

# LION RECOVERY FUND

FEBRUARY 2023  
PROGRESS REPORT







# PROMOTING COEXISTENCE BETWEEN LIONS AND PEOPLE

2023 promises to be the LRF's busiest year yet. There is a growing sense of urgency associated with our work as an increase in agricultural development and expanding settlements across Africa threatens to overtake the wild landscapes that lions and other wildlife need to survive and puts people and wildlife into contact more frequently. With your support, the LRF is investing in projects aimed at protecting the integrity of wild areas and minimizing detrimental human impacts on lions and their landscapes.

While coexistence between people and wildlife is absolutely possible, rapid demographic changes do create some challenges for wildlife, as outlined in this [article](#). Many countries, especially in southern and East Africa, have set aside above average percentages of their land for conservation. However, in the face of rapid growth and demand for land, it's likely there will be political pressure to use that land for agriculture and human

settlements rather than for wildlife. This means we need to find ways to make protected areas work for local people and economies, while continuing to effectively protect biodiversity. There is a rapidly closing window of opportunity to achieve this.

A critical first step is to improve the conservation management of under-managed protected areas so that natural assets, such as lions, are not lost. The next steps include developing ways to involve local people in the governance and management of conservation areas, ensuring that they benefit directly from conservation, and ensuring that they bear as few costs—both financially and through human-wildlife conflict—as possible. Many of the LRF's investments revolve around improving the management of neglected protected areas and promoting coexistence between lions and the people who live in and around these areas. You will learn more about these investments, which are only possible thanks to your generous support, in this latest LRF Progress Report.



