



HIGHLIGHTS AND LEARNINGS VOICES FOR JUST CLIMATE ACTION

WWF-VCA Annual report
2022

Be one with nature



COMPONENTS

In this report, we will explore the work of WWF in Voices for Just Climate Action (VCA).

1. Collaboration and partnership-building. By connecting CSOs across different levels, VCA brings actors with diverse expertise and local knowledge closer together.
2. Joint lobbying and advocacy. As a network, we lobby and advocate together to make policy and financial flows responsive to locally led climate solutions.
3. Locally led climate solutions. With VCA we consider the unique perspectives and needs of different communities and scale up initiatives.
4. Inclusive conservation beyond VCA. VCA is enabling WWF meet its key objective: Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the heart of everything.
5. Challenges. WWF looks at some of the challenges of an inclusive approach and how we (can) address them.

For details of the 2022 milestones of the Voices for Just Climate Action (VCA) Alliance, please contact Barbara Nakangu: bnakangu@wwf.nl, for the VCA Annual Progress Report 2022.



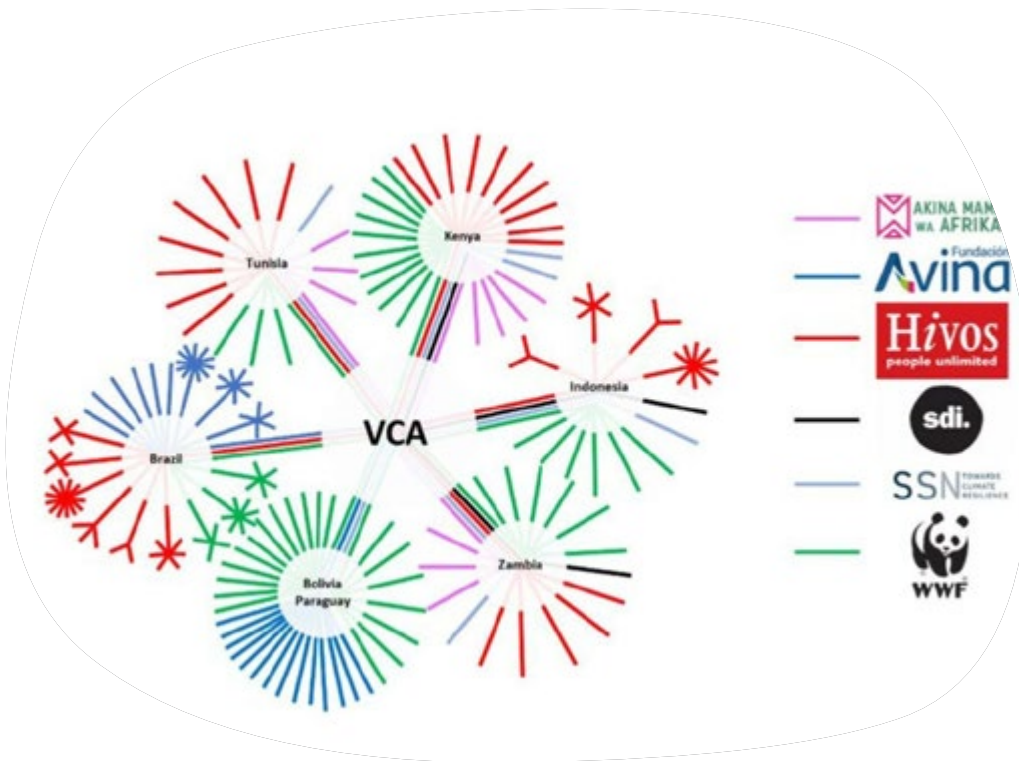
Photo credit: Diego
Fernando Peralbo Rolón
/ WWF-Brazil
Indigenous people (Yshir)
fishing in Bahía Negra,
Paraguay

MOVE THE WORLD WITH LOCAL VOICES

Voices for Just Climate Action (VCA) started in 2020 as an alliance with four Southern and two Global civil society organizations (CSO's) to address the need for inclusive and collaborative climate solutions and to engage a wide range of local stakeholders, from grassroots activists to local CSO's. This approach guards the needs and perspectives of local communities that are directly impacted by the effects of climate change, but are often not considered in the fight against climate change.

