



LION RECOVERY FUND

2018 Progress Report



The Lion Recovery Fund (LRF) was launched one year ago because of an alarming fact: the number of lions has declined by half during the last 25 years. With a strong sense of hope and commitment, the LRF was created by the Wildlife Conservation Network in partnership with the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation to reverse this decline, and bring lions back.

Recovery is possible. Lions are resilient and can rebound when they, their habitats, and their prey are adequately protected, and when there are means to help lions and local communities coexist. Recent research suggests that if Africa's protected areas alone were managed optimally, they could support as many as three to four times the number of wild lions that currently exist.

Projects supported by the Lion Recovery Fund are addressing a multitude of threats facing lions so that this iconic species can once again reign throughout Africa. Thanks to the support of our visionary donors and key conservation allies, the LRF has channelled \$1.3 million in 2018 to 14 projects and 12 partner organizations in eight countries. This report presents the progress made in the first half of 2018 by the inspiring conservation work of our grantees—the real heroes—across Africa.

Your support is enabling the LRF to be a powerful new platform for lion conservation, supporting the best ideas from any institutions that will bring lions roaring back.

THE LRF IMPACT TO DATE:

28 PROJECTS | 14 COUNTRIES

20 PARTNERS | \$4M RAISED

\$2.4M INVESTED

LRF Strategy Overview

Strategy for Lion Recovery

WHAT IS THE LION RECOVERY FUND?

The Lion Recovery Fund is a collaborative granting initiative created by the Wildlife Conservation Network in partnership with the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, with a bold vision to double the number of lions in Africa—to bring back the half we have lost. The LRF is managed by WCN but draws on a coalition of advisors with expertise in conservation and philanthropy to guide grantmaking and ensure that decisions are rooted in sound science and financial integrity.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- The LRF is managed by WCN. The LRF directs 100% of every donation directly to the best projects to recover lions, with zero administrative or overhead fees taken.
- The LRF team—including a granting committee comprised of conservation experts—identifies and vets the best lion projects across Africa. This team does the groundwork for our donors, ensuring that their dollars are spent where they can have the greatest impact with the most trusted players.
- The donations raised by the LRF are deployed quickly so grantees can get to work.
- The LRF team monitors and tracks progress and impact towards our goals and reports back to our donors.

HOW WILL WE SUCCEED?

Recovering lions and their landscapes cannot be done by any single organization or single fund alone. A key element of the LRF strategy is to bring together governments, nonprofits, philanthropists, and the public through various forums to allow for greater impact than would be possible through our efforts alone.

The LRF is like a venture capital firm for lions: we seek innovative approaches, bolster tactics known to work, disperse funds quickly, and measure returns.



1. EXPAND CONSERVATION COVERAGE

Increase the extent and effectiveness of the management of lion landscapes across Africa.



2. BUILD THE WILL

Build the public, political, and philanthropic will to bring lions back.



3. SCALE THE FUNDING

Elevate the amount of funding available for—and encourage greater focus on—the conservation of lions and their landscapes.

Projects Supported in 2018

Protecting Core Areas for Lions

One of the key objectives of the LRF is to strengthen the protection of core lion habitat across the continent, and to help establish a conservation presence in areas where there was previously little to none. In 2018, the LRF funded seven projects that expand support for the management of protected areas, across five countries.

- In **Nigeria's Yankari National Park**, which holds one of only four known populations of West African lions. The grant to Wildlife Conservation Society will support the law enforcement efforts in the park to tackle threats such as lion poaching and the rampant degradation of the park from illegal livestock incursions.



Musekese Conservation

THE LRF IS SUPPORTING MUSEKESE CONSERVATION TO SET UP AN ANTI-POACHING UNIT IN ZAMBIA'S KAFUE NATIONAL PARK.

- In **Angola's Luengue-Luiana National Park**, where only 30 lions remain in the vast 30,000 square mile park. The grant to Panthera will help initiate anti-poaching efforts, with a view to helping rehabilitate an extremely depleted park such that it can one day support significant lion numbers and a tourism industry that can benefit local communities.



