

# The Livingstone biWeekly

26 May 2020

Dear All

The other day I heard a big plane land at the airport and wondered what on earth was going on. I hadn't heard a plane for weeks. Later I found out. The President was in town to re-open the Victoria Falls.

Photograph from the Daily Mail



## ZAMBIA

**ENDING LOAD SHEDDING: ZESCO Limited And Power China Sign 600MW Solar Power Plant Contracts.**  
Zambia Reports

ZESCO Limited and Power China have signed three contracts worth US\$548m to develop 600MW (AC) grid connected Solar PV Power Plants to be located in Chibombo, Chirundu, and Siavonga Districts. ...

*G: There were several articles about this but none told us how this is to be funded.*

*While we are thinking about ZESCO, there have been far fewer power cuts during the past few weeks. The water in the Zambezi has reached Lake Kariba and the dam is filling up. I just hope that the Zambezi River Authority has its sums right and that we use the water for power generation carefully. It is better that we continue with some short power cuts now rather than end up with no water again and 15-hour power cuts by November/December.*



*Bhukhans*

JOLLYBOYS

## Flatdogs Camp

Ade and Paolo went out with ZCP the other day when we heard a pride of lions on Flatdogs Site. ZCP who are partly funded by Flatdogs, try to check on prides whenever they can, especially when they have been outside the park near human settlements. The threats to lion are bigger in these areas as the danger of snaring and other forms of human animal conflict are higher. As this pride of 11 lions has two females with GPS collars it is possible for ZCP to find them and check they are in good condition.

Luckily with Ade and Paolo's help the pride was found and all 11 were present and looking good

See attached pics of Benny, one of the ZCP researchers and a young male who is part of this pride. Looking in fine fettle.



## Zambian Carnivore Programme

News from the field! Introducing the new "kings of the jungle" KLI-655 and KLI-656, to the Kafwala and Mapunga area of the Kafue National Park, Zambia. Born into the Papyrus Pride on the Busanga Plains, these young males, now 5 years old, have staked out a territory 70km south of their birthplace. Look out for them on your next safari!



## Kasanka

Kasanka is looking for a couple to work in the park:  
<https://kasanka.com/jobs-at-kasanka/>





## Ndole Bay Lodge

With the water levels rising to the highest in recent history, our deck is the perfect habitat for cichlids and a fantastic snorkel site to explore the underwater world of Lake Tanganyika



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## North Luangwa Conservation Project

Working from home takes on a whole different angle when the office is in one of Africa's most amazing national parks. We all face unique distractions during Zoom meetings – here is 'Skippy' the elephant providing strategic input!



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## BAN ON CAPTURE AND TRANSLOCATION OF WILDLIFE LIFTED

Phoenix FM Zambia

Tourism and Arts Minister Ronald Chitotela has lifted the ban on capture and translocation of wildlife from national parks to community and private game ranches which was effected on October 2nd 2019

The minister has also assured the nation that, within the course of next month, the wildlife management licensing committee will be appointed and will be operational.

Announcing the development at a media briefing in Lusaka today, Mr. Chitotela said after further investigation, it became apparent that there was total lack of engagement and consultation with stakeholders hence creating mistrust and suspicion by the local communities surrounding protected areas as well as the general citizenry.

He said the ban affected the delivery of government programs in wildlife conservation and tourism promotion and had to be reviewed.

Mr. Chitotela said after the review, the ministry has put in place modalities and processes to include stakeholder consultations.

# ZAMBIA TRADITIONAL HISTORY

## George Westbeech 1868

Born in 1844 in Liverpool, England, at the age of 17 he boarded a ship to the Cape Colony (South Africa). For the first 8 years he traded in wildlife products, mainly elephant tusks, between the Cape Colony and Matabeleland (Bulawayo). Although he would bring various items for trade like cloth, the most valuable trading items he could bring were guns and ammunition. He became friends with Mzilikazi and then Lobengula, the chiefs of the Matabele. George Westbeech learned many of the local languages and could communicate easily with everyone he met. He was also recognised as being honest and fair. The other side of George Westbeech's character was that he loved alcohol and 'the ladies'.

