

The Livingstone biWeekly

26 July 2017

Dear All

My header is of Lake Kariba at Siansowa. I'll show you a before-and-after later. I have been working on a dongle for the past two weeks since the last biWeekly, so this may be short and nasty. I will try to catch up, but it may not happen.

LIVINGSTONE

Power Cut

Last week we had a power cut on a Sunday. I wasn't surprised except that I had had no notification. Normally ZESCO will send a text message if they intend to do maintenance. It wasn't until I read the news a few days later that I was informed that the power cut had been caused by a baboon who had fiddled with a mains transformer and caused the outage. Although the baboon received quite a shock from his interference, he survived, but the whole of Livingstone was without power for 4 hours.

ZAMBIA

Lake Kariba

Here are a couple of photos of the lake - December 2016 and July 2017. As you can see the water level has increased nicely after the past rainy season. Let's hope that we are careful with this precious commodity this year and that our power shedding will not continue this year. ... *As I wrote this, we had a power cut ...*



Trip to School Club

Last week I drove to Siansowa to do a bit of work with School Club Zambia. I was visiting Kariba South Primary School and Chisybulungu Primary School. ... and, of course, my son and his new wife, Lois. ...

Siansowa is about 5 hours from Livingstone, turning right at Batoka, travelling through the Escarpment to Lake Kariba. It is rather remote. School Club Zambia has taken on five schools in the area and is helping them to raise funds and improve the lives of the children.

At Kariba South, School Club has set up the Young Tailors Club and the Young Farmers Club. They have built new toilet blocks, an internet/library building and a chicken run for layers. A playground for pre-primary children is almost finished.



They have also built a store room for the food which is delivered to feed the children. (Children in some schools are given a meal in the middle of the day.)

Chisybulungu has new toilets, a vegetable garden, some layer chickens and a carpentry workshop. The carpentry workshop is yet to get going because it needs electricity and ZESCO has given too high a price for its installation, so School Club is going to raise the funds to buy a solar set-up. This will cost about US\$10,000 but it is hoped, within the year, funds can be found.



My first stop was Chisybulungu where I took some 'pretty' plants so that we can green-up their environment (at the moment it has a desert appearance). It will be a bit of a job because the soil there is like concrete. The trees I planted along with Baraka volunteers last year are mostly OK, with the Musikili trees doing best. Those which have died (termites) will be replaced later with more Musikili trees. The children need shade. While there I bought some tomatoes from their garden. The head teacher told me that the money from the garden is used to buy chalk ... These schools have little or no funding from government ...

After Chisybulungu I went to Kariba South to deliver all the materials for making shopping bags and to show the ladies how to make them. The shopping bags will be ready in a couple of weeks, I hope. I have got orders for about 50 bags so far. Protea, Waterfront, Sussi & Chuma and Tongabezi have all ordered. My hope is that all tour operators will take up the challenge of not taking the free plastic bags from the supermarkets when they go shopping. This is a win-win story - we reduce our reliance on plastic bags, thereby saving our environment, and Kariba South gets much-needed funds. If you would like some, send me an email.

Northern Circuit

Of course, I had my wrists slapped after my article in the last edition of the biWeekly about the Northern Circuit. As I did mention, I don't know the area well so it was not a surprise when the following day after sending out the newsletter, I got a swift response to say I was wrong ...