Kim Young/Panthera

KAFUE ANTI-POACHING COMMUNITY SCOUTS SUPPORTED BY THE LRF.

- In **Zambia's Kafue National Park**, a vast area that could potentially hold hundreds more lions with adequate protection. The grant to Panthera will pay for the salaries of community scouts, who will augment the efforts of the existing government scout force, to prevent lion and bushmeat poaching.

- In **Zambia's Kafue National Park**, to set up an Intensive Protection Zone and tackle bushmeat poaching. The project, overseen by Musekese Conservation, is coordinated with the efforts of Panthera's project, thus helping to expand the overall conservation within this massive park.
- In **Zambia**, for a pioneering project by BioCarbon Partners and Lion Landscapes designed to work with communities to encourage them to protect forests and wildlife including lions, to allow for the sale of carbon credits, which will provide a sustainable source of conservation finance and support for local livelihoods.



Peter Lindsey

SNARES REMOVED FROM THE SERENGETI.

- In **Tanzania's Serengeti National Park**, one of the most iconic landscapes in Africa, which is under threat from snaring by bushmeat poachers. The grant to Frankfurt Zoological Society will support the park authorities with de-snaring and infrastructure needs.

- In the **Boma-Badingilo Landscape of South Sudan**, an area that has significant lion numbers but receives very little conservation attention because of the ongoing civil war. The grant to the Wildlife Conservation Society will support and strengthen law enforcement to tackle poaching and to work with communities and local government to build public and political support for lion conservation.

Promoting Coexistence Between People and Lions

Conflict between lions and the local communities living alongside them—typically due to lions preying on livestock, resulting in retaliatory killings—is one of the biggest threats facing lions. In 2018, the LRF funded four more projects tackling this threat, three of which were in Tanzania, where the problem is severe.

- In **northern Tanzania**, where human-lion conflict over livestock has led to retaliatory killing of lions. The grant helps Big Life plan the expansion of their successful community-engagement programs to promote human-lion coexistence in an area with huge potential for lion conservation.

- In **Tanzania’s Ngorongoro Conservation Area**, with a grant to KopeLion to start an incentive payment program that empowers local people to be key allies in conservation by rewarding them for protecting lions on their lands.
- In **Tanzania’s Tarangire-Manyara Ecosystem**, where lions are threatened by habitat loss and are persecuted as they come into contact with livestock. The grant to African People & Wildlife Foundation funds rangeland management, which helps to protect both local livelihoods and the



“LIVING WALLS” ERECTED BY AFRICAN PEOPLE & WILDLIFE FOUNDATION PROTECT LIVESTOCK FROM LIONS.



AERIAL VIEW OF A MAASAI HOMESTEAD IN NORTHERN TANZANIA WHERE KOPELION IS INCENTIVIZING LOCAL PEOPLE TO PROTECT LIVESTOCK FROM LIONS.

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pastures on which lion prey depends, and measures to reduce conflict between people and lions.

- In **northwest Namibia**, where a recent drought has caused a spike in conflict between people and wildlife. The grant to Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation helps create a ‘rapid-response unit’ to work with communities to minimize livestock losses by helping them achieve improved livestock husbandry.