# THE LRF HAS INVESTED IN 45% OF LION RANGE.



23  
COUNTRIES



\$30.6M  
GRANTED

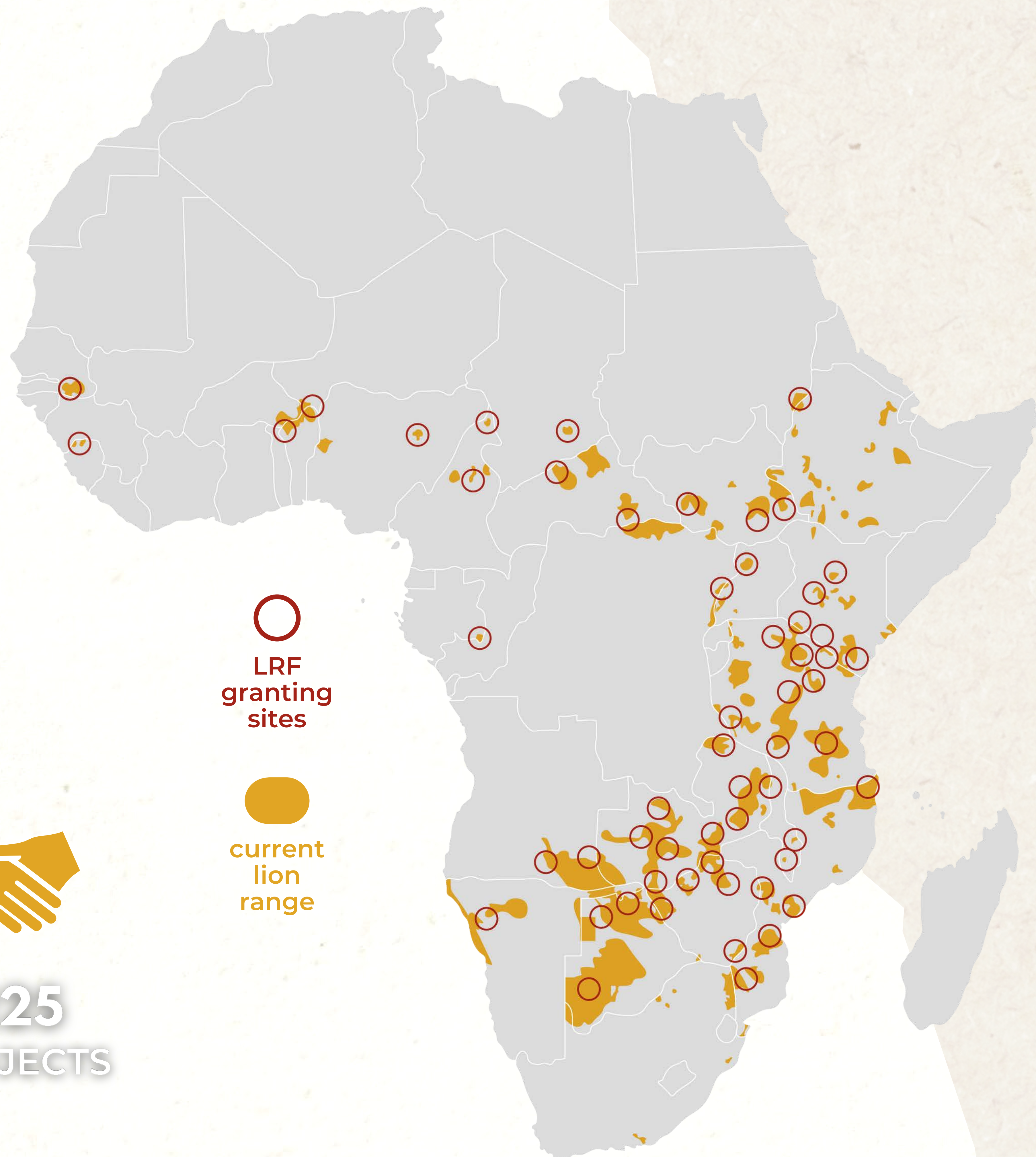
*Since 2017*



225  
PROJECTS

○  
LRF  
granting  
sites

●  
current  
lion  
range







# INVESTING IN EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS

If we are to tackle the large, complicated issues that threaten lions and other wildlife, we need to explore new approaches. This is why the LRF frequently invests in conservation 'start-ups' as long as their idea is inspired, the grantee is credible, and the need in relation to lion conservation is clear. A recent example of such a worthwhile investment was with the Mozambique Wildlife Alliance (MWA). In 2020, increased pressure on wildlife in Mozambique, particularly resulting from illegal wildlife trade, spurred the need for additional support to the efforts of the country's wildlife authority. MWA was established to provide conservation services to Mozambique's under-resourced wildlife authorities, the National Administration of Conservation Areas (ANAC). The LRF was one of

**LION RECOVERY  
FUND GRANTEES  
HAVE SAVED AND  
TREATED 68  
LIONS CAUGHT IN  
POACHING  
SNARES.**

the first major investors in MWA, offering them seed money to begin their crucial work. This kick-starter grant helped them leverage over \$1 million in funding from other sources and hit the ground running. Since then, the LRF has provided additional grants, investing in MWA's ongoing work to protect Mozambique's wildlife.

The services that MWA provides address major issues wildlife are facing, including tackling human-wildlife conflict, translocating wildlife, and treating wounded animals. In addition, MWA is also supporting ANAC in tackling the illegal wildlife trade, including the illegal trade of bushmeat and lion body parts, which are both major threats to Mozambique's lions. MWA's impact has been very pronounced—since the first LRF grant in 2020, MWA has saved 14 lions from poaching snares, in addition to 60 elephants, 10 hyenas, 15 African wild dogs, five leopards, and five cheetahs. They have also translocated 21 lions away from situations where they would have been killed by local farmers to safer locations where they can live and breed in peace.





Over the past two years, MWA has contributed to the seizure of over 4,400 lbs of bushmeat, 880 lbs of lion bones, and eight lion skins from illegal networks, as well as the arrest of 18 bushmeat poachers and nine traffickers directly implicated in the illegal killing of lions and trade of their body parts. In addition to their direct conservation impact, MWA is also playing a key role in building capacity among emerging Mozambican conservationists. For example, they have trained five Mozambican veterinarians, two criminal lawyers, four human-wildlife conflict

technicians, two case analysts, and four investigators, as well as over 250 district and community members on human-wildlife conflict management and mitigation. Developing African conservation leadership is critical for success going forward and will make a big difference in terms of the resonance of conservation messaging among politicians and local communities.

Since our initial investment in MWA, the LRF has continued to grant approximately \$600,000 to them, which has had a major impact on their ability to deliver positive conservation outcomes for lions and other wildlife in Mozambique.

*Top: Collaring a lion.  
Left: Treatment of a lion whose front paw was lost in a gin trap.  
Right: Translocation of a lion implicated in killing livestock.  
(c) Mozambique Wildlife Alliance*



# GRANTEES SUPPORTED SINCE SEPTEMBER 2022

African Parks

African People & Wildlife

Associação NATURA, Moçambique

Conservation Travel Foundation

Desert Lion Conservation Trust

Frankfurt Zoological Society

Honeyguide Foundation

Integrated Rural Development and Nature  
Conservation (IRDNC)

IUCN Cat Specialist Group

KopeLion

Kwando Carnivore Project

Lion Landscapes

Mozambique Wildlife Alliance

Namibian Lion Trust

Panthera

Tourism Supporting Conservation

The EAGLE Network

WildCru

Victoria Falls Wildlife Anti-Poaching Unit

Volcanoes Safaris Partnership Trust





# LONG TERM INVESTMENTS, GREATER IMPACT

*Top: Lion hunting a Kordofan giraffe in Zakouma National Park, Chad.  
Bottom: Ngungu Lemlela, a ranger from the anti-poaching unit in Makame Wildlife Management Area, northern Tanzania.  
(c) Peter Lindsey*



## Improving Lion Habitat Honeyguide Tanzania

Honeyguide's mission is to strengthen the governance and management of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) with communities in Tanzania. WMAs are arguably the most neglected type of protected area in Tanzania, yet they are of major ecological significance. With LRF support, Honeyguide has spent the past 4-5 years helping improve the management of the Makame WMA in northern Tanzania. Now, Honeyguide seeks to support the governance and management of WMAs in southern Tanzania, and the LRF has issued a grant to support these efforts over two years. This work is critical in ensuring habitat retention and connectivity in lands that are subject to massive pressure from human encroachment and habitat conversion.