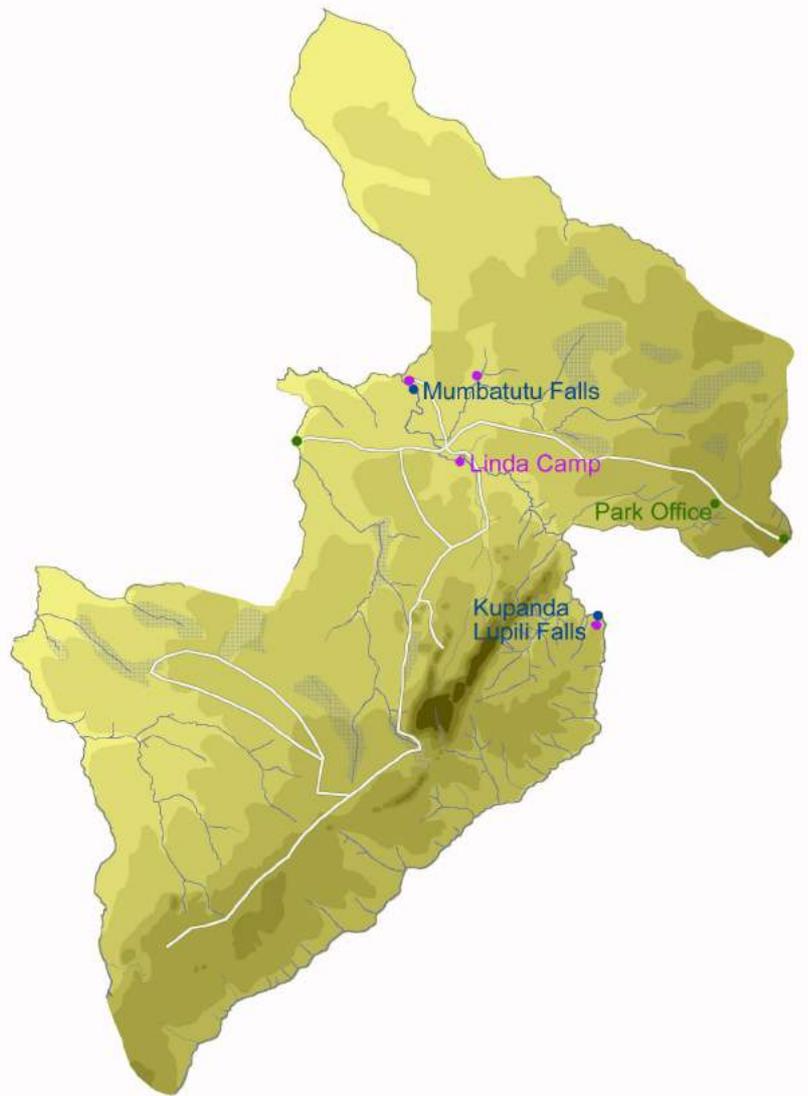
So, here to make amends is a map of Lavushi Manda:

Linda Camp is where the managers stay and payments are made. There are campsites at Mumbatutu Falls and Kupanda Lupila Falls.

Lavushi Manda is reached from the Serenje-Mpika Road. Kasanka Trust is assisting the Department of National Parks. Although the wildlife is a bit sparse and skittish, the scenery is stunning, with hills and waterfalls. The park has two waterfalls – Mumbatutu and Kapanda Lupili. Both of the falls feature in the Guide to Little Known Waterfalls of Zambia. I feel sure, in time, the wildlife will come back and flourish with the park's new-found protection. In the meantime, visitors can enjoy the wilderness value of the park along with the scenery.

From Kasanka Trust: *Lavushi has 2 campsites available at the moment - Kapandulapili campsite and Mumbatuta campsite. We are excited about opening Mumbatuta Camp later this year which offers 4 ensuite safari tents and a wonderful stay on the river with great birding, fantastic fishing and beautiful waterfalls.*

Latest Lavushi guest feedback: "We had a lovely stay by the waterfall at Mumbatuta campsite. Being entertained by a friendly spotted necked otter swimming up and down the rapids, sighting a Palmnut Vulture and bathing under waterfalls and was the perfect way to spend the weekend!"



Kasanka National Park

I did draw a map of Kasanka but got it wrong ... I will work on it and add it to another newsletter ... In the meantime, from **Kasanka Trust Zambia**:

Kasanka National Park has 2 lodges: Wasa Lodge which is the heart of Kasanka and offers a more hosted stay to guests. Wasa is also the prime location to enjoy the bat migration from because of its close proximity to the bat forest and hides. Luwombwa Lodge which is the best venue to enjoy birding from for visitors. More suited to self drive guests, it is situated on the Luwombwa river which boasts amazing birding and even some fishing. Kasanka also has 5 campsites.

