



Peace Parks Foundation Newsflash 4/2011

Photographer: Tiago Nhazilo

Community to develop ecotourist lodge in Maputo Special Reserve, Lubombo TFCA

On 25 March 2011, the Ahi Zamani Chemucane, a community association representing 850 people from three rural Mozambican communities, signed a 25-year partnership agreement with the Bell Foundation to develop a luxury ecotourist lodge in the northern section of Maputo Special Reserve. This landmark agreement marks the first time that a Mozambique community has received long-term concession rights to a prime tourism site in a major nature reserve.

The agreement follows a three-year open tender process involving the International Finance Corporation, the government of Mozambique and the Ahi Zamani Chemucane community association, which in December 2010 had been granted a 50-year concession to build and operate an ecotourist lodge in the Maputo Special Reserve. The Reserve is part of the Lubombo Transfrontier and Resource Area and also lies in the Maputaland Centre of Endemism, an area of approximately 20 000 km² that is internationally recognised for its conservation value owing to its high numbers of endemic plant and bird species.

Upon completing the agreement between the communities and the government in December, Mr Fernando Sumbana, Mozambique's Minister of Tourism, said, 'The Government policy has been to involve the local communities in the management of natural resources and to encourage their engagement in the economic opportunities created in pro-



tected areas. This pilot partnership model with the communities is a means to support poverty alleviation and promote the sustainable use of natural resources.'

Of the agreement between Ahi Zamani Chemucane and Bell Foundation, Peace Parks Foundation CEO, Werner Myburgh said: 'Communities stand at the core of TFCA development, which is why their participation is ensured by way of the TFCAs' integrated development plans. In partnership with the Mozambique government, the Foundation has been involved with the Matutuine communities since 2005 and is very pleased with the outcome for the Ahi Zamani Chemucane. We'd like to

thank African Safari Lodge Foundation for their assistance in bringing about this very positive result for the communities.'

BACKGROUND

In 2005, the Mozambique government had requested Peace Parks Foundation to assist it with its community development strategy in the Matutuine District, with the technical and professional training of the community members as one of the goals. Peace Parks Foundation appointed a community development technical adviser to implement the strategy, which aims to bring about the sustainable economic development of

and benefit-sharing by communities living in and around Maputo Special Reserve through a consultative and participatory process that will also develop nature-based tourism and conservation enterprises.

As part of this strategy, Peace Parks Foundation assisted the communities with the creation of a Community Legal Entity, called Ahi Zameni Chemucane (AZC) and requested the community development technical adviser to act as the AZC representative and bid officer during the tender process for the ecotourist lodge development.

At the end of the tender process, Bell Foundation was identified as the preferred bidder for the Chemucane concession. Peace Parks Foundation then requested African Safari Lodge Foundation to assist the community in their negotiations with

Bell Foundation. These were completed successfully and a partnership agreement between AZC and Bell Foundation was signed on 25 March 2011.

The partnership agreement to develop an ecotourist lodge made the release of the \$500 000 World Bank contribution possible. In addition, the African Safari Lodge Foundation made a further \$600 000 (almost R4 million) available as an interest free loan. All of which has enabled the Ahi Zameni Chemucane to obtain a 40% share in the joint venture.

The lodge has an estimated investment value of \$3 million and will create about 50 direct jobs and bring other tangible benefits to the communities. The lodge will have a minimal ecological footprint, with the remainder of 2011 dedicated to planning, an environmental im-

pact assessment and establishing a joint venture company. Once completed, construction will begin.

For more information kindly contact:

Dr Francisco Augusto Pariela
 Director Nacional : Ministry of Tourism
 Tel : +258 21 303 633
 Mobile : +258 82 749 3500
 Email : pariela@hotmail.com

Dr Bartolomeu Soto
 Director: Unidade de Coordenação das Áreas de Conservação Transfronteira
 Tel: +258 (21) 302 362/303 616
 Mobile: +258 (82) 302 9300
 Email: bsoto@tvcabo.co.mz

Irma Engelbrecht
 Communications Manager :
 Peace Parks Foundation
 Tel : +27 (0)21 887 6188
 Email : iengelbrecht@ppf.org.za