In this report, we will explore the work of WWF in VCA. We reflect on the organization's approach and results of collaborations, partnership-building, joint lobbying and advocacy.

Integrating collaborative and inclusive approaches into climate solutions calls for deep listening and learning. With VCA we hope to educate ourselves and stakeholders in the international development field, especially for international organizations like WWF. By highlighting the benefits of the VCA approach and the challenges that arise in implementing them, we aim to inspire a more concerted effort to work together to create a more sustainable and just world.



2022

Local partners

Local partners increased from 150 in 2021 to 189 in 2022

Broader ecosystem

With subcontracted CSO's that connect through VCA, we can reach 250 local partners

Figure VCA

Each line ending depicts a contracted CSO. Colours indicate which Alliance member they have been contracted by. The clusters of lines in Indonesia and Brazil show the collaborations of multiple CSO's through coalitions.

VCA: A GROWING NETWORK

Since its inception, VCA has grown rapidly: VCA is now a network that connects almost 200 organizations across multiple countries - Brazil, Bolivia, Indonesia, Kenya, Paraguay, The Netherlands, Tunisia, and Zambia - at local, regional, and global levels.

A number of local partners in the VCA network, employed their own approach to collaborate with their respective local partners. Thus, they provide a broader ecosystem of CSO's that connect through the network.

WWF & VCA - TO LISTEN INSTEAD OF TO REPRESENT

With VCA, WWF can connect local and global knowledge to fight climate change and showcase the governance and finance models that promote climate justice from the grassroots level. Instead of sharing our perspective on this local expertise, VCA is our opportunity to let government officials, policy makers and finance and business leaders listen to local voices themselves.

The network defines our role as a facilitator, connecting, supporting, and amplifying the impact of existing inspiring initiatives in the region. Ensuring that local people, communities, and organizations have a seat at the table where these decisions are being made.



Photo credit: VCA

HIGHLIGHTS

COLABS & PARTNERS

The VCA network now covers a vast network of 189 local partner organizations. Among them a diversity of rural and urban civil society organizations, alternative media, and grassroots organizations: some youth led, other Indigenous led, woman led or led by local peasants or rural defenders.

Photo credit: Fernando Franceschelli / WWF-Brazil



Photo credit: Jasper Doest / WWF
Traditional leaders from the Barotse floodplain in Zambia

ZAMBIA - TRADITIONAL LEADERS

WWF Zambia has been working with their local partners to equip traditional leaders to effectively play their role as climate change ambassadors. Traditional leaders, play their role since they are the custodians of land and resources and main entry points for expanding VCA to more villages. They have the best overall knowledge about the local context and how to engage the society.

PARAGUAY - OPADES, YOUTH LED

With the support of WWF Paraguay, OPADES organizes a Volunteer Support Programme for Protected Areas (PAVAP), with the inclusion of the youth from the bufferzone of the national park Ybycuí, where the program takes place, and with quota for young Indigenous people and rural community members from the Chaco-Cerrado-Panantál. The experience over the years has been very successful, with over 700 young people acting to conserve and improve the management of national parks. OPADES also started the 'Guardians of the Park', an environmental education program for kids from the bufferzone.



Photo credit: Opades and WWF Paraguay
Volunteers Ybycuí National Park, an initiative of OPADES with support of WWF-Paraguay

HIGHLIGHTS

LOBBYING & ADVOCACY

By connecting CSOs across different levels and fostering unusual partnerships and multi-stakeholder collaborations, VCA can bring actors with diverse expertise and local knowledge closer together. This approach enables VCA to lobby and advocate together to make policy and financial flows responsive to locally led climate solutions.

Photo credit:
WWF-North Africa



Photo credit: FAPI
Report "Derecho Al Futuro"

PARAGUAY - JOURNALISM FOR PRESSURE

Together with 15 other CSOs, WWF Paraguay published the report "Derecho Al Futuro" or "the Right to a Future". Through VCA, the team then decided to take this further and contracted a team of local investigation journalists to compile a dossier with 20 specific cases, where the state is not guaranteeing the human and environmental rights for its citizens in Paraguay.