From Facebook:

Shoebill encounter available from Kasanka! With a nesting site confirmed just 2 hours from Kasanka, this is your chance to track down this magnificent bird.



Nuclear Power Planned

Southern African Times

Overwhelmed by the need to bolster energy in the Southern African and continent's second leading copper producer, Zambia has inked a deal with Russia to oversee the pilot phase of the construction of a Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology in the country, among other projects.

During a recent bilateral meeting held in Russia during the AtomExpo, the two countries signed four agreements. Russia, renowned for its nuclear capacity, will undertake feasibility studies of the nuclear power plant to be built in Zambia. ...

G: I really hope that government gets some approval from the public for nuclear power. Although, I don't know much about it, I know that it can be dangerous.

In 1986, under the Soviet Union, there was a major 'accident' at Chernobyl nuclear plant:

From Wikipedia

... The Chernobyl accident dominates the energy accidents sub-category, of most disastrous nuclear power plant accident in history, both in terms of cost and casualties. It is one of only two nuclear energy accidents classified as a level 7 event (the maximum classification) on the International Nuclear Event Scale, the other being the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in Japan in 2011. The struggle to safeguard against scenarios which were, at many times falsely, perceived as having the potential for greater catastrophe and the later decontamination efforts of the surroundings, ultimately involved over 500,000 workers and cost an estimated 18 billion rubles. During the accident, blast effects caused 2 deaths within the facility and later 29 firemen and employees died in the days-to-months afterward from acute radiation syndrome, with the potential for long-term cancers still being investigated. ...



Zambian Carnivore Programme

A subadult male lion from the Kafue's Papyrus pride was snared around the waist this week in Busanga, but teams from ZCP and DNPW and Dr. Kambwiri Banda were able to find, desnare and treat him successfully! Thanks to Mukambi Lodge for greatly assisting the operation! Photos by Jonah Gula.



After nursing outside, Hyena 59 returns the young cubs comprising her latest litter to their den in Liuwa Plain. One of many individuals studied for over 7 years as part of collaborative carnivore conservation efforts in Liuwa, Hyena 59 and her family are part of the Carnivore Comeback in this key transboundary ecosystem. Photo by Shadrach Mwaba.



Another snared lion rescue--this time in the Luangwa's Lower Lupande Game Management Area. Teams from CSL, DNPW and ZCP were able to quickly respond and successfully treat this young male. Dr. Sichande was also able to use the opportunity to further mentor aspiring wildlife vets Mercy and Johanne, who are gaining practical field experience through our Wildlife Vet Training Programme. Photos by Ami Desai.

Livingstone's Adventure



The Zambean Coffee Co.

We are pleased to announce a very exciting fundraising event for September - "For the Love of the Zambezi". The Zambean Coffee Co. meets the Zambezi by hosting a special art exhibition to promote and raise proceeds for both local artists and conservation in Zambia. It will be a night under the stars with welcome drinks, canapés and a cash bar to keep the night going. Artwork will be on display and up for auction with proceeds from all artwork going to CLZ to help protect our projects in the Lower Zambezi, through Anti-poaching activities, Community Support & Environmental Education.



Conservation South Luangwa

What it takes to dart a snared giraffe on foot — with Mwamba Sichande and Johnathan Merkle. Usually about 12 experienced scouts, 2 land cruisers, an experienced vet, ropes, blindfolds, good cutters, strong people. Big thanks to Yobe from RPS for reporting this snared giraffe yesterday and ZCP's Johnathan Merkle for staying with it and helping. Darting giraffe always makes me nervous and probably for good reason, they are not easy but with about 14 under our belt now, the team has good experience under the watchful eye of Dr. Sichande (CSL / ZCP Vet).



GRI - Elephant Orphanage Project

Here is near-release orphan, Chamilandu, browsing along the river bank. She's now 11 and has been in the care of the Elephant Orphanage Project for almost 10 years. She is now at the release stage of the rehabilitation process, meaning she can choose to spend time exploring her wild surroundings, away from the rest of the herd. She chooses to do this most days, accompanied by 9 year old Batoka. After her excursions, she always comes back to visit the rest of the herd and spend time with those she has formed strong bonds with.



