



# Position Statement on the Community Private Partnership: Community—Save Valley Conservancy Partnership

Adopted by the nine Chiefs on July 15, 2014 at Hakamela Camp, Chiredzi



**AFRICA BIODIVERSITY COLLABORATIVE GROUP**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This community position paper articulates the vision of local communities in Manicaland and Masvingo Provinces for engaging the Save Valley Conservancy in a Public Private Community Partnership (PPCP). The initiative is being led by the following Chiefs representing the shared community vision from five districts: Chief Nhema, Zaka; Chief Budzi, Bikita; Chief Ziki, Bikita; Chief Mabika, Bikita; Chief Mutema, Chipinge; Chief Musikavanhu, Chipinge; Chief Gudo, Chiredzi; Chief Tshovani, Chiredzi; and Chief Chamutsa, Buhera.

## **OUR VISION**

The proposal contained herein will see the establishment of a viable, marketable and sustainable PPCP. This is envisaged to be a unique endeavour in that it brings together five districts/communities with a shared vision for partnering for conservation. It is expected that the initiative will surpass existing conservation models in protecting wildlife resources and delivering benefits to local communities.

The proposed partnership conforms to Zimbabwe's Indigenization Policy, is in line with the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimASSET), and it is informed by the views of community members who as custodians of resources have chosen a business model appropriate to their context. Additionally, the proposed PPCP is an opportunity to implement empowerment policies which are beneficial to all concerned. The partnership also complies with land use model option 2 of the Wildlife Based Land Reform Policy document produced by National Parks.

Communities have been at the centre of natural resources management for millennia. Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) has resulted in significant conservation and welfare benefits in areas where it has been implemented properly. Specific examples from Botswana and Namibia show that communities have benefited directly from both consumptive and non-consumptive use of wildlife resources through direct control and business like involvement. Despite a different policy context, both cases show that communities have potential to partner with private sector and operate sustainable, viable and marketable wildlife based 'companies'

Zimbabwe, through the Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE), was a pioneer in the region and in the Wildlife Conservation Industry in spearheading a CBNRM model that was later adopted by other countries, which have now taken it further than Zimbabwe has as a tool for genuine community empowerment. The proposed Save Valley PPCP promises to once again put Zimbabwe on the map for ground-breaking conservation innovation led by Zimbabwean communities.

This vision includes:

1. Developing a sizable economy in the local area which will spread benefits for future generations.
2. Confirming our rights and authority on the land.
3. Renewing traditional and cultural pride and awareness of our identity and natural heritage.
4. Using involvement in the wildlife industry as a beginning to building a larger vision based on the development of secondary industry opportunities. Eg: uniform making industry, food growing for tourism, craft industry, cultural tourism products.

This has always been the vision but it has been compromised due to the practical failure of CAMPFIRE to deliver.

## **ISSUE: POOR PERFORMANCE OF THE CAMPFIRE PROGRAM IN THE CONTEXT OF SVC, NATIONAL PARKS AND ADJACENT COMMUNITIES**

**Position:** As communities in Manicaland and Masvingo Province, we note with concern that Zimbabwe has been implementing the CAMPFIRE program for the past two and a half decades without CURRENTLY satisfactory ecological and economic outcomes in areas within our districts (and as has been the case in many other areas).

Locally, we have several CAMPFIRE wards but they have achieved little. These include: Malipati, Ward 5 in Chiredzi, and Mahlanguleni to name a few. Some problems identified include:

1. CAMPFIRE has failed to deliver significant benefits or income to local communities.
2. CAMPFIRE areas do not correlate with high wildlife numbers. It is worrisome to note that some CAMPFIRE communities continue to poach and destroy wildlife fences and wildlife continues to be depleted because there are no evident benefits accruing to households and communities.
3. Rural District Councils (RDCs) divert CAMPFIRE revenues to fund their operations rather than community development projects. Additionally, the benefits are shared at a larger scale or at management level sometimes far from the area rather than coming directly to those who suffer the costs of living with wildlife.
4. While some CAMPFIRE communities have been successful, the benefits of the program reach few people. For example, CAMPFIRE has fared relatively well in Masoka community because the area is sparsely populated.
5. It is also important to note that the basic tenets of CAMPFIRE are good. However, the CAMPFIRE model (focused on hunting) has failed to generate and sustain incomes over the years due to depleting trophy qualities and failure to invest in non-consumptive tourism.
6. CAMPFIRE has demonstrated that appropriate local partnerships are KEY for any conservation program to succeed. The meaningful engagement of communities around Save Valley Conservancy to address both conservation and welfare issues also is KEY in developing a sustainable and viable wildlife industry in addition to high marketability.

