

Conserve

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Zim 



High-Tech Hope: Elephant Collars Could Be the Key to Peaceful Coexistence in Hwange National Park



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Editor's Note



Welcome to the First Edition of the ConserveZim Newsletter!

The ConserveZim team is thrilled to launch this new platform to connect with you and share the latest stories about Zimbabwe's environment.

In this inaugural edition, we've curated a selection of articles that highlight the beauty and challenges facing our nation's precious ecosystems. You'll find stories about individuals committed to changing their environment for the better, inspiring efforts to effectively deal with the ever increasing Human-Wildlife Conflict as well as how our country Zimbabwe is handling precious minerals meant for the betterment of the nation.

We believe that everyone has a role to play in protecting Zimbabwe's environment. Whether you're a seasoned conservationist or just starting to learn more, we hope this newsletter will inspire you to take action.

In the coming editions, we'll continue to bring you in-depth reports, success stories, and ways to get involved. We also encourage you to share your thoughts and suggestions with us by replying to this email. conservezim3@gmail.com

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+263772920301

Together, we can make a difference!

Warm regards,

John Cassim

ConserveZim Editor & Publisher



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High-Tech Hope: Elephant Collars Could Be the Key to Peaceful Coexistence in Hwange National Park

By John Cassim



These high-tech marvels will chart the leader of the herd and her companions' movements, providing a window into their ever-changing world.

This knowledge, will be disseminated to stakeholders, including government agencies, park authorities, and local communities.



Landscape Conservation Director at IFAW.

“This elephant collaring project could enhance our conservation efforts and inform future land-use planning in the greater Hwange ecosystem.”

Decoding the Elephant Dance: Using Data to Promote Coexistence

The collars will transmit real-time data on the elephants' location, speed, and direction of travel. This detailed information will paint a picture of their daily routines, seasonal migrations, and how they interact with the changing landscape.

By studying this “elephant dance,” researchers aim to:

Identify Potential Conflict Zones: Elephants venturing into human settlements in search of food or water can lead to devastating consequences. The data will help identify areas where these encounters are likely, allowing authorities to implement mitigation strategies.

Mapping a Shared Future: Understanding elephant movement patterns allows for informed land-use planning. This includes creating corridors for safe passage, reducing habitat fragmentation, and ensuring access to vital resources like waterholes.

Promoting Peaceful Coexistence: By minimizing human-elephant conflict, the project aims to foster a sense of shared responsibility for this extraordinary ecosystem. Local

Harare, Zimbabwe - The crimson sun dips below the horizon, painting the vast savannah of Hwange National Park in fiery hues.

In this ancient land, where towering baobab trees stand sentinel to the rhythm of life, a new chapter is unfolding.

A symphony of trumpeting erupts from a herd of African savannah elephants, the wise old matriarch, leading the charge.

But the journey this time is not a familiar path that once led them to a waterhole but Gwayi-Shangani Dam, which is still under construction, less than 50km east of Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park.

This new source of water has the potential to alter how elephants use this landscape significantly.

This massive project, while promising to address water scarcity in the region, casts a long shadow on the future of residents in Binga, Hwange, and

Lupane district communities.

Experts warn that the new water source, might disrupt the delicate balance of the ecosystem, potentially altering elephant movement patterns and intensifying human-wildlife conflict.

A Technological Lifeline in the Face of Change

Concerned about the potential impact, conservationists at ZimParks and IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare) are turning to a beacon of hope – technology.

In a groundbreaking initiative, they are equipping eight elephants with GPS-enabled tracking collars.

These high-tech marvels will chart the leader of the herd and her companions' movements, providing a window into their ever-changing world.

“It's always exciting when you see innovative technological developments change how we work,” says Phillip Kuvawoga,



Recent studies confirm that elephants spend much of their time outside protected areas, risking conflict with humans. Better understanding their movement patterns will help inform sound long-term management of the elephants,



communities can then focus on sustainable solutions for agriculture and livestock rearing, ensuring their well-being while protecting the majestic giants.

Beyond the Collars: Building Bridges for a Sustainable Future

The success of this project hinges on collaboration.

ZimParks and IFAW, with their combined experience in wildlife management and conservation, are leading the charge. Local communities are being actively involved, providing crucial insights into elephant behaviour from their unique perspective.

“Recent studies confirm that elephants spend much of their time outside protected areas, risking conflict with humans. Better understanding their movement patterns will help inform sound long-term management of the elephants,” says Nobesuthu

Ngwenya, National Elephant Coordinator at ZimParks.

The journey doesn’t end with the data collected. The information gleaned will be analysed to create detailed maps and forecasts of elephant movement patterns.

This knowledge will be disseminated to stakeholders, including government agencies, park authorities, and local communities.

