



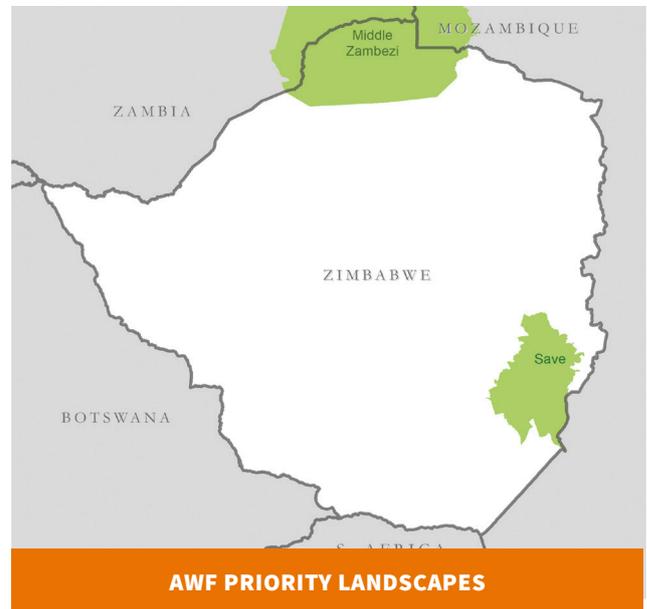
# ZIMBABWE COUNTRY STRATEGY

## *Executive Summary*

Zimbabwe is renowned for its diverse wildlife, including Africa's second-largest elephant population. It relies heavily on natural resources for economic development and human well-being. But the quest for growth exerts enormous pressure on Zimbabwe's natural heritage, leading to degraded land and biodiversity loss. While Zimbabwe must harness nature to build diversified and resilient livelihoods, it must balance development agendas with conservation priorities to sustain benefits across multiple generations.

The AWF Zimbabwe Country Strategy guides our efforts to promote sustainable development underpinned by sound management and use of natural resources. Our conservation approach is people-centric and recognizes conservation can be a medium for attaining sustainable livelihoods and improved standards of living for current and future generations.

**AWF ENVISIONS RESILIENT AND SELF-SUSTAINING WILDLIFE POPULATIONS AND HABITATS IN ZIMBABWE THAT ARE ECOLOGICALLY, ECONOMICALLY, AND SOCIALLY VIABLE, AND THAT SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF COMMUNITIES LIVING IN AND AROUND WILDLIFE AREAS, SUPPORTED BY THE COUNTRY'S LEADERS.**



We prioritize all of our work against 10-year targets and three overarching goals:

- Zimbabwe leaders shape and drive development that is underpinned by thriving wildlife and their habitats
- Zimbabwe's ecosystems and the services they provide are conserved, protected, and restored to improve resilience and deliver sustainable development
- Zimbabwe's wildlife is conserved in situ to reduce poaching and trafficking as major causes of decline of key wildlife species

In Zimbabwe, AWF delivers on these goals through a combination of country-level engagement with government leaders, businesses, civil society organizations, and youth and women's groups, as well as through the implementation of field-level programs in landscapes.

