MAJETE

WILDLIFE RESERVE
MALAWI

AFRICAN PARKS PROJECT SINCE 2003

Majete totals 700 km^2

Partner: Malawi Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW)

0 rhino poached since 2003
81 schools participating in environmental education

The Story of Majete

Majete Willdife Reserve was depleted of wildlife when African Parks assumed management in 2003. Scouts had been under-resourced and inadequately trained, and elephants, lions and other major species had been poached to local extinction. It was a "paper park" in every sense – one that existed only in name and on a map, resulting in an empty forest. Over a ten-year period, African Parks restocked the reserve with more than 8,800animals, including the species that make up the Big Five; enacted rigorous law enforcement, and worked closely with the local communities. Today the reserve is home to over 8,000 animals; not one rhino has been poached since 2003 nor one elephant since their reintroduction in 2006. Majete is regarded as one of Malawi's and the region's leading wildlife sanctuaries, and serves as a shining example of how an area can be restored, and flourish once again.

majete wildlife reserve
Malawi

© John Dickens

The Challenge

By 2000, After two decades of rampant poaching, fishing and illegal logging, Majete's ecosystems were almost irreversibly degraded and most of the park's mammals had been exterminated. With under-resourced scouts who were ill-equipped to counter the present threats, the reserve was producing diminishing returns for local livelihoods and its tourism potential was crippled, failing to contribute anything to the local and national economy. Today, more than 140,000 people live around Majete, which means pressure on natural resources and human-wildlife conflict are ever present.

The Solution

Majete's full rehabilitation required a multi-pronged approach. The establishment of an effective law enforcement team provided the first step towards tackling Majete's key threat of poaching. Community participation complimented these efforts through an effective informant network that helped by alerting the park to illegal activity. Once law enforcement had been overhauled, species were restocked and well protected, allowing local populations to breed and grow. Maintaining a close and constructive relationship with local communities has been essential to the enduring success of Majete, and it has been strengthened by the flow of tangible benefits generated by the park's conservation and tourism activities.

Majete provides 80 school bursaries each year, and maintains an orphanage.

© Morgan Trimble

Highlights

- Majete was restocked with over 2,500 animals, including black rhino, elephant, lion, sable antelope, and buffalo. Today more than 8,800 animals exist.
- Zero rhino and elephant have been poached since 2003 and 2006 respectively.
- Majete has transformed the local economy and directed funds in to critical social infrastructure, including schools, clinics and safe roads; employment has increased ten-fold since 2003.
- Thawale Tented Lodge, Mkulumadzi Lodge run by Robin Pope Safaris, and the community-run campsites offer tourists the opportunity to visit and experience the park.

Next Steps

1. Continue to strengthen law enforcement operations, advance the intelligence capability and work with communities to improve their quality of life.
2. Strengthen community engagement by scaling up income generating activities and implement malaria controls through the operational research project, supported by the Universities of Malawi, Wageningen and Amsterdam, as well as African Parks.
3. Expand the reserve's tourism development plan to encourage further growth through the development of new lodges.
4. Translocate 200 elephants from Majete to Nkhotakota in 2017 to reduce habitat degradation.

African Parks is a non-profit conservation organisation that takes on direct responsibility for the rehabilitation and long-term management of national parks and protected areas, in partnership with governments and local communities. We currently manage 10 parks in seven countries – CAR, Chad, Republic of Congo, DRC, Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia - with a combined area of six million hectares. Our goal by 2020 is to have 20 parks, and 10 million hectares, under management

For more information please contact us at Email: info@african-parks.org | Tel: Johannesburg: +27 11 465 0050 | The Netherlands: +31 343 565 019 | New York: +1 646 568 1276
Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/AfricanParks | Twitter: www.twitter.com/AfricanParks | Instagram: www.instagram.com/AfricanParksNetwork | www.African-Parks.org