Relevance:

- The Right to a Future dossier is a powerful advocacy tool. It can be used as a pressing mechanism to raise awareness on climate justice. [Read more.](#)

BOLIVIA - PARTICIPATION INDIGENOUS WOMEN

In Bolivia, through their VCA local partners, WWF has initiated capacity building activities with the Charagua Iyambae Indigenous women. The aim: developing the interzonal women's agenda and promote the proposal of the "Comprehensive Law for the Promotion of the Political, Economic and Social Participation of Women in the Guaraní Charagua Iyambae Autonomy".

Relevance:

- Working on a common agenda enables the Charagua Iyambae women to present project proposals to their zonal governments.



Photo credit: WWF-Bolivia
Charagua Iyambae women
work on common agenda rights

BRAZIL - ENSURING ENGAGEMENT OF YOUTH SAFEGUARDING AMAZON PARTICIPATION

An important milestone was achieved in Brazil by enabling Youth and Amazon Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to voice their climate justice demands.

“Letter from the Forest Youth”

In November 2022, the Extractivist Youth Meeting II took place in Amapá state, bringing together representatives of various youth groups, including extractivist, riparian, landless, Indigenous, Quilombola, and traditional communities from across the Amazon region. They crafted the “Letter from the Forest Youth,” to underscore the youth’s dedication to the Amazon, biodiversity, Brazilian democracy, and humanity.

Relevance:

- The letter was submitted to the Ministry of the Environment, urging them to ensure the meaningful engagement of youth in Youth Councils, Climate Forums, the development of the National Youth Policy, and all Public Policies.
- Additionally, it called for the allocation of national and international funds dedicated to safeguarding the Amazon, such as the Amazon Fund, to support youth-focused initiatives.



Photo credit: VCA
Brazilian local partners campaigning for the defence of their territories.



Photo credit: VCA
One of the 27 stories:
Young women promote

LOCAL CLIMATE ACTIVISTS AT COP27: THE CENTRE OF CLIMATE DECISIONS

With VCA, WWF-NL and partners can connect local and global knowledge to fight climate change. Our work together at the Climate Change Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh (COP27), is a good example where women, youth and Indigenous people were able to tell their own stories, to transform dominant narratives to influence policy making and spur debates. Thanks to both video stories and in-person participation.

27 minutes of stories from CSO’s and youth led organizations were shown in a side event during COP 27 (27@27 event). It featured contributions from 12 youth activists and youth-led initiatives, and 9 VCA local partners, from Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, Bolivia, Zambia, Indonesia, Brazil and Paraguay. It gives potential to an ecosystem of CSO’s that can be reached by donors to access finance and enable vulnerable communities to be heard at a global decision-making stage. [Watch the video.](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

LOCALLY LED SOLUTIONS

WWF-NL advocates for locally led climate solutions that are both effective and equitable, considering the unique perspectives and needs of different communities and stakeholders. In the VCA-network local communities have emerged as catalysts for change, pioneering innovative solutions that address pressing environmental challenges.

Photo credit: Fernando Franceschelli
/ WWF-Brazil



Photo credit: VCA
Treeplanting Bolivia

Examples of locally led solutions that WWF contributed to, are related to four approaches:

1. Community forest reserves and tree planting
2. Agroforestry and cultivation of drought resilient crops
3. Local seeds and farming methods, the protection of endemic species
4. Water management such as wastewater management, capturing rainwater and drip irrigation

INDONESIA - VARIOUS INITIATIVES ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

In East Nusa Tenggara, VCA Indonesia has spearheaded an initiative on achieving food sovereignty as both a cultural asset and a climate strategy. Communities in Papua are mapping their food systems to ensure they are restored and enhanced. For example Sorghum, known for its resilience in dry and arid environments affected by water scarcity, serves as both a cultural asset and a climate change adaptation strategy embraced by local communities.

Moreover, the communities have taken steps to enhance marine ecosystems by creating artificial coral reefs and undertaking mangrove plantation along the seashore. These endeavours demonstrate a holistic approach to environmental conservation and climate resilience in the region.