## **ISSUE: PARTNERSHIPS FOR CONSERVATION**

**Position:** Globally, Public, Private, Community Partnerships (PPCPs) are a new vehicle driving conservation and community development. These partnerships are often negotiated by partners who realise the comparative advantages of working together – rather than imposed partnerships.

Mutual commitment and shared vision foster successful long-term business partnerships. In view of these trends, the communities around Save Valley prefer to work with the existing Save Valley Conservancy Safari Operators for the following reasons<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> See attached notes from community consultations

1. SVC Safari Operators have demonstrated good environmental stewardship over the years as evidenced by sustained and growing numbers of species of animals in the conservancy even when country stocks managed by other agents in the same area are being depleted and endangered. (E.g. National Parks around the Provinces).
2. SVC Safari Operators understand the ecology of the area based on their long history of working in the area which is important considering that wildlife resources take many years to reproduce and mature. Consumptive and non – consumptive utilisation of wildlife is dependent on adequate numbers as well as good specimens of animals.
3. Despite historical differences between blacks and whites in the country, the communities in Manicaland and Masvingo Province acknowledge the comparative advantages of partnering with the SVC Safari Operators for conservation purposes based on their experience and attributes. Eg: Experience, marketing knowledge and contacts, resources and commitment.
4. Communities should have decision making power and freedom to choose who to partner with rather than having government agencies select partners on their behalf. Imposed choices would lead to increased conflicts as evidenced in some of the CAMPFIRE projects.
5. Community ownership of the proposed vision will naturally reduce poaching as they will see themselves as the joint owners of the wildlife. This will lead to them taking an active role in protecting rather than harming it.
6. A less disruptive transition in partnering will protect international marketing efforts from negative impact.

## **WAY FORWARD**

In view of these challenges and past lessons, communities around the Save Valley Conservancy propose to undertake a new model of conservation by partnering with the current SVC Safari Operators. The proposed model will focus on the wildlife industry as a business and the said partnership should be construed as a community-private business. The organizing principle for this partnership is *doing what is good for business; which in turn is good for wildlife as well as communities.*

## **FRAMEWORK FOR ORGANIZING THE PPCP**

Figure 1 below provides a schematic of the proposed framework of the proposed SVC-Community Partnership. The figure shows three key actors: (a) communities, (b) SVC Safari Operators, and (c) regulatory authorities.

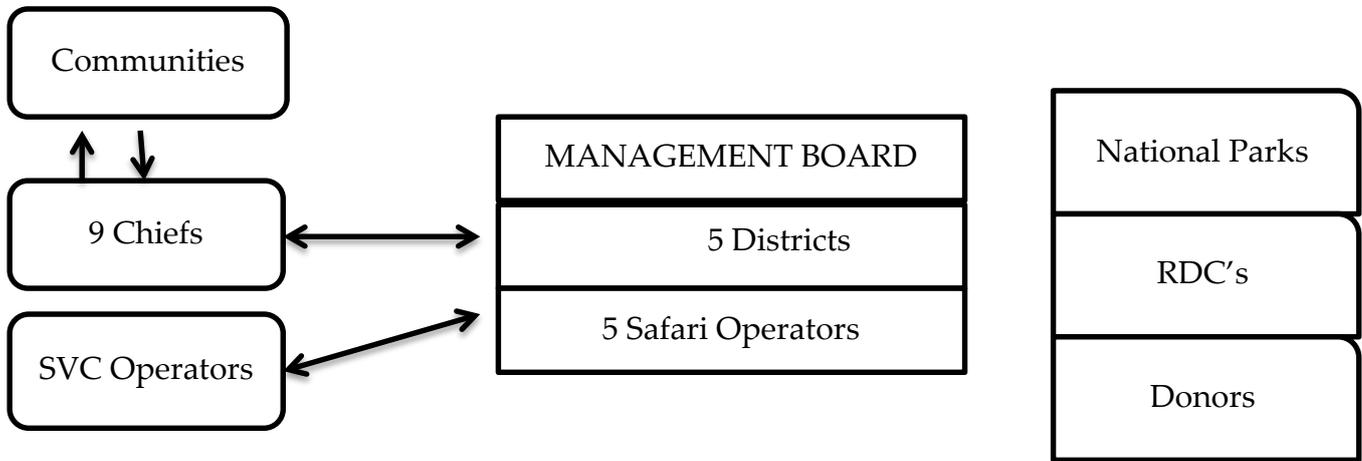


Figure 1: Proposed Management Structure for the SVC-Community Partnership

### **SAVE VALLEY RESOURCES MANAGEMENT TRUST**

This will be overall board that oversees the management of the conservancy. Its duties will include the following: fence maintenance, ecological management, conservancy wide anti-poaching activities, community outreach and education, and public relations. The board will comprise of 10 members. The current Safari Operators will be represented by five people while the community will each provide a district level representative thereby having five representatives.

