Building Sustainable Conservation Economies through Responsible Ecotourism

Kai Collins
Conservation Manager
Our journey

...started in Botswana more than 35 years ago
Our journey

...building sustainable conservation economies
What is our role in conservation in Africa?

- Operate **50 luxury safari camps** in **7 African countries** covering **2.3 million hectares**.

- Ensuring **sustainable protection of carbon sinks and biodiversity** through the creation of viable ecotourism businesses.

- Ensuring that **ecotourism remains the chosen alternative** to less sustainable industries that irrevocably damage biodiversity, wilderness and ecosystem processes.

- Creating **a profitable, ethical and responsible business** that others are able to replicate and implement in other regions of the planet.
Through high-end luxury Ecotourism
But ... it is not just about the camp and the room ...
Shumba camp, Kafue, Zambia
Its about conserving spectacular wildlife areas ... in wetlands
Conserving spectacular wildlife areas ... in deserts
It is about awesome wildlife encounters ... in camp
Its about how sustainable the camps are – 9 camps are 100% solar powered
The 4Cs of Wilderness Safaris - we believe our focus on the 4Cs contributes meaningfully to the wildlife and the people of Africa.
Conservation, Community, Culture and Commerce, un-packed

Conservation is about investing in biodiversity

Culture is about showing respect to where you have come from and the country in which you operate

Community is about building a model “fair to all”

Commerce is about being financially prosperous, understanding that making money is fundamental to what we do

Building ENVIRONMENTAL equity

Building SOCIAL equity

Building FINANCIAL equity
...mobilises the resources we need to make our interventions and contributions under the other three Cs
...the ethnic and cultural diversity of all staff and all communities with whom we work and engage
Culture

...various cultural activities incorporated into the guest experience
…develop positive and constructive engagements with neighbouring communities
Community

Staff training…fostering a culture of service and enthusiasm
Threats: Land use changes and management
Threats: Unsustainable use (commercial & illegal)

...need to maximise the conservation and tourism value
Threats: Water use impacts – water quality and quantity

...ensure that we have no significant negative impact on these water bodies
Conservation Contribution for 2017: P10 million

Biodiversity Footprint: 2.3 million hectares

52 Research Project supported

51 Collaborations with international institutions & stakeholders

Conserve 34 IUCN Red List species

Countries
- Botswana
- Kenya
- Namibia
- Rwanda
- Seychelles
- South Africa
- Zambia
RHINO CONSERVATION

Wilderness Safaris has been involved in rhino conservation for more than 20 years.

We have assisted with black and white rhino reintroductions and conservation in 6 countries: Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Threatened species reintroductions.
Black Rhinos released back into the wild in Botswana in 2014
Why is inclusive tourism important?
Inclusive Tourism
Making a sustainable difference
A study by Dr. Susan Snyman (2014) on the impact of private sector ecotourism on local socio-economic development in Botswana for 2006 to 2009 in the Okavango Community Trust representing 5 villages:

**Total payments, including lease fees and staff costs came to BWP 27.7 million (US$ 2.8 million)**
Important role of the private sector

- Forming formal partnerships with communities
- Capacity building through skills training and development
- Conservation - wildlife reintroductions, anti-poaching, etc.
- Technological advancements, e.g. solar, setting standards
- Increasing brand awareness of the region – e.g. Okavango
- Socio-economic and financial benefits (salaries, lease fees, taxes)
- Environmental Education e.g. Children in the Wilderness programme
- Education regarding the mitigation of Human Wildlife Conflict:– chilli-planting; community-based guarding
An average across the region of 7 dependents per staff member Susan Snyman (2014) showed 4781 people indirectly impacted by 16 Wilderness Safaris Ecotourism Camps
Partnersing with local communities
Inclusive Tourism Overview

**Tourism**

- Payment of taxes
- Suppliers of goods and services
- Lease Fees
- Economic benefits
- Camp
- Staff

**Community**

- Total per staff member per month: USD 278
- Total per tourist bed per month: USD 603
- Total per tourism camp per month: US 13 259

- Approx.
- Dependents
  - USD 19
- Local Shops
  - USD 165
- Education
  - USD 33
- Employment
  - USD 14
- Other expenses
  - USD 66

**Benefits**

- Environmental benefits
- Social benefits
A life skills and educational program for children who live in neighbouring villages, taking place in all 7 countries
Success is achieved through understanding stakeholders
Building capacity
Supported by enabling factors through Governments...

...are the components that lead to success
Inclusive tourism enables sustainable development through

- Multiplier impacts of employment
- Understanding & engaging stakeholders
- Capacity building

To be continued...
“In the end we will conserve only what we love, We will love only what we understand, We will understand only what we are taught”

– Baba Dioum