Photo credit: VCA
Mangrove restoration is an important locally led, nature based, climate solution in Indonesia

BOLIVIA- PARAGUAY - SCALE UP SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION MODEL

Under the leadership of Guaraní women and in coordination with the Autonomous Regional Government of the Gran Chaco, the food security of five Indigenous communities (Guarani, Whenayek, and Tapiete) has been strengthened in the VCA landscape of Bolivia and Paraguay (Gran Chaco). This achievement was accomplished through the support provided for local agroecological gardens and the implementation of effective water management techniques. The sustainable agricultural production model employed in these communities includes the integration of rainwater harvesting systems.

Scale up

Encouraged by the success, this model is now being replicated in other communities, such as Yerobiarenda and Tentami, further expanding its positive impact.



Photo credit: Jane Houston / WWF-US
Gran Chaco region



Photo credit: WWF / Simon Rawles

Rain water dripping into a rainwater harvesting system.

KENYA - ENHANCED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND BOLSTERED RESILIENCE FARMING COMMUNITIES

Kenya is confronted with long dry spells and drought. VCA Kenya has successfully implemented impactful rainwater harvesting techniques across multiple counties, including Makueni, Isiolo, Wajir, Marsabit, Garissa, and Homa Bay. These techniques encompass a range of effective methods such as Zai pits, rainwater harvesting ponds, drip irrigation systems, climate-smart farming, and participatory rangeland management.

These initiatives have yielded significant improvements in both water security and food production

- By adopting rainwater harvesting techniques, communities have enhanced their ability to collect and store water during rainy seasons, reducing dependence on erratic rainfall patterns.
- This has led to increased availability of water for irrigation, livestock rearing, and domestic use, ultimately contributing to improved food production and livelihoods.



Photo credit: Sarah Black / WWF
Water transport on the Kafue River

STEPS AHEAD OF LOCALLY LED SOLUTIONS

With VCA, WWF is making relevant steps in supporting locally led solutions. But let's not forget that steps ahead of locally led solutions such as involving local groups in decision-making processes are vital. Why?

1. It will increase the likelihood of successful implementation of locally led solutions.
2. It will help ensure that these solutions are indeed tailored to their specific needs and priorities.

Furthermore, when locally led climate solutions demonstrate success at the community level, there is often a strong case for scaling them up to a broader regional or national level. The evidence of their effectiveness, combined with the support and buy-in from the local community, can help build a compelling case for wider adoption and integration into policy frameworks.

That's why it's important to also share examples of the VCA support that will lead to implementation of locally led solutions.

ZAMBIA - LOBBY LOCAL LEADERS HIGHER GOVERNANCE LEVELS

A local council succeeded to influencing a higher governance (district program) to achieve the largescale change required. The councilor named Boyd Musangu, representing Itumbi ward, suggested the integration of agro-forestry tree planting into the Farmer Support Inputs Programme (FISP) in the Itezhi-tezhi district. The purpose of this proposal was to address the extensive deforestation caused by agricultural expansion. This solution has high scalability potential, paving the way for wider



Photo credit:
Herd of elephants near
Itezhi-Tezhi Dam, Zambia

TUNISIA - WOMEN'S GROUP ORGANIZES TO ACCESS FUNDING

A significant milestone is the establishment of the inaugural Fisherwomen and Agriculture Development Group in Kerkennah Island, Tunisia. This formal group now comprises approximately 50 women who actively participate in decision-making processes and advocate for climate change issues at the national level. Their collective efforts have proven instrumental in securing funding for tangible local nature-based solutions focused on preserving and restoring the endemic palm of Kerkennah.