Armed with this information, they can work together to develop a comprehensive strategy for managing Hwange’s elephant population in harmony with human needs.

This story is far from over. But it offers a glimmer of hope. By using technology as a tool for understanding, not control, the Elephant Odyssey project is paving the way for a future where humans and elephants can thrive side-by-side in this magnificent ecosystem.

Spotty Success:

Zimbabwe Celebrates Stable Leopard Population, Vows for Conservation

- Leopards bring tourism revenue to Zimbabwe, but hunting quotas and habitat loss raise concerns.
- Country’s first leopard management plan focuses on sustainable use and human-wildlife coexistence.

Harare, Zimbabwe – The first International Leopard Day commemorations held in Harare, the Zimbabwean capital, on May 3, revealed that the southern African nation has a healthy and stable leopard population, although more needs to be done to conserve them.

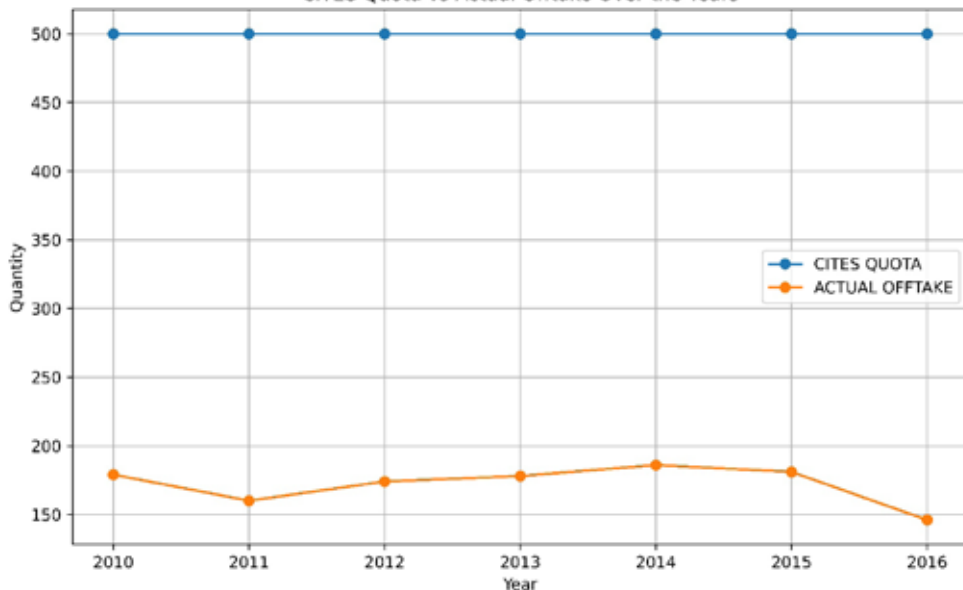
The commemorations were held at the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks) under the theme, “Human-Wildlife Coexistence: Harnessing the Power of Education in Leopard Conservation,” where exhibitions by various partners were done.

Every year on May 3, the world is reminded to pause





CITES Quota vs Actual Offtake Over the Years



Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora, hence the need for close monitoring as they are threatened with extinction globally.

The cats are hunted for their trophy in safari areas, communal areas, private ranches, and conservancies with a national quota of 500. However, on average, about 150 leopards are harvested annually.

On the one hand, the treasury revealed that leopards earned the country US\$5,000 in the year ending April 2023 compared to US\$11,000 in the year ending April 2024. For the whole industry from trophies, the country earned US\$376,000 in 2023 and US\$89,000 in 2024.

In an effort to conserve the species, the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority came up with a leopard management plan (the first of its kind in Zimbabwe and possibly in the region as well). It was approved in 2023.

The long-term vision of the management plan is to conserve and manage leopards sustainably for their aesthetic, cultural, and ecological values and the socio-economic development of Zimbabwe.

The immediate objective is to secure and, where possible, restore as many viable leopard populations and habitats as possible in Zimbabwe, while mitigating their negative impacts and enhancing their value for the benefit of people through sustainable use.

While ZimParks celebrates a stable population, a closer look reveals lingering challenges. Trophy hunting, despite quotas,

Leopards are a keystone species and an important component and indicator species of naturally functioning ecosystems in Africa. The leopard population in Zimbabwe is stable, though it is threatened globally and its population is declining

and raise awareness about the conservation and protection of leopards around the world.

Leopards are a cryptic and notoriously difficult species to monitor, hence the country's total population is not known.

However, ZimParks, through the Scientific Services Unit, external researchers, and institutions, are doing wildlife counts and surveys inside and outside protected areas.

The African Leopard, *Panthera pardus* in the scientific world, is one of the big five species in Zimbabwe. It is found in key wildlife areas such as Hwange, Mana Pools, Chizarira, Matusadonha, and Gonarezhou

National Park, as well as in surrounding safari areas.