When, by the late 1860s, elephants became hard to find in Matabeleland, George Westbeech needed a new area in which to hunt and looked northwards to the Zambezi River. At this time only a few white men had made their way to the Zambezi River. David Livingstone had reached there in 1851, and had published the book, *Missionary Travels and Researches in Southern Africa*, in 1857. Other hopeful traders and hunters had reached Kazungula but it would seem that none of them were entertained by the local people. George Westbeech would have heard stories and possibly read David Livingstone's book which had sold in its thousands.

George Westbeech did not work alone in his business. He had several partners to work alongside him and had other partners looking after the business in the south, and some remaining in Bulawayo with Lobengula.

Lobengula was well aware of George Westbeech's plan to move to the Zambezi River and they remained friends, often writing to each other and sending presents. Apparently Lobengula particularly liked the feathers of the crane, so on finding some in Ilaland, George Westbeech sent some to him.

Having decided to take the risk and visit the Zambezi River, George Westbeech loaded wagons with trade items from his store at Klerksdorp and headed to the river at Kazungula. He cut a road through the bush from the southern border of Matabeleland, northwest towards the river. This road became known as the Hunters' Road and finally the border between Botswana and Zimbabwe.

The Lozi Empire included a vast region north and south of the Zambezi River, but the Zambezi River was patrolled by Lozi warriors to ensure that only welcome visitors were allowed to cross and all had to have permission of the chief.

Sipopa, the chief of the Lozi, at the time, had come to power in 1864, after he had led a rebellion against the Kololo overlords of the kingdom. The Kololo, a Sotho clan who had arrived from Shaka Zulu's war machine in southern Africa, had made themselves comfortable in the Barotse Valley for over 20 years, consolidating and extending the kingdom. Both Kololo chiefs of the realm, Sebitwane and Sekeletu, had played host to David Livingstone on his travels (1851, 1853, 1855, 1858).

George Westbeech arrived at the Zambezi River in 1868 when Sipopa had been in power for only four years and had, during that time, carried out several purges on anyone who had been on the wrong side of the rebellion. He met Sipopa who was based at Sesheke, not far from Kazungula. (Sesheke was then the name of the village where Mwandia now stands). Sipopa allowed George Westbeech to be brought over the river, possibly because of his ability to speak the local language, but he was then held 'captive' for about 18 months. During his enforced stay with Sipopa, they became friends.

On allowing him to leave, Sipopa loaded George Westbeech's wagons with elephant tusks. With the money earned from the sale of the elephant tusks in the Klerksdorp, George Westbeech loaded new wagons with trade goods and set off back to the Zambezi to make a trading station in 1871.

He did not set up his camp along the Zambezi, but at Pandamatenga, some 100 km south of Kazungula. The land between Pandamatenga and the Zambezi had pockets of tsetse fly which would kill any domestic animals, particularly horses and oxen, which were essential for transport. Pandamatenga became a trading hub for anyone who wished to travel north of the Zambezi River. There, ox wagons and horses were paddocked and swapped for porters to carry supplies to the river and beyond.

Apparently, the name Pandamatenga comes from a man, Mutenga, who was a well-known local hunter who had made his base there previously. Mpanda is the name for the Rain Tree under which Mutenga camped.

George Westbeech renewed his friendship with Sipopa and thereafter a great trading partnership began, with George Westbeech setting up several stores in the Lozi kingdom. Life was good for several years.

In 1875 George Westbeech married and brought his Boer wife up to Pandamatenga so that he could take her to see the Victoria Falls. Not much is said about the people he met on the trip from Pandamatenga to the Falls, only that they were 'Batoka'. What is interesting is that the whole area south of the Falls was full of game pits. Both George Westbeech and his wife fell into them.

'The wife' was packed off back south shortly after the trip to the Falls because of the coming rainy season and along with the rains came malaria. The marriage did not last long; only one more trip was made by the wife to Pandamatenga, and three years later, the marriage was dead as a dodo. I am sure Mrs Westbeech did not approve of her husband's philandering and alcoholic ways.

It was around this time that rebellion in the Lozi Kingdom was being openly discussed. After 12 years in power, Sipopa had become despotic and cruel. It is said that he liked to throw children of his perceived enemies into the river to be eaten by crocodiles. His executioner, Mashoku, was kept very busy until even he could not take it anymore. Eventually the rebellion happened under the leadership of Mwanawina in 1876. Mwanawina became the next, but short-lived, king of the Lozi.