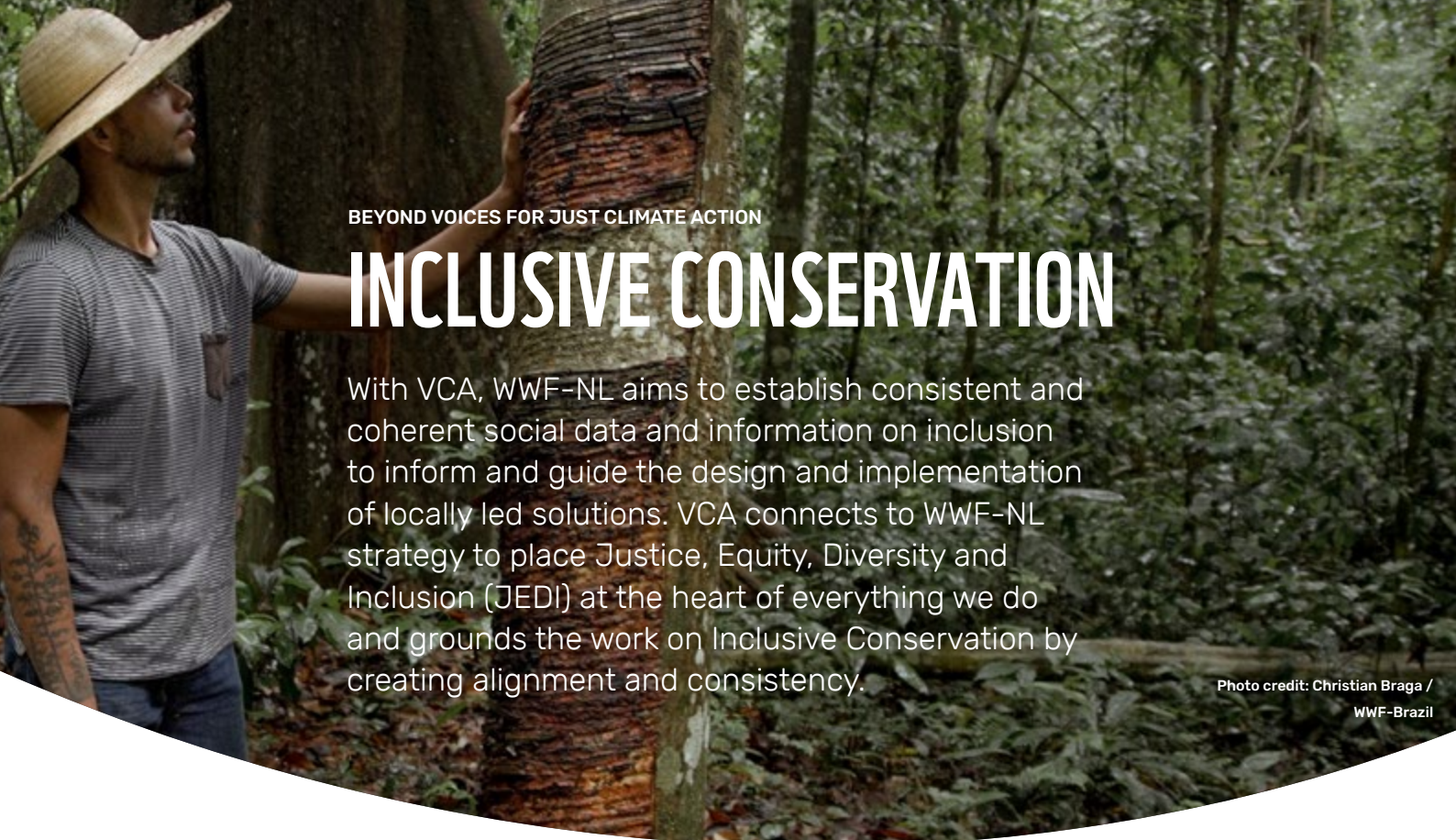
Through their organized participation, these empowered women have established a platform to voice their recommendations, ensuring that their perspectives on climate change are heard and considered. This landmark achievement signifies a positive step towards sustainable development and environmental conservation in the region, while also highlighting the vital role of women in driving change and securing a better future for Kerkennah Island.

PARAGUAY - INDIGENOUS PEOPLE TAP INTO CARBON FUNDING

In Paraguay, thanks to WWF efforts, close collaboration with governmental institutions and advocacy on adaptive regulations, the procedures for Indigenous people to enter the PES scheme have been altered. Thanks to these efforts, 112.256 hectares of forest reserved form Indigenous territories got certified, from 6 different Indigenous people (Guarani ñandeva, Ayoreo, Ishyr, Nivacle, Guarani occidental, Toba-Maskoy) in 4 Ecoregions. The first 480 ha got sold, providing an autonomous alternative income for historically marginalized communities in the Chaco-Cerrado-Pantanal.



