A key aspect of the selection of this site for the establishment of a major centre was the confluence of the Limpopo and Shashe Rivers which, combined with the narrowing of the river, resulted in slowing of the water and deposition of soil. This Nile-type system of annual soil replenishment made it possible to establish intensive agriculture to feed a large settlement in all three countries. Both the ecological and cultural boundaries of the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape extend beyond the Park boundaries.

addo elephant

agulhas

augrabies falls

bontebok

golden gate highlands

karoo

kgalagadi transfrontier

knysna lake area

kruger

mapungubwe

marakele

mountain zebra

namaqua

table mountain

tankwa-karoo

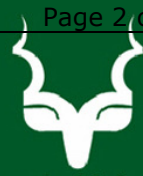
tsitsikamma

|ai-|ais/richtersveld

vaalbos

west coast

wilderness



The cattle roaming around the park: This scenario is more visible as a result of the poor maintenance of the veterinary fence by the Department of Agriculture along the Limpopo river and the situation on the Zimbabwean side, especially the Maramani community located opposite the confluence area. We are currently engaging with the Department of Agriculture and also facilitating a meeting with the Zimbabwe rural district council to address this matter with the Maramani Chief and the Headman. Respecting the on-going interactions as part of the greater Mapungubwe Trans-frontier Conservation Area (which include Zimbabwe and Botswana), our position is to maintain the inter-national negotiations and relationships and rather engage the communities directly, without creating long-term conflicts which will have unintended outcomes of jeopardising the Transfrontier co-operations in place. Shooting or impounding cattle is thus not a viable option at this stage.

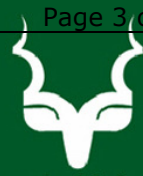
Currently the land use within the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape as a living culture include rural community and their livelihood, game ranching, national park & world heritage site, agricultural activities, mining etc. and proper zonation is envisaged to separate different experience within the cultural landscape and that will include the separation of domestic

livestock grazing. The signing of the treaty by the three heads of state is underway to conclude the implementation of the agreed upon Integrated development plan (IDP) for the GMTFCA. The trilateral signing of this agreement is imminent and until that stage is reached several processes and management decisions is being weighed down.

The riverine fence is essentially a so-called red-line veterinary fence and, like the disused military fence, in a state of disrepair. Management has not to date been given the mandate to remove or maintain these structures. In the interim the park is being inundated with cattle crossing the Limpopo from Zimbabwe and Botswana, thus impacting negatively on the ambience of the park. Suggestions to destroy these unherded animals were perceived to be too harsh, as it is often the owner's only source of income and we already developed a good relationship with residence of the Maramani community (Zimbabwe) who the owners of cattle's which still need to be nurtured

On the positive side, Mapungubwe management remain enthusiastic regarding the establishment of this mega park (Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area) and the many agreeable spin-offs this initiative will hold for the benefit of the park and the general public experience in the region.

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Riverine ecosystem vegetation: SANParks is acknowledging that the current method used to protect the ecosystem has proven to be ineffective. The destruction of trees by elephants, in particular along the Tree Top Walk, has necessitated a review of alternative strategies. I can assure you that there is a process currently underway that attempts to address the current threats and damage of the gallery forest along the Limpopo River. Unfortunately, these will require additional funding, and thus a process of sourcing external funding is envisaged.

Please bear with us in this difficult phase of negotiations and be assured of our determined efforts to consolidate the many role-players towards reaching an amicable solution. The presence of livestock is normal for the Maramani rural district and their only source of water is the Limpopo River which is shared between the three countries, their presence is more visible during the dry season when there is limited grazing and water in the vicinity.

Kind regards,
Park management

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