Two years later another rebellion took place, with Lubosi coming to power. Mwanawina, however had not been killed but fled south into Batoka country where he managed to raise an army of sorts to return and try to take back his kingdom. When he arrived at Sesheke he found the town abandoned because Lubosi had moved the capital to Lealui. Mwanawina burned down Sesheke (including George Westbeeche's trading store) and continued towards Lealui. Hearing of the coming army under Mwanawina, Lubosi sent his own forces to meet him. They met on the Lumbe River, near Ngonye Falls, where a battle was fought, Mwanawina being defeated.

In 1882 Lubosi sent an army of 12,000 men to Ilaland. The Ila, known to the Lozi as Bashukulumbwe, had plenty of cattle and this seems to have been the reason for the raid. By the end of the campaign, many Ila were dead and 20,000 cattle were driven back from Ilaland to the Barotse Floodplain.

Two years later, in 1884, another rebellion took place ...

We must remember that the Kololo had only been defeated twenty years previously and that, during their reign of 25 years, various factions of the original clans had scattered to all points of the compass, setting up their own villages in the diaspora. When one group, under Sipopa had returned and taken over the leadership there were still other factions looking on and waiting for their chance to take over. Mwanawina brought his own forces to bear down on Sipopa but Mwanawina also showed himself to be un-kinglike. Then Lubosi arrived with his supporters and took over, and, although Lubosi had proved to be a popular leader, there was still another faction who wanted power and so it was in 1884 that war broke out again. Lubosi fled south and the new incumbent in the position of king was Akafuna Tatila. He proved himself to be weak and unable to keep control of the empire so, when Lubosi managed to raise a new army and return, Akafuna had little support and lost the battle. Finally, after much turmoil, Lubosi regained his throne, became known as Lewanika – The Uniter or The Conqueror – and would remain there until his death in 1916.

Meanwhile in the 1880s when Lewanika was back in power, one induna continued to cause problems. He had fled with his followers into Tonga country, near Ilaland. His name was Sikabenga but he was often known as Maransian, the name of his induna position. He continued to harry Lewanika's warriors for the next five years. It was Sikabenga who caused all the problems for Emil Holub, which I will mention later.

George Westbeeche never interfered in politics and was able to work with all the chiefs and their indunas, but his trading did suffer during uncertain periods. He was also faced with a ban on the sale of guns and ammunition outside of the Cape Colony between 1879 and 1884. During those 5 years George Westbeeche could no longer bring guns and ammunition from the south and struggled to make a living. At the time he considered alternative ways of earning an income including returning to Matabeleland to mine for gold.

Under Lewanika, the induna in charge of the sale of elephant tusks had dramatically increased the price of them and controlled any elephant hunting. This too contributed to the sad state of George Westbeeche's financial state.

Throughout his time at Pandamatenga he had often been ill with malaria. Eventually, malaria started to take





its toll on his health and during the last two attacks he had been vomiting blood and had only just managed to regain his health. By now he was in his 40s, he had been a hard drinker (when it was available) and had been pushing himself in his business in order to get back some of the losses which had occurred.

George Westbeech did stay at Pandamatenga until 1888 when he decided to take his elephant tusks south for sale. He died on the journey.

Why was George Westbeech's life one to remember? George Westbeech did keep a diary of notes but sadly most of them were lost. They would have told us much about his interactions with all the people he met both black and white. However he wrote many letters which have been preserved. From them we know much about the turmoil going on in the Lozi Empire during his time at Pandamatenga.

He was also important in other things too. Because of his friendship with Lobengula, it was thought that Lobengula did not send his impis into Loziland, instead they crossed the river further north into Tongaland and Ilaland. Lobengula considered George Westbeech to be his induna and therefore under his protection.

Another aspect of George Westbeech's presence in Loziland was the reduced influence of the Mambari, and their Portuguese bosses, who traded in guns in exchange for elephant tusks and slaves. The guns and ammunition brought in by George Westbeech were of much better quality, therefore the Mambari traders mostly left Loziland alone.