Two men have been sentenced to nine years in jail each for poisoning elephants in Zimbabwe

Eyewitness News

The sentences were imposed by a magistrate in Hwange in the west of the country.

Trevor Lane from conservation group The Bhejane Trust says a third suspect is believed to have escaped to Bulawayo, but he's confident he'll be caught too.

The two poachers were arrested earlier this month in Dete, western Zimbabwe, after National Parks investigators posed as ivory buyers. They admitted to killing five elephants in June on the boundary of Hwange National Park, using oranges injected with cyanide. ...

More Park Rangers

Eyewitness New

Zimbabwe has deployed 150 parks rangers and police officers to Hwange National Park in the wake of the latest cyanide poisoning incident.

Two elephants were found poisoned inside the park this week.

A source in Hwange says the two elephant carcasses were found by rangers who were fighting a fire deep in the park on Monday. A parks spokesperson told state radio that two elephants were found dead at a salt lick that's believed to have been poisoned with cyanide. ...

Lion shot by hunter causes a stir

Telegraph

A trophy hunter has shot dead one of Cecil the lion's cubs in Zimbabwe, just two years after the massively popular lion of Hwange National Park was himself killed. Six-year-old Xanda was killed just outside the park, a short distance from where an American dentist had shot dead Cecil in 2015, The Telegraph reported on Thursday.

Xanda, the pride male of a group, was shot on July 7. Researchers found out about his death with the help of an electronic collar he was fitted with to monitor his movements. Andrew Loveridge from Oxford University's Department of Zoology had fitted Xanda with the collar in October 2016.

"It was monitored almost daily, and we were aware that Xanda and his pride was spending a lot of time out of the park in the last six months, but there is not much we can do about that," he told The Telegraph. "Xanda was one of these gorgeous Kalahari lions, with a big mane, big body, beautiful condition – a very, very lovely animal," The Guardian reported Loveridge as saying. ...

G: Hunting in Africa is part of the tourism industry in many countries. It provides an income for some communities. I do, however, think that shooting a collared animal is not acceptable. If we are ever to save our wildlife populations we have to do research. Surely governments can make a law that these animals may not be shot.

THE LAKE HARVEST KARIBA FUN RUN

WHAT'S GOING ON?
A weekend of entertainment where all proceeds support the Kariba Animal Welfare Fund Trust (KAWFT), The Tony Waite Organization & Greenwood Park.
Date: 12-13 August 2017

ON THE CALENDAR
Sat 12th - Kids Fishing at Lake Harvest Ponds
Sun 13th - 21km, 10km & Kids Race
Sun 13th Evening - Entertainment by Gary Stanley
Movies under the stars for the Kids

ENTRY FEES
21km Half Marathon - \$20
10km Run/Walk - \$20
Kids Race - \$5

CONTACT
info@rtharare1.co.zw

SPONSORS: ROUND TABLE, CROSA, Drifter, PADENGA, TOYOTA ZIMBABWE, SWIFT, bonacqua water by design, Dendairy

Peace Parks Foundation

The first Impala arrived safely in Zinave from Sango yesterday.

This week saw the start of one of the largest wildlife translocation projects that Africa has ever seen, whereby 6 000 animals, donated by Mr Wilfried Pabst, owner of Sango Wildlife Conservancy in the Save Valley Conservancy in Zimbabwe, will find a new home in the 4 000 km² Zinave National Park in Mozambique. This mammoth project is a collaboration between the governments of Mozambique and Zimbabwe, as partners to the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA), of which Zinave is an important component. It is planned to restock the park with 7 500 animals over the next three years with animals coming from within other protected areas within Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe. For this year alone, the Zimbabwe government has committed 2 000 animals from Sango in the Save Valley Conservancy while a further 500 animals will be sourced from Gorongosa National Park, where sufficient numbers of wildlife have been built up through the partnership between the government of Mozambique and the Gorongosa Restoration Project.