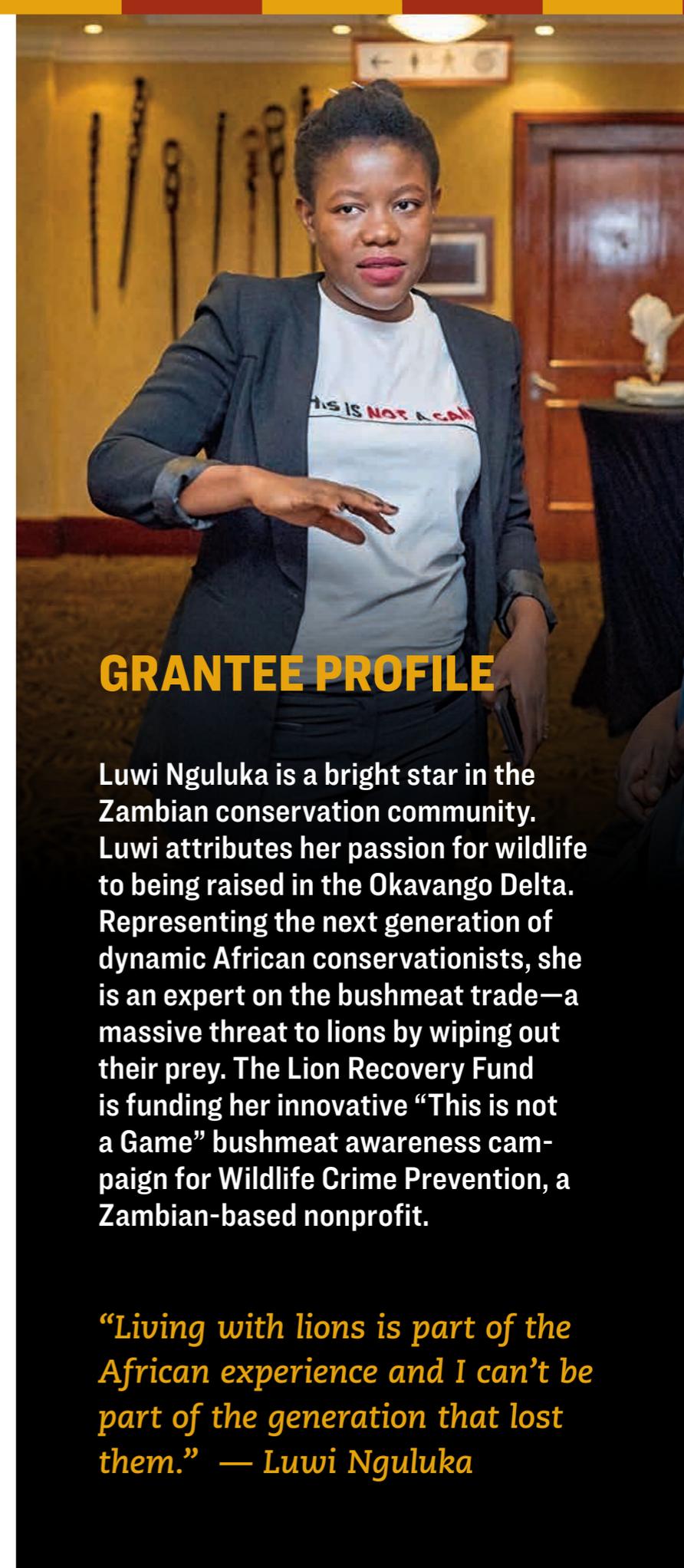
Campaigns Projects and Convening Initiatives

In addition to the more traditional field conservation projects, the LRF supports creative, innovative **campaigns** that abate threats to wildlife and build the public, political, and philanthropic will for lions. This year we supported **Equilibrium Research's** project to undertake a continent-wide analysis on the value of lions across sectors, from tourism to ecosystem services to cultural heritage. Ultimately, this assessment will be used to demonstrate that healthy lion populations bring economic and cultural benefits to people living near lions, thus substantiating their protection to key decision makers. Additionally, we further supported the innovative **anti-bushmeat campaign** in Zambia (see Grantee Profile on the right). Because of its success, the project will soon be expanded into neighboring Malawi where bushmeat poaching is also a massive threat.

THE POWERFUL MESSAGING OF THE AD CAMPAIGN DISSUADES URBAN ZAMBIAIS FROM BUYING ILLEGAL BUSHMEAT.