Leopards are often spotted in the Machete Safari area, the Bubi, and the Southern Valleys, which are private land areas outside the protected areas.

According to ZimParks, this is where the largest leopard population is found. Besides these areas, minor range areas like Nyanga National Park have leopards coming in from Mozambique.

Leopards have also been spotted in the Nyatana Wilderness, an area in Muzarabani and on the border with Mozambique.

The Umfurudzi Safari area near Shamva has leopards as well.

“Leopards are a keystone species and an important component and indicator species of naturally functioning ecosystems in Africa. The leopard population in Zimbabwe is stable, though it is threatened globally and its population is declining,” Dr. Fulton Mangwanya, Director General of ZimParks, told the gathering.

Leopards are used for consumptive and non-consumptive tourism. They are listed on Appendix I of the Convention on International



continues, and the economic benefit from leopards pales in comparison to other wildlife.

Can Zimbabwe successfully balance conservation with economic needs? Will education efforts bridge the gap between humans and leopards?

The future of Zimbabwe's leopards remains uncertain. International Leopard Day served as a reminder of their importance, but critical questions hang in the air.

With continued conservation efforts and innovative solutions, Zimbabwe might just be a beacon of hope for these magnificent spotted predators. But only time will tell if this "stable success" can be sustained.



Emma Mandlazi's Courage Inspires Save Valley Communities to Protect Wildlife Despite Losses During Raids

By Staff Reporter

Save Valley, Masvingo – Emma Mandlazi, 28 years old, from Village 31 in Bikita's Ward 26, has become the talk of her community due to her recent display of bravery, which saved lives and crops during raids by elephants and hippos.

It took special courage for Emma to track down stray elephants and hippos as she documented their behavior, captured how much crop they destroyed and how a hippo mauled to death, a woman in her community.

While there are male



community rangers in this area, Emma exhibited tenacity and went an extra mile to do what her male counterparts were afraid to do during the tracking

and documentation process. As a result of her efforts, ZimParks has intervened and increased human resources.

Emma is a female ranger



participating in the new Save Valley Conservancy Women’s Community Ranger initiative, supported by DEFRA.

Due to the fact that Emma’s village is located on the boundary with Save Valley Conservancy, human-wildlife conflict is common. When the project started, the community was initially skeptical due to Emma’s gender.

However, as the project progressed, its aim became clear: to empower women and ensure the conservation of the community’s natural, human, and cultural resources.

Today, the community fully supports Emma, who provides guidance on wildlife-human

coexistence in Save Valley.

Village 31 lies on the shores of the Turwi River, a vital water source for more than 200 homes in the village.

Livelihood and Conflict

This area is a green belt, where farmers grow maize, tomatoes, and other vegetables. Crops from these fields are highly valued, especially this year, when harvests have been decimated by the El Nino-induced drought.

Watermelons are abundantly produced in this area due to the semi-arid climatic conditions. They serve as a significant energy source and a source of hydration for both humans and wildlife in the enduring heat of Village 31.

Hippos, being grass-eaters, pose a threat to the community’s watermelon fields, which are vital for their survival.

The community’s survival is closely linked to the vegetables they grow, along with the watermelons, which serve as their lifeline in the harsh climate.

Every day, evidence of the community’s reliance on watermelons and other vegetables and fruits is observed as the big green, rounded watermelons are transported in donkey-drawn carts to Chiremwaremwa, Nyika, and Bikita markets.

Thanks to DEFRA’s support for the women’s community ranger initiative, Emma’s efforts have yielded positive results.

Her role is not only about protecting the community’s resources but also about ensuring the village’s economic stability.

This is a challenging task for the community ranger, who has recently started her work and is still figuring out how best to serve her village.

Last month, before being engaged by the SVC-Defra initiative, elephants had destroyed most of the plants in this village.

Hippos were also posing a

significant threat to the village every night.

With the training Emma has received, the community trusted her and rallied behind her as she started tracking problem animals under the Problem Animal Control strategy.

Emma has been meticulously documenting the destruction of the green belt by elephants and hippos, providing reports to the community liaison manager of the Save Valley Conservancy.

The reports, which included the death of one woman, highlighted the community’s overwhelming situation and the need for additional resources.

Douglas Kuramba, ZimParks’ senior regional manager based in Senuko and overseeing Save Valley Conservancy, took action. On April 13th, he deployed senior ZimParks rangers, marking the beginning of a stakeout.

Emma led the team to track the problem animal in the densely populated riverbed. The goal was to scare the animal away from the area, with lethal action being the last resort due to the imminent danger to human life.

The team located the animal, and on the afternoon of April 13th, they pushed it downriver.

