



VACANCY

Position Title:	Chief Executive Officer – Nyika Vwaza Co-Management Trust
Duration:	Five-year contract
Reporting to:	Board of Trustees
Location:	Thazima, Malawi

BACKGROUND

The Government of Malawi, through the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW), and Peace Parks Foundation have signed a 20-year Co-Management Agreement (CMA) for the sustainable development and management of Nyika National Park and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve, forming the Nyika Vwaza Complex, which is an integral component of the Malawi-Zambia (MAZA) Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA). These two protected areas collectively cover over 4,000 km² of land.

Under this agreement, a special non-profit and efficient legal entity, the Nyika-Vwaza Co-management Trust (Trust), was established in Malawi. The Trust will be responsible for the management and development of the Nyika-Vwaza complex. It will be overseen by a Board of Trustees (Board) appointed by DNPW and Peace Parks in accordance with the CMA provisions and the Trust's Constitution.

A Park Management Unit (PMU) will be formed within the Trust to implement the Strategic Business Plan (SBP). The PMU will be led by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) appointed by the Board.

DNPW is an agency of the Government of Malawi responsible for managing protected areas within and outside the protected areas, as mandated by the National Parks and Wildlife Act (CAP 66.07).

Peace Parks is a non-profit conservation organisation specialising in large-scale conservation through the development of TFCA and the long-term management of key protected areas in partnership with government conservation agencies and local communities.

While the Trust is being established and capacitated, DNPW and Peace Parks will lead the recruitment of the CEO. Peace Parks will also serve as the interim employer for the CEO and the senior management team of the PMU. Once the Trust becomes operational, the employment contracts will be transferred to the Trust.

JOB PURPOSE

The CEO is expected to be an achiever who has already made a mark in the conservation or business management arena of southern Africa and is expected to be a dynamic and innovative manager with good organising, public relations, strategic management and leadership skills. The performance of the CEO will be reviewed annually by the Board.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership

- The CEO is appointed as head of the PMU to develop and manage the Trust under the strategic guidance and supervision from the Board and in accordance with relevant frameworks:
 - National Parks and Wildlife Act (2017) and other pieces of legislation.
 - National Wildlife Policy and other pertinent Policies.
 - The co-management agreement.
 - Integrated General Management Plan for Nyika and Vwaza.
 - Strategic Business Plan and other plans approved by the Trust.
- Lead the update of the Strategic Business Plan.
- Ensure that the Trust's mission and values are developed and reflected in all activities and initiatives.
- Steer the PMU to ensure programme effectiveness and alignment with the Trust's mission.
- Guide the development of policies, procedures, standard operating procedures related to, amongst others, human resources, finance, procurement, risk and compliance, community engagement, tourism development, counter-poaching.
- Engage with Peace Parks who under the terms of the CMA will:
 - Apply the best management, financing and development practices for the Trust.
 - Provide appropriate support to the PMU in all technical related aspects and to build the Trust capacities.
 - In consultation with DNPW, support the CEO in preparing the Budget and Business Plan and review and change these documents, as deemed necessary.
 - Implement financial management procedures to comply with donor funding requirements.
 - Conduct internal audits on a regular basis to define risks and improve the performance of PMU.
 - Appoint the services of an external internationally recognised auditor to undertake regular and detailed annual financial audits.
 - Ensure that appropriate training has been provided to all Trust staff regarding human-rights abuses and support the process of developing appropriate safeguards to prevent any human rights abuses from taking place.
- Report to the Board

Programme development and implementation:

- Endorse the overall responsibility of programme development and implementation in all sectors of activities of the Trust (conservation, law enforcement, community and commercialisation).
- Prepare a rolling five-year work plan and annual budget for approval by the Board.
- Implement the activities and plans as outlined in the Business Plan.
- Prepare and monitor biodiversity and performance.

Conservation Management:

- Oversee all aspects related to conservation within the Nyika Vwaza Complex and ensure adherence to conservation principles, laws, and agreements. This includes:
 - Developing and implementing conservation strategies in alignment with the CMA, Integrated Management Plan, and Strategic Business Plan.
 - Directing efforts to monitor and conserve biodiversity.
 - Collaborating with local communities and relevant stakeholders to promote conservation awareness and environmental education programs.
 - Promote sustainable resource management practices.
 - Ensuring compliance with international best practices for conservation management.
 - Understand and adhere to the requirements and conditions for managing MAZA TFCA in relation to joint structures and collaboration.

Communities:

Ensure that the PMU continuously and proactively engages the neighbouring communities over related conservation and livelihood activities. The CEO will ensure that the Trust promotes an integrated model of conservation and development that unlocks benefits for surrounding communities, improves their livelihood while stemming degradation of Nyika Vwaza ecosystems and implementing a state-of-the-art Human-Wildlife Co-existence Management Scheme (HWCMS) around Nyika National Park and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve. To do so, the CEO will:

- Promote inclusive partnerships between the Trust and local communities which foster participation and custodianship of the Nyika National Park and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve.
- Ensure that the Nyika Vwaza Association and its affiliates are informed of activities and progress and that the election of Natural Resources Management Committees (NRC) is current.
- Develop a strong programme at the Trust level to assist communities living around Nyika National Park and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve in dealing with and managing human-wildlife conflict and partner with organisations active on this topic.
- Develop conservation awareness and education and promote the link between conservation and development.
- Support improved livelihood programmes around Nyika National Park and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve.