Says Dr Bartolomeu Soto, Director-General of the National Administration for Conservation Areas: 'We are realising the dream that we started when our countries signed the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park Treaty in 2002. We are grateful to the government of Zimbabwe and the donors for their tremendous support for giving a critical protected area a second chance. In particular our thanks goes to Peace Parks Foundation as a long-standing partner and supporter of conservation and development in Mozambique.'

Over the next three years, hundreds of buffalo, eland, giraffe, impala, kudu, waterbuck, wildebeest, zebra and elephant will be brought into Zinave National Park in a project spearheaded by Peace Parks Foundation, which is also funding the translocation costs. The animals will first be released into a fenced 18 500 hectare sanctuary and later into the core development area of the park. ...



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Matusadona Anti Poaching Project

Yesterday, Sunday 23rd July, MAPP, together with ZPWMA and Bumi Hills Anti-poaching Unit conducted a joint operation on the lake and recovered a staggering 15km of illegal netting from in and around the Kings Camp area. This was our biggest haul of netting yet. Clearly some of the occupants of Kings camp fishing cooperative are not prepared to observe the strict conditions of their permits!!!. Well done to all involved in this operation.



BOTSWANA

Country Life

A \$30 tourism levy was introduced for entries into Botswana from 1 June 2017.
What you should know about the levy:

The Levy Background

The Ministry of Environment Natural Resources' Conservation and Tourism through the Botswana Tourism Organisation wishes to announce the introduction of an obligatory Tourism Development Levy (TDL)

Purpose of the Levy

The objective of the Levy is to raise funds for conservation and national tourism development in order to support the growth of the industry and broaden the tourism base, resultantly improving the lives of the people of Botswana.

Who is eligible to pay?

All visitors to Botswana in exception of residents and citizens of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states

Where is the levy collected?

The Levy is payable at all ports of entry including airports and border posts, starting 1st June 2017

How is the payment done?

Payments are done at the ports of entry through cash (US Dollars). After the payment, a unique receipt corresponding to the passport will be generated. The receipt should then be presented to Immigration Officials. The passport and the receipt will be stamped and handed back to the traveller. The receipt will valid for a 30 day period and can be used for multiple entry.

How much is the levy

Travellers to Botswana will pay USD30.00. (Roughly R390).

A \$30 tourism levy was introduced for entries into Botswana from 1 June 2017.

Hunters to target last remaining adult male lion in Namibian conservancy?

A suspicious trophy hunting advertisement has been placed online for a threatened Namibian desert lion. And it would appear that the target is the only known adult male lion in the Sesfontein Conservancy.

The advert has since been removed, but we secured screengrabs of the advert – featured below.

We have been informed that a large male lion in the Sesfontein Conservancy has been declared a ‘problem animal’, and a permit has been issued to a trophy hunter to kill him. Our sources advise us that there is only one known remaining adult male lion in the conservancy – XPL 81, or Kebbel.

Kebbel’s former coalition partner (XPL 87, photo below) disappeared a few years ago and has not been seen since (thought to have been hunted), and it is therefore unlikely (although not impossible) that XPL 87 is the subject of this problem animal permit.



We approached Izak Smit, co-founder of conservation association DeLHRA, and he had this feedback:

Izak Smit:

“Judging by the advertisement and based on feedback from our networks, this lion will be hunted in the Sesfontein Conservancy by Leopard Legend Hunting Safaris on a ‘problem animal permit’.

The advertisement wording – ‘an extremely rare lion trophy opportunity...’ and, ‘this lion population has adapted to the arid region of the North-west of Kaokoland and is very unique’, is of concern as it places value on the rarity and uniqueness of this lion.

“I attended a meeting with the Namibian Ministry of the Environment and Tourism (MET) during the past week, and took the opportunity to question a senior MET official about this hunt – specifically whether a specific lion had been earmarked and identified for this hunt. I also enquired as to whether ‘problem animal’ protocol (in terms of the National Policy on Human-Wildlife-Conflict Management plan) had been followed, specifically with regard to establishing of the identity of the specific lion responsible for livestock killings, as MET is required to do.