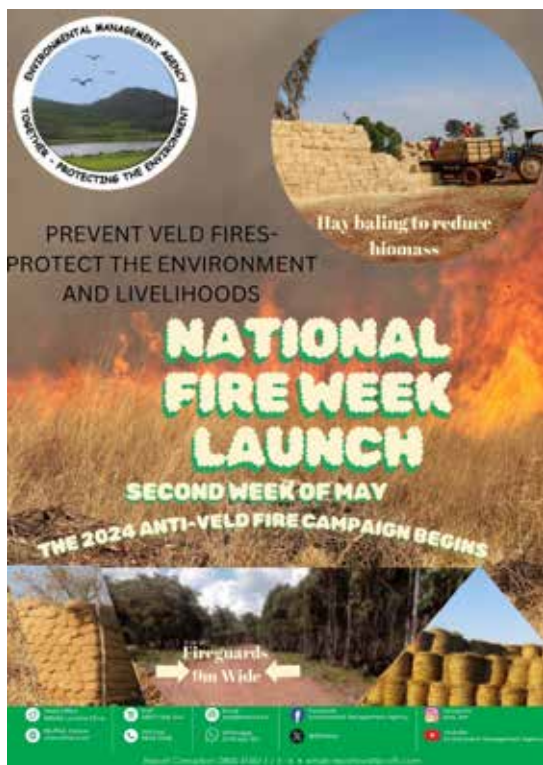
The team stayed overnight to assess whether the hippo would return to the village. Fortunately, on the morning of the 14th, there were no signs indicating the hippo’s return.

This outcome was exciting for the villagers. The animal retreated out of the community, and no human lives were lost.

“I am grateful for the cooperation extended to my community by the National Parks of Zimbabwe and the Save Valley Conservancy under the DEFRA program to drive the hippo out of the community,” said Ranger Emma.

“This initiative demonstrates that with proper data, accurate documentation, community mobilization, and cooperation, the lives of both animals and people can be saved,” she emphasized.

I am grateful for the cooperation extended to my community by the National Parks of Zimbabwe and the Save Valley Conservancy under the DEFRA program to drive the hippo out of the community





Fishing Decline in Southern Africa Due to El Nino-Induced Drought

By John Cassim

Fishing communities devastated by El Nino-induced drought are facing unprecedented challenges as the fish in the river are gone, fisher lamented.



Harare, Zimbabwe – Fishing communities in Southern Africa are reeling from the devastating impacts of the El Nino-induced drought, as the once-thriving fisheries now face unprecedented challenges. “The fish in the river are gone,” lamented Juliet Kamwi, a local fisherwoman from Sesheke District, Zambia, encapsulating the dire situation felt across the region.

This stark reality reverberates as Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Zambia declare a state of disaster, confronting a severe food security crisis affecting over 20 million people.

The El Nino-induced drought has decimated fish populations in local rivers, intensifying the struggle for survival among fishers who rely on these waters for sustenance and income.

Reduced water levels, as reported by the Zambezi River Authority, have left fishing areas barren, making it increasingly

difficult for communities to secure enough fish to feed their families and sustain their livelihoods.

Juliet Kamwi’s reflection mirrors the collective anguish experienced by many, where reliance on river fish once ensured food security and educational opportunities for their children.

Now, with the disappearance of fish, life has become uncertain, plunging families deeper into poverty and hunger.

Recognizing the urgent need for intervention, ActionAid calls for emergency action to address the crisis.

While immediate food assistance is crucial, long-term solutions are necessary to ensure the sustainability of fishing livelihoods in the region.

Jovina Nawenzake, Interim Executive Director at ActionAid Zambia, emphasizes the importance of investing in these communities’ futures, given their heavy reliance on fishing for both

sustenance and income.

As the region contends with rising costs of living compounded by drought-induced challenges, urgent humanitarian aid is imperative to alleviate the suffering of those most affected.

In 2022, concerns arose regarding the potential disappearance of kapenta fishing in Lake Kariba if measures were not taken to curb poaching and overfishing.

Chartwell Tanga Kanhema, chairman of the Zimbabwe Kapenta Fishermen Association (ZKFA), urged the governments of Zambia and Zimbabwe to implement measures to address these challenges.

Nesbert Mapfumo, secretary-general of the Zimbabwe Kapenta Producers Association (ZKPA), highlighted the stark decline in kapenta catch compared to previous decades, citing overfishing and illegal fishing practices as major contributing factors.

Introduced into Lake Kariba in 1967, kapenta has supported a significant fishery for Zimbabwe and Zambia. However, the current situation is exacerbated by the El Nino-induced drought, further straining the already fragile ecosystem.

Kariba Town Council documents reveal the discrepancy between licensed and illegal fishing activities, underscoring the urgent need for regulatory enforcement. As the region grapples with multifaceted challenges, concerted efforts are required to safeguard the future of fisheries and the livelihoods they support.