Commercialisation:

- Ensure that tourism initiatives align with the Trust's conservation goals while also fostering sustainable development as foreseen in the Strategic Business Plan and other relevant documents.
- Guide the development of a comprehensive tourism plan that balances the preservation of natural habitats and wildlife with promoting responsible tourism practices. These strategies should aim to enhance visitor experiences, return to the Trust, while minimising environmental impact.
- Steer tourism planning and zonation for maintaining the integrity of the landscape.
- Manage concessionaires:
 - Selection and oversight of concessionaires who operate within the Complex
 - Ensure that concessionaires adhere to sustainable practices, comply with regulations, and contribute positively to the Trust's conservation efforts.
 - Negotiating contracts, monitoring performance, and fostering positive relationships to maximise the benefits for both the Trust and the local communities

Financial Management:

- Provide oversight to the financial management of the Trust, including budgeting, fundraising, and fiscal management.
- Ensure that approved financial management plans and procedures are adhered to.
- Ensure compliance with procurement procedures to realise value for money.
- Make sure that the Trust follows the international best practices in terms of the management of funds.
- Seek and secure funding sources, grants, and donations to support the Trust's programmes and initiatives.
- Drive innovative and diversified conservation-friendly revenue streams.
- Be responsible for the Trust operational account.
- Be part of the mandatory signatories on the use of the Trust operational funds.

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Endorse the primary responsibility of stakeholder engagement and relationship for the Trust, both within and outside the landscape.
- Develop, promote and maintain good working relationships with all interested parties, including donors, government agencies, NGOs, concessionaires and communities.
- Advocate for the Trust's mission and objectives at various levels, including public speaking and media engagement.
- Ensure that the local communities are consulted and informed of activities and progress.
- Ensure that all contracts signed by partners with the Government for collaboration and activities in Nyika and Vwaza are transferred to the Trust.
- Manage all partnership contracts involving the Trust.

Team Leadership:

- Foster a positive, inspiring, and collaborative work environment that empowers employees to actively work toward organisation-wide goals.
- Recruit, develop, and manage the PMU as a high-performing team of professionals.
- Be responsible for all staff and foster a collaborative and inclusive work culture that promotes team spirit, innovation and excellence.

Governance and Board Relations:

The CEO will work closely with the Board to ensure effective governance and board engagement.

- Provide regular updates and reports to the Board on the Trust's activities and financial performance.
- Submit technical and financial progress reports to the Board monthly, quarterly and annually.
- In collaboration with the board secretary, prepare the agenda and discussion documents for the board meetings.
- Participate in the Board meetings.
- Participate in the Executive Committee meetings; the Executive Committee will assist the Board with the day-to-day guidance of the PMU and shall also carry out such other duties and functions as the Board may, from time to time, delegate to the Executive Committee.

Compliance and Legal Matters:

- Steer the Trust towards best international practices in terms of risks and compliance.
- Ensure all risks and safeguard management plans are developed, resourced and adhered to.
- Ensure the establishment and effective operation of a Grievance Mechanism and Stakeholder Engagement Plans within the Trust, aligning with the expectations and standards set forth by international donors and partners.

- Ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations, and reporting requirements.
- Address any legal or compliance issues promptly and effectively.
- Provide special attention to the respect of human rights in all Trust activities.

Public Relations and Communications:

- Serve as the public face of the Trust, representing it at conferences, events, and in the media.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive communication and marketing strategy.

Tran Frontier Conservation Area

- Ensure the Trust participates in discussions, institutional and technical meetings, workshops, and conferences relating to MAZA TFCA.
- Nyika - North Luangwa component
 - Engage with DNPW Zambia and partners active in the Zambian component of the TFCA, such as Frankfurt Zoological Society and COMACO.
 - Support the development of transfrontier activities (wildlife monitoring, tourism development and planning)
 - Support activities aiming at maintaining the ecological connectivity between Malawi and Zambia
- Kasungu – Lukusuzi component
 - Promote institutional and technical exchanges with DNPW Malawi, DNPW Zambia and partners active in this Southern component of the MAZA TFCA such as IFAW.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- A higher degree in natural sciences, project management or business management fields.
- A minimum of 15 years of senior leadership experience in conservation, environmental protection in southern Africa; knowledge and experience in Malawi.
- Knowledge and experience in working with the local communities in and around protected areas in Malawi will be an added advantage.
- Proven experience in the following types of programmes:
 - Planning and development of conservation areas.
 - Management of large protected area/s, including conservation programmes.
 - Working with rural communities in the field of governance, resource use and livelihood programmes and projects.
- Strong financial management and fundraising skills.
- Demonstrated ability to lead, inspire, and manage a diverse team.
- Proven track record in strategic planning and execution.
- Skills in negotiating, excellent interpersonal communication and programme management are essential.
- Track record, ability and willingness to live and work in remote conditions are highly advantageous.
- Experience in management, liaison, monitoring and evaluation, compliance and reporting on large development partner donor programmes.

Interested candidates are invited to submit a **cover letter** detailing their interest in and suitability for the position and a **curriculum vitae** with full address, telephone number, email address and contact details of at least three contactable references. These should be submitted by **23 August 2024**.

A competitive salary package will be negotiated based on qualifications and experience.

Applications should be submitted to Human Resources.

Email: zamapplications@peaceparks.org

SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES will be contacted to attend an interview.

Should you not hear from us within two weeks from the closing date, your application was unsuccessful.