

Gilé National Reserve

Newsletter May 2020



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Gilé National Park

Key Issues- May 2020

Gilé becomes National Park!

On May the 20th, the Council of Ministers re-categorised Gilé Reserve to the status of National Park, becoming Gilé National Park, Gilé NP (Category II in the IUCN Protected Areas Categories System).

This upgrade in protection status aims to receive higher level of prestige and visibility, as well as greater attention to the environmental conservation of protected areas.

The new designation is also accompanied by a real commitment from the government to develop tourism in the country. In the new management plan 2021-2030, Gilé NP will present an important section on the development of tourism and will engage to create a specific department.

- A meeting lead by the Gilé NP Warden and field technicians from the Community Development Department, the Warden's secretary and the Infrastructure Officer was held the 23rd of May in Musseia Headquarters. The meeting aimed to renew the GNP's collaboration with the community and its technicians;
- In May, 51 seasonal workers were recruited to support infrastructure development.



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One of the groups of GNP's elephants

Management and Infrastructure

- 55 km of roads between Musseia Headquarters and Malema river were rehabilitated;
- Musseia Headquarters: Construction activities of driver and guard house continue, at reduced pace due to a lower number of workers contractable due to Covid-19's restrictions;
Cashew oil paint has been used to protect the wooden houses;
Water supply and electric system have been cleaned and undergone maintained;
- Lice Tourist Camp: the roofs of the restaurant and the two kitchens have been completed;
- Namurrua Camp: the camp was equipped with a water pump.



Road maintenance

Law Enforcement

- One community north of the protected area, in the Gilé District, contacted Park Authorities to signal to possible presence of a lioness with cubs. Though the reported version was very unlikely, the Law Enforcement Department together with SDAE - *Serviço Distrital de Atividades Econômicas* (i.e. District Economic Activities Service) verified the information on the ground. The testimonies and facts that were gathered were inconclusive. Being in touch with community authorities, the situation will be monitored in the months to come;
- A total of 11 patrols were undertaken in May covering 243 km on foot and 426 km by car;
- In May, 89 signs of illegal activities (poaching, illegal mining and logging) were detected;
- The following items were confiscated: 30 bicycles, 18 logs, 66 wooden planks, 28 hoes, 20 axes, 19 fishing nets, 17 steel cables, 15 spears, 13 machetes, 5 5L jars, 4 gin traps, 3 knives, 3 sifts, 2 hooks, 2 pots, 2 shovels, 2 picks, 1 hoe, 1 bucket, 1 manual gold washing machine, 1 fishing cage, 1 mobile phone with 1 reserve battery;
- 7 poachers and 13 illegal loggers were captured;
- 19 legal processes were opened and submitted to the Attorney Office of Pebane Districts.



Confiscated wooden planks and tools

Biodiversity Conservation

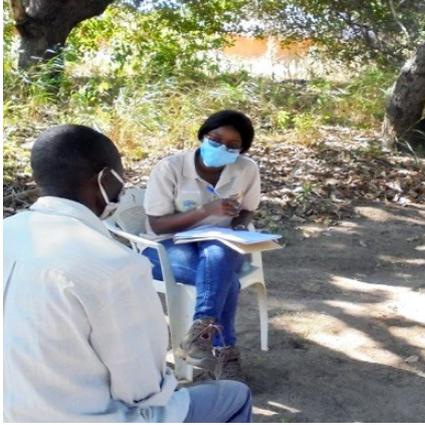
- For the first time since begin of the year, the elephants moved back into the park and have remained into the protected areas and the *coutada* (i.e. Community hunting area) boundaries throughout the entire period;
- In May, Gilé NP rangers responded to 2 cases of Human/wildlife conflict when elephants were raiding community's crops; The joint effort between local government, Police and Gilé NP staff shows improvements in local relations and will hopefully continue to prove a valuable partnership in preventing and mitigating the conflict;
- Animal directly observed in May: waterbucks, kudus, duikers, reedbucks, wildebeests and sable;
- Spoor of buffaloes and zebras were also recorded.



Sable Antelope bull

Community Development

- Since 2017 Gilé NP launched "SCAMBIO", a program to provide agriculture tools in exchange for gin traps and others poaching instruments. This activity has a long story in Gilé NP, where the first approach in exchanging poaching instruments with agricultural tools dates back to 2002. From 2017-2020, thanks to this initiative, nearly 3800 hunting tools have been collected through the involvement of local communities.
In May, an assessment of the impacts of these activities at community level was carried out. The evaluation aims to understand the next steps in terms of awareness strategy, make a comparative analysis and continue to sensitize the local communities in shifting to legal and more sustainable agricultural activities.
The collection of data for this purpose will end in July.
- Chilly guns are conservation tools that have proven their efficiency in mitigating Human/elephant conflicts. The capsaicin powder they project is effective in dispersing the elephant herds that invade communities and agricultural lands.
Human/elephant Conflict specialists have recently visited Gilé NP to showcase these tools and trained selected staff in their use.
Considering the difficulties encountered in procuring and importing these tools internationally, the Community Development Department is now looking for options to produce chilly guns nationally. By training and providing these tools to affected communities, Gilé NP aims at teaching and equipping people to better protect their properties and livelihoods, minimizing conflicts around the Protected Area.
- Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) Project:
 - Mushrooms: The writing of the Business Plan for the commercialization of mushrooms, within the partnership with NITIDAE, has started.
A database of mushrooms collected during the rainy season has been created.
Contacts are maintained with a scientific team based in Belgium as part of the partnership with NITIDAE for the NTFP project.
The aim is to share the characteristics of the edible mushrooms around the buffer zone to strengthen the visibility of the Gilé NP.
A first survey for the sale of mushrooms in the city of Maputo has been launched. The survey is aimed at shops, supermarkets, restaurants and hotels.
It is expected to be extended also to the cities of Quelimane, Molocué, Mocuba and Nampula.
 - Honey: Beekeeping follow-up activities have been carried out.
The monitoring visits implemented at the hives installed, showed satisfactory results.
The swarms are showing good development, the technicians have followed the recommendations highlighting motivation, commitment and improvement in the work done.
In May, the technical assistant held a meeting to exchange experience with a French beekeeper. The meeting was held in France and greatly improved knowledge in this component.
It was possible to learn how to make a swarm division and how to raise productivity. These experiences will be a good basis for improving the technical skills of the team.



A GNP technique during data collection



Mushrooms ready for classification

Forecast for June 2020

Due to the current situation regarding the Covid-19, all not-essential visits to Gilé NP are temporarily suspended. However, the final evaluation mission, by an external expert, of the current EU funded Project is scheduled by half of June.

- The Secretary of State from Zambezia will be visiting the park in the coming weeks;
- An Expression of Interest for a new NTFPs Projects will be submitted to the AFD (French Development Agency) in mid June;
- The building of new infrastructures and maintenance of the existing one, will carrying on in Musseia Headquarters;
- Training of local communities' members in HWC mitigation techniques will be organised in June to be started in early July;
- Law enforcement and other core activities will be, however, guaranteed.

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