## THE LRF IS PROUD TO HAVE SUPPORTED 16,073 ANTI-POACHING PATROLS ACROSS CRITICAL LION HABITAT IN AFRICA.

### Monitoring Lions and Reducing Conflict African Parks Zakouma ecosystem, Chad

Zakouma National Park lies at the heart of the Zakouma ecosystem and is an incredible place with significant, growing populations of wildlife. The lion population here is around 150 individuals, which is

smaller than expected with this level of prey availability. The LRF has supported the work of African Parks to monitor these lions to help understand what factors constrain the population. The key limiting factor appears to be the dispersal of lions during the wet season, when the park is inundated with water and the lions are persecuted by livestock farmers. The LRF has also supported wildlife surveys to plan expansion of the area under African Parks' management, which now encompasses over 10,000 sq miles. The latest LRF grant supported the deployment of horseback anti-poaching units into the wider area to foster ecological recovery and expand lion monitoring. The next step will be to tackle human-lion conflict in the areas around Zakouma National Park to prevent lion mortality during the wet season.





Lion Landscapes and TANAPA carnivore monitoring work, Nyerere National Park, Tanzania. (c) Peter Lindsey

### Reducing Threats to Lions Frankfurt Zoological Society/Lion Landscapes Selous-Nyerere ecosystem, Tanzania

The Selous Game Reserve and Nyerere National Park form a massive wilderness area of over 19,000 sq miles. This area represents one of Africa's most important strongholds for lion conservation. This once pristine wilderness is under growing pressure from bushmeat poaching, and influxes of pastoralists and habitat conversion in the lands bordering the protected areas. In addition, the areas around this wilderness area are suffering very rapid deforestation due to an influx of pastoralists, adding pressure to wildlife. The LRF issued a significant grant to Lion Landscapes to

support a combination of carnivore monitoring in this important protected area and community engagement on the periphery. This work will strengthen management of the area, allow for detection of conservation challenges, and work with communities to help tackle threats to lions. The LRF also funded Frankfurt Zoological Society's efforts to support authorities' management of the protected areas.

### Tackling Human-Lion Conflict Kwando Carnivore Project Namibia

Kwando Carnivore Project is tackling human-lion conflict in the Zambezi region of Namibia. The retaliatory killing of lions was once a major cause of concern in this

area and neighboring northern Botswana. The LRF has been supporting Kwando Carnivore Project's work, which has resulted in a 90% reduction in lion attacks on livestock. In 2022, they achieved zero retaliatory killings of lions for the first time in a decade, and the LRF issued a two-year extension grant to continue this important work. In addition, the LRF issued them further funds to extend their work into Khaudum National Park and Nyae Nyae Conservancy, where they plan on hiring local San people as Lion Rangers to tackle human-lion conflict and reduce retaliatory killing of lions. This will simultaneously help harness the San people's remarkable bush skills and help preserve their traditional way of life.

### Protecting Desert Lions Collaborative Namibian lion conservation effort Namibia

For some time, the LRF has supported the efforts of Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) and Desert

Lion Conservation (DLC) to protect the unique desert lions of Namibia's northwest region. There are several organizations working on the conservation of desert lions, but they have not always been able to collaborate effectively. Over a series of discussions, the LRF indicated that if these organizations could come together for such a collaborative project, we would elevate our investment there. This collaboration happened in 2022, so the LRF issued a grant across five different organizations to work with local communities to reduce human-lion conflict—IRDNC, DLC, Tourism Supporting Conservation, Namibian Lion Trust, and Conservation Travel Foundation. This work will hopefully ensure that the desert lions can thrive in the parks and community conservancies in Damaraland, and coexist peacefully with local communities. These lions are key drivers of the tourism industry in the area, so these conservation efforts should help boost local economies and employment.



Desert lions taking a nap. (c) Peter Lindsey



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

This year promises to be highly productive for the LRF. We have a big job ahead of us to raise the funds needed to support the amazing conservationists that form the LRF family of grantees. Our goal is to raise at least \$7 million in 2023 for grants that will make lasting impacts for Africa's lions. We have developed an incredible network of supporters and it is their generosity that gives us hope that we can reach this ambitious target.

Through our granting we take great care to ensure that every cent is well spent. We undertake extensive due diligence and fund only the most effective conservation groups. The LRF's Director makes field visits to check on prospective and current grantees as often as possible. Our 100% model ensures that all of the funds raised are channeled to the field, and it is this unique brand of flexible and efficient funding that makes the LRF so impactful. All of these achievements are only possible with the kind support of our donors—thank you for helping us protect the future of Africa's lions.



Lion  
Recovery  
Fund

[LIONRECOVERYFUND.ORG](https://lionrecoveryfund.org)