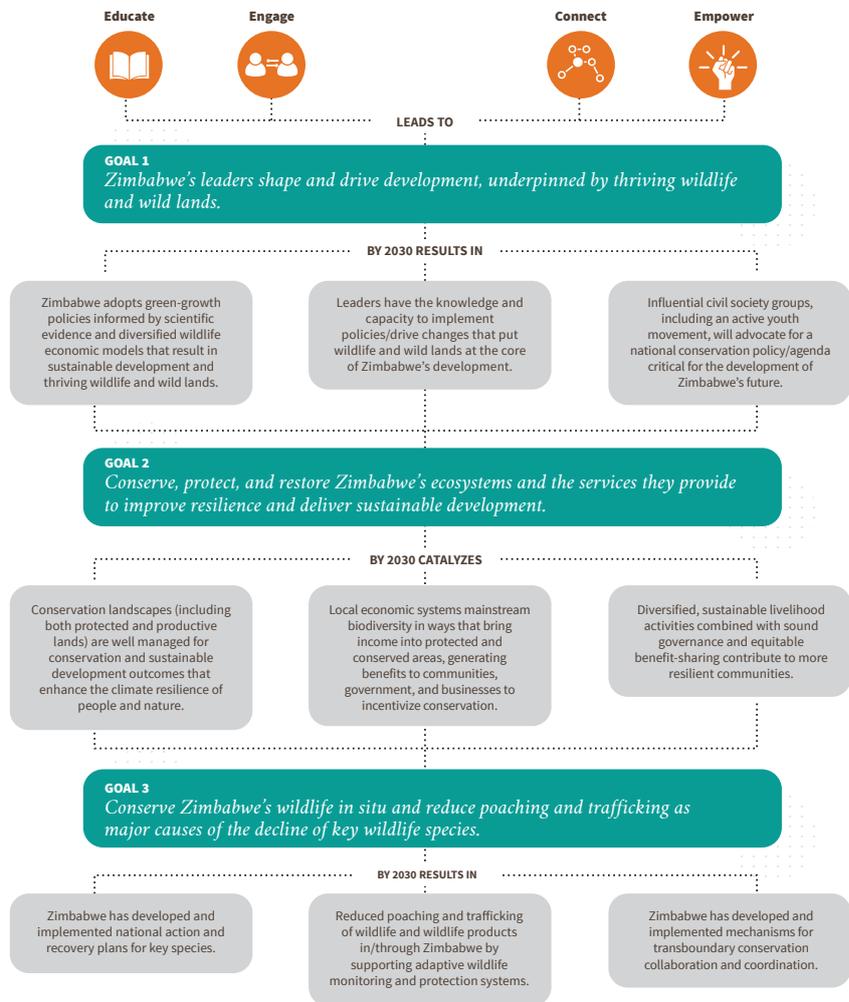
## MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

AWF's comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system tracks key performance indicators linked to our three organizational goals. The process, which includes annual and 10-year targets, helps us to demonstrate whether we are on track to meet the goals, identify areas of improvement, and replicate successful strategies at scale. Importantly, it allows us to be responsible partners and ensure we are delivering on our commitments.

## OUR WORK

AWF began operations in Zimbabwe in 2011 to support the government in managing wildlife and wildlife habitats. Currently, we operate in the Middle Zambezi Valley.

- Anti-poaching work in Mid-Zambezi:** AWF works with the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority and other key partners to strengthen the capacity and management of rangers throughout the landscape. We built a rapid-response anti-poaching unit, trained rangers in advanced ecological monitoring and supplied them with leading-edge tracking technology, and installed a full-time anti-poaching specialist in Mana Pools National Park. We have equipped the wildlife authority with an upgraded digital radio system, which not only provides secure and encrypted radio communications but also facilitates communication between the rangers in Mana Pools and their colleagues at the anti-poaching base.
- Improved curing practices:** Tobacco production is a critical industry in Zimbabwe. But tobacco curing can use a lot of wood and lead to significant deforestation; in Hurungwe, one of the main tobacco-producing districts, curing practices are a significant threat to wildlife habitats. AWF has helped Hurungwe farmers construct new or convert existing tobacco barns to be energy efficient. The improved barns,



known as "rocket barns," have small cavities that better channel heat and can contain an intense burn with very little wood—even twigs suffice. The rocket barns in Hurungwe District villages have been a real success because they cure high-quality tobacco and reduce the time and effort needed to gather fuelwood.

- Expansion plans:** AWF has supported efforts to map out a larger transboundary area, with plans underway to declare the Mana Pools and Lower Zambezi national parks a 41,543-km<sup>2</sup> transfrontier park. UNESCO has said that the creation of such a reserve would "strengthen

the management of the entire area." Although COVID-19 delayed the establishment of the area, the plans are extant and could be a model for collaborative management ensuring ecosystem resilience.



*The African Wildlife Foundation's mission is to ensure  
wildlife and wild lands thrive in modern Africa.*

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