“The MET official in question expressed his dismay with the terminology used in the advertisement pertaining to how rare the lion is as he felt that this was inviting an outcry from animal rights activists. The use of this terminology, of course, is clearly aimed at whetting the appetite of the hunter and justifying the price tag of USD65 000, much higher than ‘ordinary lion’ price tags.

“During the subsequent meeting with MET, the sharing of the spoils and the benefits for the communities were discussed. Typically the community would get paid about USD2 500 for a lion trophy. A very senior community representative and conservationist also present at the meeting was shocked to learn this and the general feeling was that of disgust. Translated into Namibian dollars the community would get N\$32 500 and the hunting outfit N\$812 500 – a mere 3,8% of the trophy revenue generated.

“The question now arose in the discussion following this, that the target lion appears to be only adult male lion left in the conservancy – XPL 81, also known as Kebbel – a research subject, collared and monitored by the Desert Lion Project. Surely he is worth a whole lot more to the community alive than dead? This lion is a huge tourist attraction that contributes to filling lodge beds.

“Also, since he is the last productive adult male in the Hoanib, Okongue and Orowau areas, surely killing him would be detrimental to the surviving prides, given the already drastically skewed gender ratios that exist (Editor’s note: see Simon Espley’s thoughts on gender bias in the desert-adapted lion populations in this post). The Ganamub and Tomakas areas lost eight lions to human-wildlife conflict in June alone.

“I would question whether the identification of which lion is the ‘problem animal’ has been sufficiently proven – it seems convenient that the animal declared a ‘problem animal’ happens to be the only remaining potential trophy lion left in the area.

“DeLHRA would offer to collect funding and pay the N\$32 500 to the community to prevent the killing of this iconic male and support the vital tourism lodges in the area. We have no problem in principle with sustainable utilisation of any species, but this case seems totally unproductive and not in the community’s interest.”

Elephant Poaching On The Rise In Botswana

The Monitor

July is proving to be a bloody month for elephants poaching in Ngamiland area as 17 jumbos have reportedly been gunned down.

District wildlife coordinator, Timmy Blackbeard revealed in an interview that they have registered 11 cases of poaching in Nokaneng area adding that six were further discovered in the Ditshiping area.

He explained that poaching is growing in western Ngamiland in areas such as Gcwihaba Hills, adding that recently carcasses of poached animals were discovered in the area.

“Recent research predicts that about 600 tonnes of bush meat is smuggled out of this district monthly. I thought the research was over exaggerated but judging by the recent trends, 600 tonnes may be nothing,” Blackbeard said.

He explained that that are experiencing a shortage of resources to deal with the problem.

Blackbeard explained that poachers mostly target elephants, giraffes and buffalo. He said however from next year, they will start using aircraft to patrol the entire district. ...

Hydroelectric for Tanzania

The Guardian

TANZANIA

Plans to build a huge hydroelectric dam in the heart of one of Africa’s largest remaining wild areas have dismayed conservationists who fear that the plans will cause irreversible damage to the Selous game reserve in Tanzania.

After many years of delays and false starts, last week the president of Tanzania, John Magufuli, announced that he would be going ahead with the Stiegler’s Gorge dam on the Rufiji river. Magufuli, nicknamed “the Bulldozer”, was elected in 2015 in part on his record of successful road and infrastructure building. The dam will provide 2,100MW of electricity to a country that is currently extremely undersupplied: Tanzania, with a population of approximately 53m to the UK’s 65m, has just 1,400MW of installed grid capacity compared to the UK’s total grid capacity of 85,000MW.

The dam is planned for the heart of the Selous, a game reserve the size of Switzerland. The reserve is home to a huge variety of species including elephants, cheetahs, giraffes and crocodiles. The reserve is a world heritage site but was listed as “in danger” by Unesco a couple of years ago when there were catastrophic falls in animal numbers after heavy poaching.