The LRF also supports convening initiatives that incentivize conservation groups to collaborate in order to strategically expand and align efforts and funding for lion and landscape recovery. This year, we enabled **Endangered Wildlife Trust** to establish a lion database in partnership with the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group that will be used to provide a continually updated assessment of the abundance and distribution of lions in Africa. This database will be available

to governments and the wider conservation community, making the sharing of information efficient and expedient. And in Zimbabwe, the LRF is assisting the wildlife authority to develop a **national lion conservation plan**, with specific action items to improve the management and protection of lions in Zimbabwe.



GRANTEE PROFILE

Luwi Nguluka is a bright star in the Zambian conservation community. Luwi attributes her passion for wildlife to being raised in the Okavango Delta. Representing the next generation of dynamic African conservationists, she is an expert on the bushmeat trade—a massive threat to lions by wiping out their prey. The Lion Recovery Fund is funding her innovative “This is not a Game” bushmeat awareness campaign for Wildlife Crime Prevention, a Zambian-based nonprofit.

“Living with lions is part of the African experience and I can’t be part of the generation that lost them.” — Luwi Nguluka

Where We Work

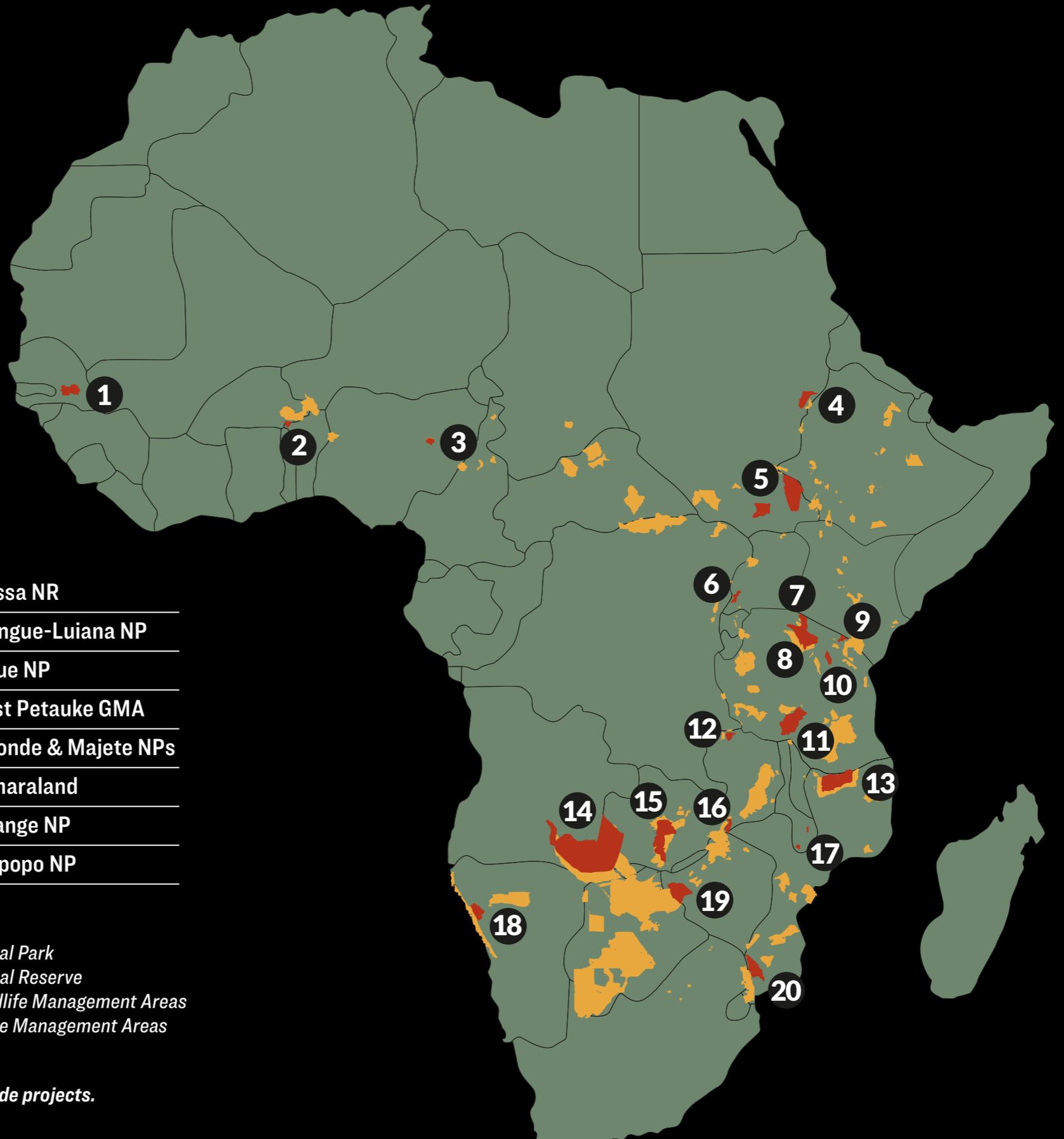
LION RECOVERY FUND SITE-BASED PROJECTS

-  PROTECTED AREA
IN LION RANGE
-  LION RECOVERY FUND
SUPPORTED PROJECTS

1. Niokolo-Koba NP
2. Pendjari NP
3. Yankari NP
4. Dinder NP
5. Boma & Badingilo NPs
6. Queen Elizabeth NP
7. Serengeti NP
8. Ngorongoro Cons Area
9. Eduimet WMA
10. Tarangire NP
11. Ruaha NP
12. Nsumbu NP/Tondwa GMA

13. Niassa NR
14. Luengue-Luiana NP
15. Kafue NP
16. West Petauke GMA
17. Liwonde & Majete NPs
18. Damaraland
19. Hwange NP
20. Limpopo NP

NP = National Park
NR = National Reserve
WMA = Wildlife Management Areas
GMA = Game Management Areas



Map does not display LRF campaign and illegal wildlife trade projects.

Partnerships

