

Africa Protected Area Directors Overview



Introduction

The Africa Protected Areas Directors (APAD) platform is a network open to the representatives of national authorities of Protected and Conserved Areas (PCAs) operating throughout Africa.

The APAD Platform Aims To:

- ▶ Develop a common agenda for Africa's protected areas.
- ▶ Facilitate collaboration and collective responsibility among members.
- ▶ Foster information sharing.

Background

The Africa Protected Areas Directors (APAD) platform was formed with the support of the African Wildlife Foundation in 2020 in response to the unprecedented disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to the management and operations of Africa's Protected and Conserved Areas. It further articulated aligned priorities and needs of Africa's Protected Area Directors at the first APAD Nairobi meeting in 2021, where they signed onto the Nairobi Declaration followed by the inaugural Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) in Kigali, Rwanda, in 2022, which resulted in the Kigali Call to Action.

Objectives

APAD is underpinned by an Africa-led agenda for protected and conserved areas as the backbone of the continent's natural infrastructure.

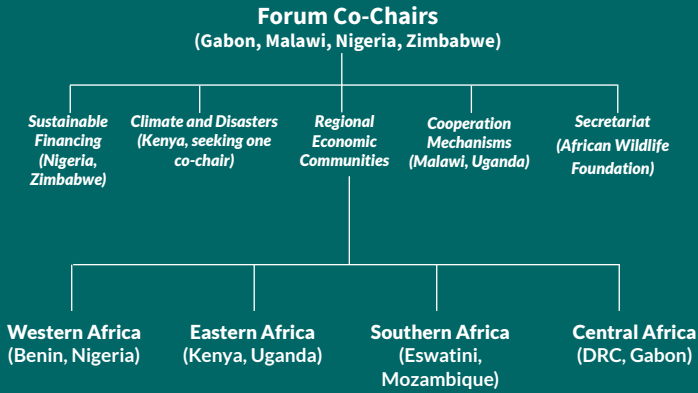
Three thematic objectives cut across APAD's work:

- ▶ To ensure sustainable financing for Africa's protected and conserved areas
- ▶ To strengthen the resilience and emergency preparedness of Africa's protected and conserved areas to climate change impacts, disasters, and pandemics
- ▶ To establish cooperation mechanisms among APADs and their networks

Structure and Leadership

APAD is open to African state leadership of protected and conserved area authorities, e.g. dedicated ministries or departments that manage these areas, and invites key leaders within these bodies to join the forum as representatives of their country's positions and priorities.

APAD LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE



What Makes APAD Unique

APAD is a vital platform for shaping African leadership in conservation. As a forum for Africa's management of PCAs, it defines and shapes Africa's conservation agenda, influencing regional African and global networks and institutions.

APAD is building its capacity to:

- ▶ Mobilize African leaders' efforts to conserve and restore wildlife and wild lands by shaping policy and its implementation, as well as economic, political, and social agendas across African countries.
- ▶ Mobilize financial and other resources from development partners and institutions globally.
- ▶ Secure Africa's biodiversity and ecosystems in PCAs and the services they provide to communities in and around them.
- ▶ Help Africa's PCAs lead and strengthen the conservation of Africa's wildlife in situ.

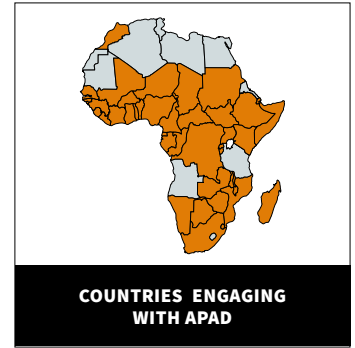
The Nairobi Conference and Declaration

In late 2021, APAD held its landmark Nairobi Conference, which gave rise to the Nairobi Declaration of Africa Protected Area Directors. This is a vision for collaboratively strengthening Africa's networks of protected and conserved areas as foundational to the development aspirations set out in Agenda 2063.

APAD members have a shared ambition to establish sustainable mechanisms in finance, disaster risk reduction, and cooperation to support Africa's protected and conserved areas.

Building Momentum

In June 2023, with funding from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), APAD set out to improve cooperation mechanisms, promote collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and



Local Communities and Youth as co-implementers of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework goals and targets, and strengthen and recognize the role of Protected and Conserved Areas in Africa's realization of its global conservation commitments.

In March 2024, APAD held its Second Conference in Zimbabwe with the overall objective to agree on implementable and committed-to actions that contribute to the achievement of the Framework targets, enhance PCAs governance and management effectiveness, contribute to Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) and IPLCs priorities.

The Second APAD Conference concluded with the following:

- ▶ APADs and stakeholders have the will and power needed to advance conservation.
- ▶ Synergies are required to address transboundary conservation challenges.
- ▶ More spaces must be created for communities to represent their voices in conservation.
- ▶ More innovative financing mechanisms for conservation must be established.
- ▶ It is essential that PAs are relevant to rural development.
- ▶ Partnerships and collaboration are required to ensure the improvement of rural communities.

APAD continues prioritizing buy-in throughout Africa, including at the eighteenth African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) in 2023, where APAD and A-PACT were endorsed as APAC outcomes. To date, the secretariat is actively engaging with 40 countries across Africa in various regional and global conventions that advance the Kigali Call to Action and the African Union Agenda 2063.