“The Stiegler’s Gorge project has been a significant concern for many years now due to its potential negative impact on the world heritage site,” said the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s world heritage conservation officer, Remco van Merm. “This includes inundation of significant wildlife habitat, including that of the critically endangered black rhinoceros, as well as a heightened risk of poaching and other illegal activities due to increased access to the area.



“Furthermore, the dam would likely have significant negative impacts on downstream land uses, commercial fishing and agricultural industries, and the livelihoods of local communities.”

Thabit Jacob , a Tanzanian specialist in energy and the environment, says: “The dam will cure the country’s energy deficit and more than double the grid’s current capacity. However, with current pressure to move away from fossil fuels, hydro dams are being framed as the ‘clean alternative’ while in reality they are not. It’s vital that robust environmental measures be put in place to protect the local ecology and avoid the danger of resettling local populations before the project goes ahead.”

The world heritage committee will meet in July to review the status of all their sites. For the last few years, while the dam project has been uncertain, they have frequently asked the Tanzanian government to abandon the project, believing that it could cause irreversible damage to the area. They say the construction of large dams on a site is not compatible with world heritage status.



'Mountain of God' Volcano Preparing to Erupt

National Geographic

An active volcano in northeastern Tanzania known to the Maasai as the "Mountain of God" has been quietly rumbling—and it is showing signs that an eruption is imminent.

Known as Ol Doinyo Lengai, the 7,650-foot-tall peak is the only known active volcano that belches out lava rich with a type of rock called carbonatite. This thin, silvery lava can flow faster than a person can run. ...

Typically, the volcano's activity is confined to its summit. But occasionally, the Mountain of God can roar to life in more dramatic fashion: On September 4, 2007, the volcano belched out a plume of ash that extended at least 11 miles downwind. Lava running down the north and west flanks ignited burn scars that were visible from space. ...



MALAWI

Malawi Tourism: Nyika National park underutilized due to bad roads

Director of Tourism in the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism, Isaac Katopola on Monday concurred with concerns raised by Malawians that the road that leads to Nyika National Park needs urgent rehabilitation if facilities that are found at the park are to be fully utilized.

Recently, CNN Travel named Nyika National Park which is the largest park in Malawi as one of the most amazing places to travel to Africa, citing that the park is one of the most beautiful and unusual places in Africa with a plateau cut by numerous rivers that reach Lake Malawi by waterfalls off the eastern edge of the mountains.

In an Interview with the Malawi News Agency (Mana) Katopola said an area of tourism attraction is fully utilized when it has all the necessities that allow tourists to feel comfortable when they visit the place.

"The road to Nyika National Park is in a bad state and only vehicles that have strong tyres can reach the area. This is a huge problem in terms of travelers that wish to visit the place, as not everyone has access to such vehicles hence the urgent need to rehabilitate the road," Katopola said.

Meanwhile on the Zambian side:

From Peace Parks Foundation:

Late in June, Peace Parks Foundation had the pleasure of delivering a Toyota Land Cruiser to Zambia's Department of National Parks and Wildlife for use in Zambia's Lukusuzi National Park, part of the Kasungu-Lukusuzi component of the Malawi-Zambia Transfrontier Conservation Area. The vehicle had been procured thanks to funding from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).



WEATHER

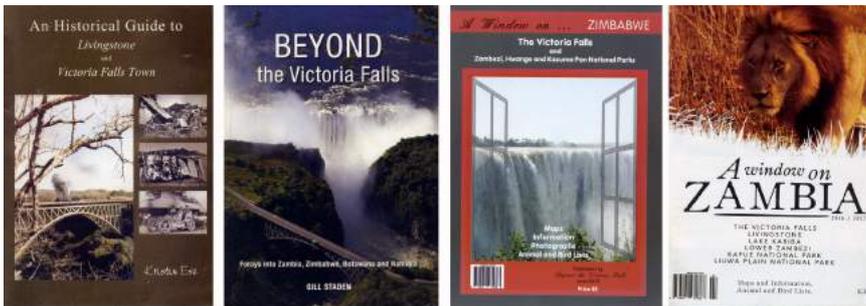
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