The other very substantial part played by George Westbeech was his kindness to all travellers when they reached Pandamatenga. Emil Holub, the Czech explorer, stayed with George Westbeech on both occasions of his visits to Loziland and beyond (1878 and 1885). George Westbeech tried to advise Emil Holub during his stays there but Emil Holub was very stubborn. On his second expedition, when considering which route to take north towards Bangweulu, his intended destination, George Westbeech thought maybe Emil Holub could avoid Ilaland by travelling through Nkoyaland, but then thought better of it. Here is a quote, included in Richard Sampson's book:

*The Mankoya is a nation of which the men and women wear the inner bark of a tree sewn together as a blanket and general dress. They are born hunters and kill game, even buffaloes, with poisoned arrows. They are also great elephant hunters, which animals they kill with the assegai. As regards their hunting propensities, one can call them the Bushmen of the North side of the Zambezi, but there all likeness ceases, as they are a fine stalwart, vigorous set of men, very black and great husbandmen ... One great fault, however, which the Mankoya have in common with the Mushukulumbwe is awkward, for anyone being alone or only three or four together are never safe, and it is: they follow your spoor and where they can get you sleeping at night or alone in thick bush so that they can creep on you, they discharge their poisoned arrows at you, with which if they make ever so slight a wound, soon causes death. They then chop off the round top part of the skull, leaving the body to be exposed to wolves and vultures. This top part of the skull is then cooked, scraped and polished and out of them they drink beer. Many of them who are now tributary to the Barotse still do it on the sly. The untamed ones take the whole skull and stick them on poles around their towns. On the death of a chief the more heads they can transfix round his grave, the more veneration they show for his memory.*

Emil Holub decided to travel through Ilaland and there he was attacked by the Ila and only managed to leave with his life and some of his journals. As I mentioned above Sikabenga, the outlawed Lozi induna had made his village near to Ilaland and had induced some of the Ila to work under him. It was Sikabenga who had wanted Emil Holub's goods, mainly in the hope of getting ammunition and guns, and so he had sent his Ila men to follow Emil Holub's retinue and to steal all the property. When Emil Holub managed to get back to Pandamatenga, George Westbeech gave all the help possible.

George Westbeech also played host to Francois Coillard who set up a Protestant mission station at Lealui. Francois Coillard had first arrived in 1878 to meet with the king (Sipopa, at that time), to enquire if it was possible for him to settle in Loziland. Sipopa had agreed and Francois Coillard had returned to Europe to organise funds and supplies to set up the mission. It took Francois Coillard 6 years before he could get back to the Zambezi and, during that time, other missionaries arrived. One large group of Catholics from Belgium and Austria came but George Westbeech thwarted their attempts to start a mission. George Westbeech was not particularly religious, so it is thought that he wanted to maintain the British influence in Loziland. Although Francois Coillard was Swiss, he was very 'English' and was married to a Scot.

Frederick Arnot, a British missionary, also arrived during Francois Coillard's absence in 1880 and George Westbeech assisted him to live and work at Lealui. Frederick Arnot stayed at Lealui for two years teaching the children and influencing Lewanika's decisions. It was during Frederick Arnot's stay at Lealui that Lobengula wrote to Lewanika suggesting an alliance. Frederick Arnot helped to persuade Lewanika that an alliance with the British, similar to that made with the Chief Khama of the Bechuana people, would be much better.

When Francois Coillard did return it was during the turmoil of Civil War. Lewanika was south of the river, Akafuna Tatila, was chief. Francois Coillard had to wait until Lewanika was back on the throne, a year or so later before his proper work could begin. It was Francois Coillard who was helpful to the British South Africa Company to get the treaty between them and Lewanika, granting mineral rights throughout the Lozi Kingdom – the Lochner Treaty of 1890.

Not many people remember George Westbeech now, but his legacy lives on. Had it not been for his influence during his fifteen years at Pandamatenga, it is likely that Loziland would have come under the Portuguese sphere and be part of Angola now. It was because of George Westbeech's fair business sense that British people were accepted in the Lozi kingdom more readily than other nationals.

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## 'Third largest dam to solve Bulawayo water problems' Chronicle

GOVERNMENT is committed to permanently addressing Bulawayo's perennial challenges through the construction of the Gwayi-Shangani Dam project with at least US\$122 million having been channelled so far under the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) to speed up the project.

The project, which was initially scheduled to be completed in December 2021, is now expected to be finished in December 2022 after it was stalled by the global outbreak of Covid-19. ...

*G: I have been adding articles about this dam in the newsletter for the past 10 years at least, so I don't think COVID-19 should be blamed.*

## Zimbabwe power utility woos private solar power producers to supply national grid Construction Review

Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company (ZETDC) is seeking to boost power supply by tapping into excess power produced by private users of solar energy through a net metering program.