Zimbabwe Wildlife Farmer Adopts 10km of Byo-Vic Falls Highway for Rehabilitation near Hwange National Park

“We need to make sure our highway is in good shape all the time as this is the only road our valuable customers use to come to our safaris,”

Harare, Zimbabwe – A wildlife farmer who is also the managing director of The Tree Lodge At Sikumi, situated around the Gwayi River area near Hwange National Park, has adopted a 10km stretch of the Bulawayo – Vic Falls highway for maintenance.

Jonathan Mathuthu, a passionate conservationist revealed that he was in the process of negotiating with fellow farmers in his area to do the same and make sure potholes are filled, plastic waste that is scattered on the sides of the highway is collected and recycled.

“If you look at our highway all the way from Bulawayo to Vic Falls, it is heavily polluted with plastic, apparently this is a wildlife area and once animals consume those plastics that would be catastrophic.

On the one hand we also need to make sure our highway is in good shape all the time as this



is the only road our valuable customers use to come to our safaris,” Mathuthu said, while addressing guests at his lodge.

Mathuthu is known for sharing his indigenous knowledge of wildlife behavior with his customers whenever he gets to the lodge.

During one of his sessions which was witnessed by this journalist, he spoke about the connection between climate change and the current wildlife movement behavior.

“Our animals are very intelligent and they interact easily while protecting each other, for an example, when a giraffe is drinking water, other animals like baboons would be watching out for predators from afar.

When the giraffe is done its now his turn to watch as he is very tall and can see things from a long distance,” he shared.

He added that baboons may look ordinary especially to humans but they play a pivotal role in terms of aware and

security.

“When you are looking for a place to stay intending to do photographic tourism, check if the place has baboons, if not then chances of seeing other game species are minimal,” he added.

Meanwhile for tourists to experience all the goodness of nature in this area, a good road that is free of plastic litter, is required hence the move to adopt the 10km road for repairs and waste clearing.

Sadly the Bulawayo – Vic Falls highway is infested with plastic litter something authorities such as the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) should urgently look into and start awareness campaigns.

The Tree Lodge

The Tree Lodge at Sikumi is located in the heart of the Lions Paradise Game Reserve, sharing a border with the vast Hwange National Park.

Currently, the lodge has 13 wooden chalets nestled high up on strong Mangwe (Ndebele) trees hence the name The Tree





Lodge.

The chalets are strategically positioned such that from the balcony of each establishment, one is able to view Elephants, Lions, Buffaloes, Leopards, Kudus, Giraffe and a host of diverse wildlife.

“This is the photographic facility,” according to Mathuthu, “although for hunting he owns another plot across the major highway and far from the Hwange National Park.”

“Like I said earlier our wildlife is very smart, you find out that

sometimes during the hunting season, animals move to this area, where they will not be hunted and it’s just photographic and game views,” Mathuthu said.

Mathuthu boasted that in his plot tourists have come across spring hares, very gentle species that look like kangaroos.

Spring hares can only be found at night; the mere sight tells you the area is free from dangers according to his indigenous knowledge system.

Climate change continues pressuring African nations to prioritise water and sanitation provision

The 2023 Africa Sustainable Development Report says, 411 million Africans still lack access to safe water, and almost three-fourths don’t benefit from safely managed sanitation services.



Harare, Zimbabwe – Climate change is likely to continue to heighten pressure for decisive action by African governments, which are widely seen, as failing to provide safe water and sanitation for their citizens, the latest Afrobarometer survey report on water and sanitation has revealed.

The report says several southern African countries including Zimbabwe and Malawi are trending below average regarding the provision of piped water as well as borehole/ tubewell.

While the average was 56%, for piped water in the 39 African countries that were surveyed, Zimbabwe had 27%.

“Afrobarometer 2021/2023 surveys find little progress toward the goal of universal access to safe water and sanitation. Water supply ranks fourth among the most important problems that Africans want their government to address,” the report says.



The top three problems are unemployment, management of the economy, and health.

About one in four citizens reported that their household frequently went without enough clean water during the past year.

Only minorities enjoy access to piped water and a sanitation system, with stark disadvantages among rural and poor populations.

A growing majority give their government poor marks on their provision of water and sanitation services.

According to the World Health Organisation and the African Union, safe water and sanitation are essential to the health of all Africans as well as to the social and economic development of their countries, yet millions lack access to both.

Despite the government's commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union's Agenda 2063, most countries are not on track to meet their objective of ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

On the one hand, the 2023 Africa Sustainable Development

Report says, 411 million Africans still lack access to safe water, and almost three-fourths don't benefit from safely managed sanitation services.