Photo credit: Gianfranco Mancusi / WWF-Paraguay
Aerial view of Pantanal, Paraguay



BEYOND VOICES FOR JUST CLIMATE ACTION

INCLUSIVE CONSERVATION

With VCA, WWF-NL aims to establish consistent and coherent social data and information on inclusion to inform and guide the design and implementation of locally led solutions. VCA connects to WWF-NL strategy to place Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) at the heart of everything we do and grounds the work on Inclusive Conservation by creating alignment and consistency.

Photo credit: Christian Braga / WWF-Brazil



Photo credit: Andrés Unterlasdtaetter / WWF-Bolivia
Paraguay river in Bolivia

Inclusive and effective conservation work requires addressing poverty and inequalities while fostering the engagement of all of society. This implies getting to know the communities we work with through social data collection and monitoring.

VCA is currently enabling the systematic collection of social baselines and strengthening capacity on this, in order to inform inclusive decision-making and improve WWF-NL's engagement with the development programmes of the Dutch government by integrating social dimensions in conservation.

Bolivia

Although water availability per capita basis in Bolivia is 48,000 cubic meters a year, water resources are not distributed equally, both geographically and per season, affecting millions of lives dependent on agriculture. WWF-Bolivia aims to use the Water Reserves approach to promote water security in several basins. Water reserve management is based on ecological flows, to ensure the functionality of local hydrological cycles. These cycles sustain systems of life, production, local economy and health, and strengthen local adaptation to climate change.

Climate change threats and impacts

- The rainy season causes flooding that damages crops
- The dry season has been intensifying

Social baseline*

- Agriculture: 11% of GDP Bolivia
- Employment in agriculture: 28% of total employment Bolivia

* Worldbank, 2018

Kenya

The lakes Baringo, with 139.98 km² of riparian zone, and Bogoria, with a surface area of 34 km² and a catchment area of 930 km², contribute to tens of thousands of livelihoods through fisheries, tourism, and agriculture. Water levels are rising, and lakes may merge due to unsustainable activities and climate change. WWF-Kenya is creating hotspots for green recovery solutions with a multistakeholder approach. The protection of these lakes aims at reaching more than 300,000 people and restore/conservate an area of 3481 km².

Climate change threats and impacts:

- **Rising water levels displaces settlements and destroys properties, including loss of animals and human lives**
- **The displacement is a threat to women rights and could increase incidences of sexual and gender base violence**

Social baseline*

- **Employment in agriculture, which includes fishing: 24% of total employment Kenya**

* World Bank, 2010

Tunisia

The Kerkennah Islands are one of the most climate vulnerable areas in the Mediterranean, as well as economically marginalized. Women are being particularly affected by water scarcity and threats to fishing and agriculture. WWF-Tunisia aims to preserve and restore the traditional palm groves on the Islands, a solution shown to slow down the increased salinity of the soil and enable agriculture and traditional Charfia fishing. The support can potentially reach 15,500 people and restore/safeguard an area of 5,000 ha. In addition, the first official fisherwomen and agricultural development group has been created in the region and is now constituted by nearly 100 women.

Climate change threats and impacts

- **Sea level is estimated to rise at a rate of 75 to 135 cm per year, fully degrading the beaches**
- **Significant increase in overall temperature, causing decline in revenue from seaside tourism and fishing**
- **Droughts becoming more frequent and intense, leading to crop failures and food insecurity**

Social baseline*

- **43% of the working population relies on fishing and agriculture as a source of income**
- **18.8% of the women and 52.5% of the children in the region are active in the fishing sector**
- **Women are often excluded from decision-making processes**

* CITET, 2009

Zambia

The Kafue River is a major source of water supporting livelihoods and many socio-economic activities. It is also an important tourism region, a Ramsar wetland of international importance and home to significant wildlife diversity. WWF-Zambia aims to restore the Lukanga Swamps for water security. The solution focuses on the protection of the swamps, which cover 2,600km² of wetland located 100km north of Lusaka, and aims at benefiting up to 6 million people living along the river.