Under the program, any existing customer producing solar energy on their premises can feed excess power back into the ZETDC network through a grid-tied inverter. However, the power utility will not pay cash for the power and will credit the customer with power units instead.

Only electrical power units and not money shall be credited to the customer account and this will benefit the customer by keeping their bills low as it reduces the total units billed at the end of the month ...

## Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust

Yesterday our community once again came together to locate a badly snared baby elephant. We were eventually able to successfully dart both mum and baby to be able to remove the snare that was wrapped tightly around the baby's neck. The team worked together to monitor both the adult female and the young calf while cleaning out the snare wound and treating the calf. Mum and calf both woke up together and moved off together. We would like to thank the team that spent days searching the riverfront for this calf and for their help and support.





## Number of elephants die from 'suspected poisoning' in Okavango panhandle

Botswana Safari News

Number of elephants have reportedly died from suspected poisoning in the panhandle area. Investigations by Department of Wildlife and National Parks to determine cause of death is ongoing. Its unclear whether the deaths are related to poaching.

Yesterday DWNP released a statement warning of elephant mortalities in areas surrounding Seronga, Gunotsoga and Eretsha. The statement warned public to desist from eating carcasses because animals are dying from unknown causes and could be health hazard.



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## Idle speculation on the old age of a remarkable acacia tree

Georg Erb to Plants of Namibia

The older image on the LHS is of a handsome camelthorn tree *Acacia erioloba* near the Catholic church in Omaruru, Namibia, taken during, or before 1907. The color image was taken a hundred years later.

The size of the tree has not changed that drastically.

It has been around since darkest pre-history, would have witnessed many migrations of local tribes, many elephant would have rested in its shade before elephant got wiped out in these parts by ivory hunters like Andersson and Eriksson. Many an ox-wagon span would have moved underneath its branches here at the banks of the Omaruru river. Steam locomotives had puffed past over a hundred years ago, when the railway line was completed from Swakopmund to the copper mines at Tsumeb. The ground around its roots has been paved and covered in bitumen asphalt and many heavy trucks are thundering past. Street lights illuminate the pavement and surroundings at night.

The tree had endured many cold winter nights and as many hot summer days. Many thunderstorms had swept around, and many lightning bolts had made the earth shudder. The tree has come through many long spells of drought. 1907 - 2010