Africa's tourism industry is intrinsically linked to the health of its iconic wildlife populations and their captivating landscapes. In fact, lions are frequently ranked as the number one animal tourists most want to see on safari. So, who better to engage in lion conservation than travel operators, safari companies, and their clients?

This year, the LRF formed the **Lionscape Coalition**, a new initiative that is good for lion recovery as well as for business. The Lionscape Coalition allows Africa's top tourism operators to take a leadership position to support on-the-ground conservation work and encourage clients to support the future of lions.



Each year, members provide a philanthropic investment into the LRF for impact in landscapes where tourism operates and in areas beyond their areas of operation, so that parts of Africa off the beaten tourist track can benefit. We announced the Lionscape Coalition in May 2018 with some

THE LRF IS ENGAGING THE SAFARI INDUSTRY TO ENHANCE THEIR COMMITMENT TO LION AND LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION.

top safari operators coming on board, and more lined up to join. The Lionscape Coalition will not only raise funds for lion conservation, but will help educate more people about the plight of lions and empower the travel industry to play an even bigger role in conservation.

Thank You

We hope you share our pride in the progress made by LRF investments thus far. Your support to date and commitment going forward is truly having an impact for lions and is deeply appreciated; thank you.

The LRF team is working hard to plan for the year ahead, armed with a growing list of solid, effective projects and partners that give us hope for lions. We greatly value the trust of our donors and are rigorous in our vetting of projects, so you can be sure your philanthropic investment is going to the best projects for lions.

Please visit www.lionrecoveryfund.org for more information about the great work made possible thanks to you.

If you are interested in making a donation to the LRF, please visit wildnet.org/lrf or contact kelly@wildnet.org.

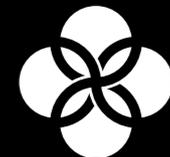


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WCN

Wildlife Conservation Network



LEONARDO
DICAPRIO
FOUNDATION

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