Climate change threats and impacts

- **The number of droughts and floods are increasing at an alarming rate**
- **Women, often primary providers of water and food, are one of the social groups suffering from poverty the most**

Social baseline*

- **The river produces 50% of all hydropower in Zambia and supplies 44% of water to Lusaka city**
- **The area is home to 7% of the national fisheries and 20% of the national cattle herd**
- **The Kafue Flats fishery, situated on the lower section of the Kafue River, has an estimated value of US\$30 million per year and account for between 15% and 22% of the total Zambian fish harvest**

* Analysis of Fish and Fisheries of the Kafue Flats Wetland Ecosystem, 2020, WWF-ZM

CHALLENGES

Photo credit:
Gianfranco Mancusi /
WWF-Paraguay
Zulma Franco, Yshir
leader Black



Photo credit: Martin
Harvey / WWF
Chief Mwanachingwala,
Kafue Flats, Zambia

Challenges:

- 1. We want to know the communities we work with.** It requires understanding and improved baselining of social diversity of the population in any program area.
- 2. We want global north offices to make stronger efforts to influence donors** to allow for the adjustments needed to conduct inclusive practices.
- 3. We want VCA to be a vehicle to deliver Nature Based Solutions (NbS)** that deliver justice and ensure equitable benefit sharing to local communities.

CHALLENGE 1 - KNOWING COMMUNITIES

Learnings

- Social baselining is still very new to the entire WWF network, and concrete know-how to incorporate the social data into informed decision-making and consistent progress tracking is still being harnessed. In most cases so far, social baselines conducted with the sub-grantee partners have revealed not to be thorough enough to guide decisions, namely due to lack of data availability and budget allocation.
- Time is also a needed resource to getting to know the communities. Time requirements should be adapted to adequately involve marginalized groups from the start. Building greater trust on implementing offices to manage local expectations, given their longer relationship history with local communities, also plays a key role.

Goal:

The goal for WWF-NL is to **update social baseline data** from the VCA landscapes annually, to inform inclusive decision-making. This requires a much deeper commitment to capture landscape-level social overviews, beyond the VCA sites and across other WWF-NL priority landscapes. WWF will also expediate the further expansion of the VCA approach beyond the six initial sites during 2023 and 2024.



Photo credit: VCA

CHALLENGE 2 - INFLUENCE DONORS

Learnings:

- 27 minutes of stories from CSO's and youth led organizations were shown in a side event during COP 27 (27@27 event). Expose and vocalize local stories at a global stage gives potential to an ecosystem of CSO's that can be reached by donors to access finance and enable vulnerable communities to be heard at a global decision-making stage.
- Exemplifying stories of local climate solutions and resilience can transform dominant narratives to influence policy making and spur debates.
- Certification of forest reserves allows direct payment to Indigenous peoples for their conservation efforts. An urgent next step is a more efficient system for the purchase and sale of environmental certificates, reaching a higher number of interested buyers and connecting them to the communities.

CHALLENGE 3 - JUSTICE ASPECTS

Learnings:

- A justice perspective to NbS is often lacking. Hereto, the [Locally Led Adaptation principles](#) should be clearly reflected in the NbS cases leveraged by VCA.
- We need to connect Local Solutions to finance by aggregating and upscaling small initiatives and by tracking specific funding commitments made by the Dutch government to unlock finance for (NbS) projects in VCA countries.
- A challenge is how to scale small initiatives, how to track the impact on local communities and to include alliance partners in design and development of NbS projects. For example, in Zambia, WWF-VCA has facilitated the development of 5 NbS based on its long experience of operating in the area. However the ideas need be further shaped to ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups in the restoration of the Lukanga Swamps.



Photo credit: VCA

Strengthen the resilience of communities in Indonesia



Why we are here.

To stop the degradation of the world's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

wwf.nl

PHOTOGRAPHY

WWF / VCA and local partners