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**TONGABEZI**

**SPAR** 

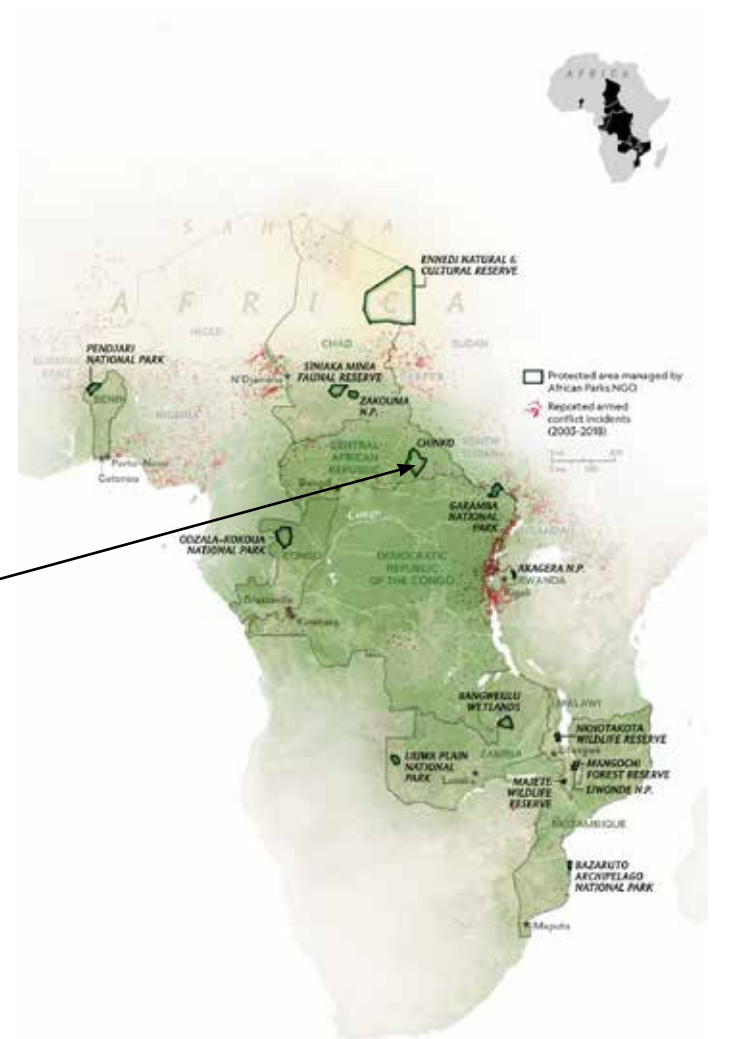




# CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

## African Parks

In a region plagued by decades of civil war and insecurity, Chinko in the Central African Republic is an unlikely story of resilience and restoration and has emerged as a bright spot for both biodiversity and stability. Just six years ago, hundreds of thousands of cattle and armed herders annually overran the protected area, and poaching and natural resource exploitation was rampant. Today, a core area of 6,000 km<sup>2</sup> is completely secured from these threats, the larger area is free from all livestock, and wildlife are finding refuge here. Recent surveys show steady increases in several wildlife populations, recording more than 1,000 Eastern chimpanzees, at least 60 elephants, more than 3,000 West African buffalo, and over 600 Lord Derby's eland. Over 75 African wild dogs and 30 Northern lions were also recorded with many more expected to reside here; and at least 70 fish species have recently been identified. The safety we're providing to Chinko is extending beyond the wildlife and the parks' borders, as it is the largest employer in the region, and a living model of peace, collaboration, and good governance.



## COVID-19 Stats as at 24 May (WHO)

Country	Total con- firmed cases	Total con- firmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths
Zambia	920	0	7	0
Zimbabwe	56	5	4	0
Botswana	29	0	1	0
Namibia	20	1	0	0
Mozambique	194	1	0	0
Malawi	83	1	4	0
Angola	60	0	3	0
Tanzania	509	0	21	0
DRC	No report			
South Africa	21,343	1,218	407	10

## COVID-19 Stats as at 4 May

Country	Total con- firmed cases	Total con- firmed new cases	Total deaths	Total new deaths
Zambia	124	5	3	0
Zimbabwe	34	0	4	0
Botswana	23	0	1	0
Namibia	16	0	0	0
Mozambique	80	1	0	0
Malawi	39	1	3	0
Angola	35	0	2	0
Tanzania	480	0	18	0
DRC	682	8	34	1
South Africa	6783	447	131	8

Many of these numbers are suspect. In Tanzania we know that the border between Zambia and Tanzania (Nakonde) was closed for 5 days after the authorities tested drivers and found 76 of them to have the virus. The Tanzanian President states that the virus has been beaten by prayer and will no longer state numbers. In Zimbabwe recently there was a report that 3 of the staff in Gonarezhou tested positive, so, if this is the case in such a remote area, we can assume that the virus is much more serious in the towns. In Zim, too, there are over 200 people in quarantine in Vic Falls Town, having come through the Kazungula or Vic Falls borders.

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### Conservation Crisis

Many conservation organisations rely on donations from fund-raising events or from tourism. The fund-raising events like the London Marathon have been cancelled. Tourism is dead. In Zambia, two of our local organisations are Conservation Lower Zambezi and Conservation South Luangwa. They do get outside funding but they have lost a lot from fund-raising and income from the lodges through tourism. In Namibia there are pleas from the Community Conservancies that their income has completely dried up as they rely totally on tourists, either from hunting or photographic holidays.

This is at a time when conservation work is most needed. The tourism guides and their safari vehicles are no longer driving through the parks and conservancies. Our tourism guides do not only entertain their clients but they are also our eyes in the park and will report anything unusual. The people living around the parks and conservancies often rely on their relatives in the towns to send money, but so many people have lost their jobs, that this money is not forthcoming. They are likely to turn to poaching in order to eat. Sadly, too, we all know that there are unscrupulous people out there who will use the opportunity to poach for the illegal trade in elephant, lions, rhinos, etc.

In Botswana they are worried about their rhino in the Delta; there has been a poisoning of elephant on the Okavango Panhandle.