Key report findings

The Afrobarometer report revealed that nearly six in 10 Africans (56%) say their household experienced a shortage of clean water during the previous year, including 24% who say this happened "many times" or "always."

Among areas visited by Afrobarometer field teams, 56% had a piped water system. Fewer than one-third had water systems in Zimbabwe (27%), Malawi (28%), Mozambique (28%), Liberia (28%), and Guinea (29%).

On average, four in 10 respondents say they have water piped into their dwelling (27%) or their compound (13%), while about one-third rely primarily on a public tap or standpipe (17%) or a tubewell or borehole (16%).

About one in five rely on well water (14%) or surface water (5%).

Fewer than one-third (31%) of surveyed areas have sewage systems, ranging from 5% in Malawi to 79% in Tunisia.

One-third (34%) of respondents have a toilet in the home, while another 39% have facilities outside their dwelling but within their compound.

One in five (19%) rely on toilets outside their compound, and 8% say they have no access to toilets or latrines.

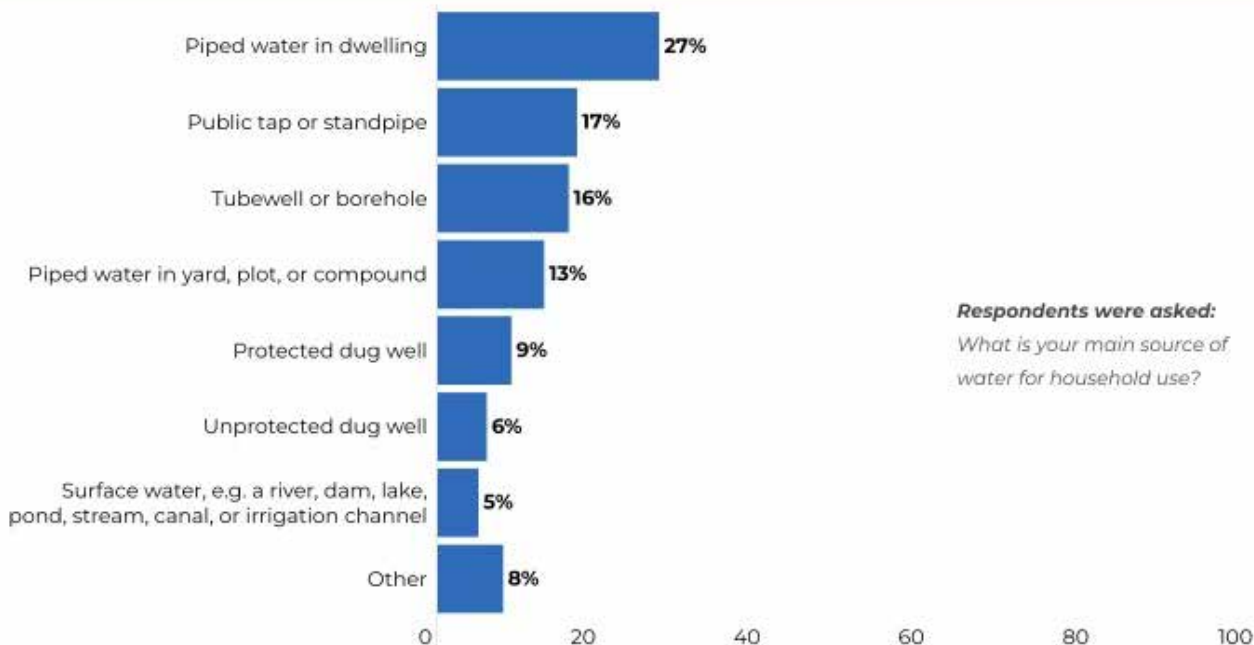
At least 12 countries recorded no significant change between survey rounds of 2011/2013 and 2021/2023, in the proportion of citizens who rank water supply as a top priority.

Within the same period, 10 countries showed significant increases in public concern, led by Côte d'Ivoire (+12 percentage points), Madagascar (+11), Nigeria (+10), Zimbabwe (+9%), and Uganda (+7).

Afrobarometer 2021/2023 surveys find little progress toward the goal of universal access to safe water and sanitation. Water supply ranks fourth among the most important problems that Africans want their government to address

Main source of water for household use
| 39 African countries | 2021/2023

AFROBAROMETER



Respondents were asked:
What is your main source of water for household use?



*Zimbabwe tighten screws on motorists to reduce **Carbon Emissions** at ZITF 2024*

Our strategy involves encouraging participants to utilize shuttle services from surrounding hotels, addressing parking challenges, and reducing pollution

Harare, Zimbabwe – In a concerted effort to alleviate parking congestion and significantly reduce, several key changes were implemented at this year’s Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF).

These changes included increased parking charges and the introduction of exclusive shuttle services.