### **SVC SAFARI OPERATORS**

SVC refers to the existing FOREIGN INVESTORS and locally owned operating companies.

### **CHIEFS AND COMMUNITIES**

Each community will have a community board that oversees various activities, similar to those undertaken by the Management Board, but this time at community level.

## **REGULATORY BODIES**

These include the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, Zimbabwe Tourism Authority and the Rural District Councils. These will not play an active role in the day to day operations of the Trust. Their role is to monitor whether the Trust is adhering to national laws and regulations and offer advice and support as requested. Only taxes and levies will be paid to such bodies.

## **CONCLUSION**

Communities have proposed a conservation model that is based on business principles. This will change the current situation to one where positive progress is possible leading to increased generation of benefits through non-consumptive tourism. Therefore, there is need to provide for a policy environment that will ensure communities implement innovative ideas in ways that improve their livelihoods. Such a policy will also encourage investment as well as build a positive National image for Zimbabwe.

## ANNEXES

### Summary Points of SVC Communities Focus Group Discussions

Dates 1<sup>st</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> July 2014

Name of Chief	Major Points	District
1. Chamutsa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ All districts to be represented in the management board</li> <li>○ 5 chiefs and 5 operators to make up the management board</li> <li>○ There should be a board of trustees made up of all the 9 Chiefs</li> <li>○ The Trust is the one that deliberates on the proceeds that go to various districts and communities</li> <li>○ Only the project areas must benefit and not the whole district as this dilutes the benefits</li> <li>○ The respective communities in various districts should come up with committees that will distribute the project money</li> <li>○ Parks to come in as authority / government but to be a beneficiary ( makes its money through various forms of taxation)</li> <li>○ Parks should also come in when there are problems between the communities and the current operators</li> <li>○ The idea of CAMPFIRE is a non-starter since it has a history of failing and frustrating the communities</li> <li>○ The RDCs should come in as technocrats assisting their respective chiefs in the running of the project</li> <li>○ Local authorities have abused development levy that is collected from the communities</li> <li>○ The 5 year leases are not sustainable, the operator has no care of the property as he will be more interested in recovering his money</li> <li>○ This leads to resource depletion and communities fear they will end up with what is in Gonarezhou now</li> <li>○ Communities want to partner with current operators who knowledge and experience</li> <li>○ Communities wish to see the SVC transforming into a very big business</li> <li>○ Communities should be allowed to lead the decision making process of their areas.</li> <li>○ All the 9 chiefs are speaking with one voice.</li> </ul>	BUHERA
2. Musikavanhu		CHIPINGE
3. Budzi		BIKITA
4. MABIKA		BIKITA
5. NHEMA		ZAKA
6. GUDO		CHIREDDZI

## **Comments from the Communities**

### **On the subject of short lease terms:**

*“... mukadzi akaziva kuti ane mazuva mashoma pamba anoenda aparadza ...”*

[If a wife knows that she is not staying for some time, she will destroy everything before she leaves]

### **On the subject of community-led initiatives:**

*“Iyo hurumende tinofanirwa kuudza zvatinoda nenzvimbo yedu kwete ivo vatirongere.”*

[We should tell the government what we want to do with our area and not have them plan for us]

### **On the subjects of wildlife marketing:**

*“... ukaenda kunoshambadza kumhiri ikoko ndiani anokunzwa.”*

[If you go to market abroad, who will realise our efforts or buy our product?]

### **On the subject of community rights and the authority of Chiefs:**

*“... Isu sevaridzi vezvinhu madzisho edu ndiwo anofanira kuenda pamusoro kwete varungu”*

[As owners of these resources, our Chiefs should be in charge and not whites]

### **On the subject of Parks and Wildlife Management Authority as regulators:**

*“Iyo parks inozo supervisor sei kana iyo yapinda wo muproject, makaro chete aya”*

[How will the Parks Authority supervise if they are business partners? It's all greediness]