If the COVID-19 pandemic continues and our tourism does not pick up we are going to see a lot more reports of deaths of wildlife in our parks. While money is pouring in from overseas to help us with the people affected by the virus, it would seem that no money is coming to help us with conserving our wildlife until we come out of this lockdown.

I do not have an answer for our problems but I feel that we should all be aware. I know some people are still travelling around a bit so, if you are going through any wildlife area, keep your eyes open for anything untoward and report it if you do.

As many people are now realising that international tourism may well be a long way off, we need to promote regional tourism and get people self-driving into the parks not only for the money they pay to stay at camps, but also for their eyes in the parks.

We also need to raise awareness of our conservation crisis to the outside world and hope that some of those well-wishers and international aid organisations will realise what a dire problem we have and come in to help. I know that our conservation organisations will try their best to keep going but eventually, if the effects of the pandemic continue for some years, they will have no option but to close.

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## WEATHER

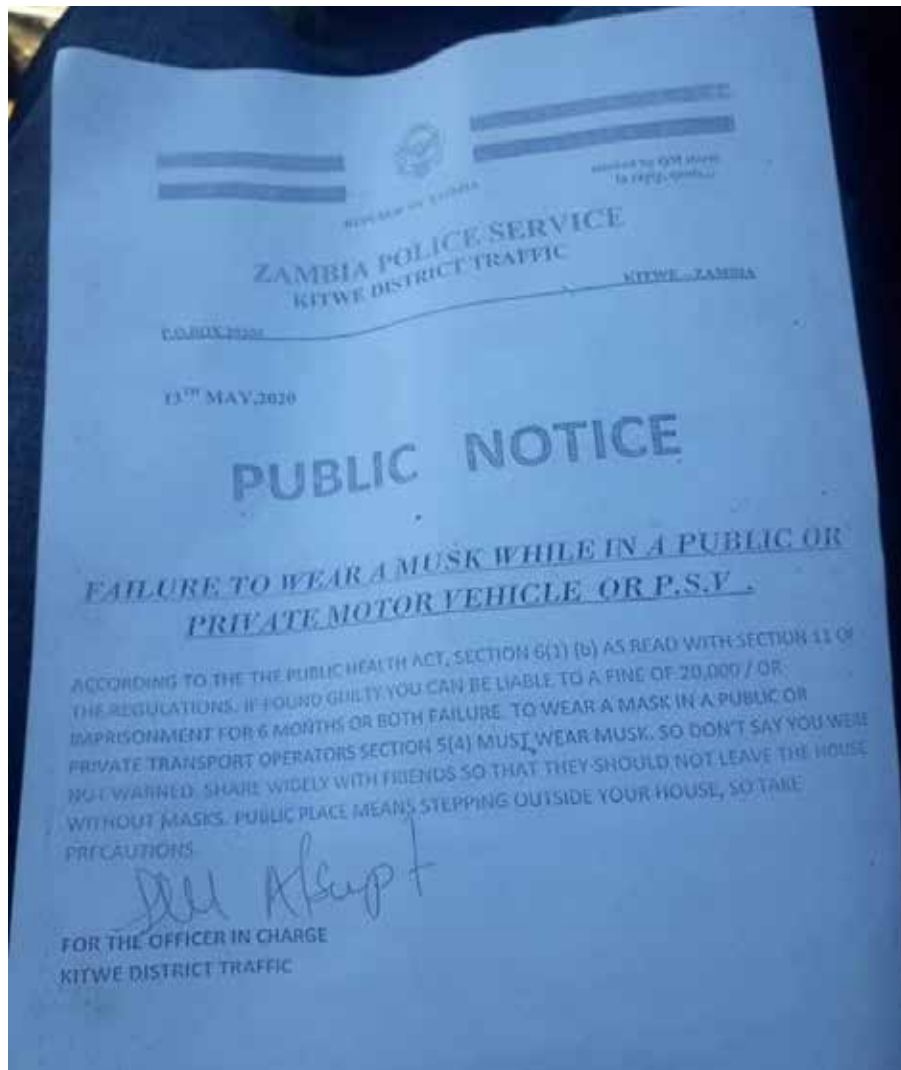
Min Temp	Max Temp
10°C (50)	27°C (80)

Gosh, it's cold. And more on the way ...

## EXCHANGE RATES

US\$1	K17.85
	P11.86
	Nam\$17.35
	Zim\$65

SMILE



Have a safe two weeks

Gill