The aim was to promote healthier mobility options,

discourage the use of personal vehicles, and encourage walking within the exhibition premises.

Dr. Thomas Utete Wushe, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, emphasized that the primary goal was to reduce carbon emissions at the venue.

“Our strategy involves encouraging participants to utilize shuttle services from surrounding hotels, addressing parking challenges, and

“...Second-hand vehicles aged 10 years and above from the date of manufacture shall not be imported.

“Any second-hand vehicle prohibited under this subsection shall be re-exported by the owner of the said vehicle at his or her expense.”



reducing pollution. We are also urging attendees to explore the exhibition on foot, enhancing their overall experience,” explained Dr. Wushe.

The was held from April 23rd to 27th at the ZITF Exhibition Centre in Bulawayo, the 2024 ZITF captivated attendees under the new theme, “Innovation: The Catalyst for Industrialization and Trade.”

Originally announced with a focus on entrepreneurship, the shift in theme underscored a broader commitment to innovation as a vital component for growth, aligning with Zimbabwe’s Vision 2030.

Busisa Moyo, Chairperson of the ZITF board, emphasized the significance of this thematic shift. “Zimbabwe’s vibrant innovation sector has flourished thanks to our national initiatives, aligning with our aspirations for equitable development and prosperity,” Moyo noted.

With these innovative measures, ZITF intended to offer an impactful, enjoyable, and environmentally friendly experience for all participants, setting a precedent for future trade shows globally.

Zimbabwe is actively working

to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as a climate change mitigation measure, currently aligning the Environmental Management Act (EMA) and Forestry Act with the Climate Change Policy.

Zimbabwe’s efforts contribute to global climate change management. Although Africa’s CO2 equivalent emissions (CO2e) footprint is declining, it still remains the highest compared to other continents.

In 2017, Africa’s total CO2 emissions constituted just 4% of global fossil fuel emissions, or 1185 MtCO2, with about 87% of the region’s emissions accounted for by ten countries.

By 2015, Zimbabwe’s contribution to global GHG emissions was approximately 0.13%, primarily from energy production and use.

To reinforce its environmental policy, the government recently banned the importation of vehicles older than 10 years.

According to Statutory Instrument (SI) 54 of 2024, Control of Goods (Import and Export) (Commerce) (Amendment) Regulations, 2024 (No 10), the importation of second-hand vehicles aged

10 years and above is now prohibited.

The notice reads: “It is hereby notified that the Minister of Industry and Commerce, in terms of Section 4(1) of the Control of Goods (Import and Export) (Commerce) Regulations, 1974, published in Rhodesia Government Notice 766 of 1974, hereby makes the following notice:

“...Second-hand vehicles aged 10 years and above from the date of manufacture shall not be imported.

“Any second-hand vehicle prohibited under this subsection shall be re-exported by the owner of the said vehicle at his or her expense.”

Zimbabwe is a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change of 1992 (UNFCCC), its Kyoto Protocol of 1997, and the Paris Protocol of 2015.

The ultimate objective of the UNFCCC is to achieve the stabilization of greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.



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Blessing in disguise as climate change-induced demand for green energy places Zimbabwe's lithium mining at the top

The increased demand for green minerals, as well as the electrification and decarbonization thrust driving the Fourth Industrial Revolution, is primarily fuelled by lithium



The development we are witnessing today is in keeping with our policy thrust to nurture and grow an industrial base related to manufacturing and production of electrical vehicle batteries and other storage media

Kamativi, Zimbabwe – The global demand for green energy as a climate change mitigation measure has positioned Zimbabwean lithium production at the top.

A blessing in disguise, as they say, as global giants such as the Chinese Yuhua Group saw an opportunity to invest a total of US\$249 million towards the construction of a two-phased spodumene processing plant with a combined capacity of 2.3 million tonnes per annum.

This is one of the major investors in the lithium sector and has revamped the former Kamativi Tin Mine that shut down 30 years ago owing to the global price decline and dwindling demand for tin products.

The mine, now known as Kamativi Mine Company (KMC), is situated 747 km far west of the capital, has been resurrected, and has opened up job opportunities, employing 300 people directly, and approximately 1000 jobs indirectly through subcontractors.

“Your Excellency, we are delighted to share with you that since the inception of our mining operations, Kamativi Mining Company has contributed significantly to the Zimbabwean fiscus, exceeding US\$ 8 million in taxes,” said Meng Yan, President of the Yuhua Group of China, at the commissioning ceremony of the Phase One lithium processing plant at Kamativi Mining Company (KMC) by Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa



recently.

Effects of climate change were evident in the Hwange District and Kamativi area during the tour of the mine, with some farmers now being forced to sell their livestock for peanuts just to raise money for food.

The harvest in the entire region was affected by the El Nino-induced drought, such that the region will not be food secure until the next harvest, agronomists have revealed.

