Peace Parks Foundation and Rob Walton Foundation partner to strengthen six of Africa's most iconic protected areas

US$29.2 million in support from The Rob Walton Foundation will strengthen conservation management across 82 000 km² in southern Africa, an area more than nine times the size of Yellowstone National Park, while helping create the conditions for sustained investment.

STELLENBOSCH, South Africa, 19 November 2026 — Peace Parks Foundation today announced a major investment in the long-term management of six protected areas across southern Africa, advancing its transboundary conservation work with national governments and communities to protect some of the continent's most important natural landscapes.

A US$29.2 million grant from The Rob Walton Foundation will support Peace Parks' conservation efforts across 82 000 square kilometres in Angola, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

The funding will help strengthen park governance, operational capacity, ecological resilience, human-wildlife coexistence and sustainable financing. It also represents an important step toward establishing the long-term management arrangements necessary to attract additional public, private and philanthropic investment.

Moving beyond short-term conservation

Africa's protected landscapes are essential to biodiversity, water security, climate resilience and the livelihoods of surrounding communities. Yet many face growing pressures from changing land use, population growth and climate impacts, while the financing available to protect them often remains tied to short-term projects.

Peace Parks already co-manages eight protected areas across southern Africa through long-term partnerships with national governments. Its approach combines professional management, shared governance and clear accountability to sustain conservation efforts over generations.

Six protected areas across four countries

The investment will support Peace Parks' work in six protected areas:

- Mozambique: Limpopo, Zinave and Banhine national parks

- Zimbabwe: Greater Mana Pools Ecosystem
- Malawi: Nyika-Vwaza Complex
- Angola: Luengue-Luiana National Park

Five of the protected areas are already supported through long-term partnership agreements with national governments. In Angola, Peace Parks and the government have signed a memorandum of understanding to develop a partnership framework for the management of Luengue-Luiana National Park.

An opportunity to expand conservation investment

The six protected areas are among 162 protected and conserved areas identified through the wider Africa Keystone Protected Area Partnership, which seeks to advance effective long-term management of ecologically significant landscapes across the continent by 2035.

Spanning 33 countries, these areas collectively contain 71% of Africa's threatened vertebrate species, provide water on which nearly 250 million people depend and store an estimated 5.8 billion tonnes of carbon.

The grant supporting Peace Parks' work in six of these areas illustrates how sustained philanthropic investment can strengthen conservation management and help create the conditions for broader participation by governments, private funders and other philanthropic organisations.

Rather than relying on a succession of isolated projects, Peace Parks' approach seeks to establish durable management institutions supported by diversified sources of financing.

"Peace Parks has established strong working relationships with governments and demonstrated what sustained investment in protected area management can achieve," said Duko Hopman of The Rob Walton Foundation. "We see an opportunity to build on that experience across six important landscapes and encourage other funders to join this effort."

"Protecting Africa's extraordinary natural heritage requires more than individual projects or short-term funding commitments," said Werner Myburgh, CEO of Peace Parks Foundation. "We've spent years working with governments to build the management capacity needed to restore and protect these landscapes. The Rob Walton Foundation's support will help us accelerate this work across six important protected areas and secure their long-term future."

Conservation beyond borders

The six protected areas also contribute to Peace Parks' wider vision for connected conservation landscapes across southern Africa.

Wildlife, rivers and ecological systems extend beyond political boundaries. Protecting them requires cooperation among neighbouring countries and communities, alongside management arrangements that recognise the interdependence of these natural systems.

Peace Parks' Vision 2050 aims to help secure 14 functioning transboundary conservation landscapes spanning 980 000 square kilometres across ten countries.

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About Peace Parks Foundation

Founded in 1997 by President Nelson Mandela, HRH Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and Dr Anton Rupert, Peace Parks Foundation is a non-profit organisation pioneering conservation at scale across southern Africa.

Working through Transfrontier Conservation Areas that span national borders, Peace Parks connects protected areas, supports biodiversity conservation and ecological resilience, strengthens local economies and promotes regional peace and stability. Its holistic approach is built on three pillars: conservation at scale, community development and conservation finance, ensuring that protected areas deliver long-term ecological and economic value.

To date, Peace Parks has supported governments in establishing 780 000 km^2 of Transfrontier Conservation Areas across southern Africa. It also co-manages eight parks where wildlife populations have rebounded fivefold and supports more than 280 000 people annually through its interventions. With formal government mandates and strong community partnerships, Peace Parks offers a proven model for building resilience for people and nature across southern Africa's most significant landscapes.

Peace Parks' Vision 2050 aims to secure 14 fully functional transboundary landscapes spanning 980 000 km^2, one of the world's most ambitious land-based conservation initiatives.

www.peaceparks.org

About Rob Walton Foundation

The Rob Walton Foundation supports large-scale conservation efforts and collaborative partnerships, primarily in Africa. The Foundation focuses on long-term, high-impact strategies that work with governments, NGOs, and communities to protect critical ecosystems, support livelihoods, and strengthen community resilience.

https://robwaltonfoundation.org/

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