Gwayi River, a major source of water in the Kamativi area, dried up early March this year, such that the mine authorities have revealed that discussions are underway with Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) to have water distributed from upstream Gwayi Shangani dam.

Meanwhile, the demand for lithium products such as batteries owing to climate change has brought new impetus to the entire province and the nation at large.

“The Mine is now back in

production, having transitioned from tin to lithium mining. This follows the energy transition necessitated by the dire impacts of climate change, which has led to a surge in demand for energy minerals such as lithium.

The increased demand for green minerals, as well as the electrification and decarbonisation thrust driving the Fourth Industrial Revolution, is primarily fuelled by lithium,” President Emmerson Mnangagwa said.

So far, Zimbabwe is recognized as one of the countries with the largest reserves of lithium and mines in Africa.

Globally, the southern African nation is ranked alongside the leading lithium-producing and supply countries such as Chile, Australia, China, Argentina, and Brazil.

While lithium mining is a new sub-sector in Zimbabwe, already seven lithium exploration and mining projects are at different stages of development.

If the Zimbabwean government

policy thrust is adhered to, the country could end up manufacturing electrical vehicle batteries.

“The development we are witnessing today is in keeping with our policy thrust to nurture and grow an industrial base related to manufacturing and production of electrical vehicle batteries and other storage media,” President Mnangagwa said while calling for value addition and beneficiation of lithium.

Chinese investments have in the past received negative publicity owing to their failure to adhere to their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

However, Kamativi Mine Company has revealed that over US\$2 million has been availed towards various community initiatives such as the restoration of community roads, revitalization of electricity and water infrastructure, and provision of essential resources to local schools and clinics.



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Zimbabwean Farmers Forced to Sell Livestock at Meagre Prices as Drought Takes Toll

Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe - Amidst Devastating Drought, Matabeleland North Farmers Face Dire Choices to Secure Food.

Amidst the harsh realities of a drought-induced crisis, farmers in Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe, are reluctantly parting with their livestock at rock-bottom prices, signalling the depth of their desperation for sustenance.

Renowned for its arid climate ideal for cattle farming, regions like Matabeleland North and South are grappling with the devastating impacts of El Niño-induced drought.

In Ndangababi village, situated in Ward 16 of the Hwange district, livestock, particularly cattle, holds immense value, akin to gold in these dry terrains.

As the winter sets in and

rainfall becomes a distant hope, the dire situation intensifies.

Despite fleeting glimpses of greenery spurred by occasional rainfall, the grass alone cannot ensure the survival of the cattle until the next harvest season in November.

In the face of this grim reality, farmers find themselves compelled to sell their cattle for as little as US\$50, a fraction of their usual market value.

Thulani Muleya (31), a father of three, expressed the anguish of parting with his prized bull, lamenting, "Under normal circumstances, a bull like that one would fetch a minimum of US\$500. But today, with the looming spectre of hunger, I have no choice but to sell."

Echoing his sentiments, Eugene Dube ruefully recounted selling his livestock for a mere US\$190, far below its true worth.

"When buyers come knocking, they dictate the terms. It's a painful reality, but the drought leaves us with no alternatives," Dube remarked solemnly.

The desperation is palpable as villagers, like Ernest Tshuma (42), who have witnessed their fair share of droughts, acknowledge that this year's crisis is unparalleled in severity.

"I have never witnessed anything like this. Previous droughts would spare us with some small grains, but not this time," Tshuma reflected sombrely.

In a cruel twist of fate, while villagers struggle to eke out a living from their land, just 20 kilometers away, President Emmerson Mnangagwa was slated to inaugurate a new lithium mine, symbolizing hope for economic resurgence.

However, for the locals, the



grandeur of the event offered little solace amidst their dire circumstances.

Expectations

During the 2023 election campaigns, the ruling party, ZANU PF, had garnered support through promises of food distribution, particularly maize meal. Villagers, including those from Ndangababi, had pinned their hopes on such pledges.

However, as the event unfolded, with government officials parading in luxurious vehicles, the stark absence of any mention of food aid dashed their hopes further.

Nevertheless, amid this despair, the Kamativi Mining Company has emerged as a beacon of hope for the

In the face of this grim reality, farmers find themselves compelled to sell their cattle for as little as US\$50, a fraction of their usual market value

community. With plans for skills transfer initiatives, gardening projects, and assistance to vulnerable groups, the company aims to alleviate the plight of the locals.

Moreover, their commitment to fencing out livestock and providing water points signifies a holistic approach to addressing

the community's needs.

Chief Dingani Nelukoba, acknowledging the severity of the situation, implored the government to intensify efforts in providing water and food relief, recognizing the critical role these measures play in mitigating the impacts of drought on both livelihoods and livestock.

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