



# Annual Review of the Karongwe Hub 2018

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'Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children's children.

- **Theodore Roosevelt**



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## 1.0 Human Resources

### 1.1 Staffing

Karongwe held six paid staff throughout the course of 2018, except for the months from April – December during which there were only five paid positions.

The following details staff members and their respective positions;

#### **Base Manager**

Leah Brown January – December 2018

#### **Assistant Base Manager**

Robbie Mann January – March 2018

Leighton Barnard March – December 2018

#### **Science Officer**

Kate Arbon January – June 2018

Kayla Geenen July – December 2018

#### **Community Research Assistant**

Faith Shivamba January – December 2018

#### **Reserve Management Research Assistant**

Gregory Crichton January – March 2018

Role terminated after March.

#### **Volunteer Co-ordinator Research Assistant**

Zoe Biggs January – December 2018

2018 saw the departure of long standing staff member Kate Arbon. She made the difficult decision to resign after three years of service to the company during which she worked her way up from Bushwise Intern to Science Officer. She was sorely missing family and no longer enjoying living alongside volunteers. Robbie Mann also resigned earlier in the year to take up a position at another volunteer organisation. He was given an opportunity to complete an all expenses paid masters within the new role.

Job descriptions remained relatively unchanged this year. However, six paid positions were reduced to five. We made this decision with the intention to take on two Bushwise



Interns rather than one going forward. This would allow for an equivalent number of drivers and would free up salary budget to increase salaries of the remaining roles, with the hopes of increasing staff retention. The Reserve Management role was absorbed by the Volunteer Co-ordinator and the BW Interns. If we are to increase capacity of the hub to allow for a third vehicle each session we will need to hire an extra staff member.

Roles at the end of 2018 were as follows;

- Program Manager
- Assistant Program Manager & Internship Co-ordinator
- Science Officer
- Community Engagement Research Assistant
- Volunteer Co-ordinator Research Assistant

## 1.2 Training

Reduced staff numbers for majority of 2018 meant that training of the staff team was unfortunately put on the back burner. I now keep a GVI staff training log to better track training completed annually.

The current team hold the following qualifications;

### **Leah Brown**

*Diploma of Animal Technology; FGASA Level One; Low Range Academy 4x4 Training; Cybertracker Level One; EFRI; PrDP*

### **Leighton Barnard**

*Exercise Specialist Degree; FGASA Level One; Full Trails Guide; Advanced Rifle Handling; Low Range Academy 4x4 Training; Man Tracking Level Two; EFR; PrDP*

### **Kayla Geenen**

*MSc Conservation Ecology candidate; FGASA Level One; Back-up Trails Guide; Advanced Rifle Handling; Low Range Academy 4x4 Training; Cybertracker Level Two; EFR; PrDP*

### **Faith Shivamba**

*Diploma of Nature Conservation; FGASA Level One, Low Range Academy 4x4 Training; EFR; PrDP*



## **Zoe Biggs**

*BSc Zoology, FGASA Level One, Low Range Academy 4x4 Training; EFR; PrDP*

The following training was completed throughout the year;

### Child Protection Policy

During 2018 all staff who had not previously completed the GVI Child Protection Policy Training completed it – Kayla and Leighton. This training was essential and enlightened staff as to the sensitivity required when using social media platforms and the internet. All incoming volunteers also received training on GVI's Child Protection Policy and GVI's Social Media Policy prior to their first trip into the community.

### Emergency First Response

The EFR course was delivered as normal to all volunteers who signed up for a period of longer than two weeks. Although there was little need for these skills to be demonstrated throughout 2018, CPR and first aid are invaluable skills and very much a necessity due to our remote location. Zoe and Greg took the EFR refresher course in January, Leighton in March and Kayla and Faith in June.

### FGASA

Leighton and I have booked a February 2019 sitting for our Level Two FGASA exam. Wish us luck!

### OSSM

Zoe and Faith completed OSSM training in January. Leighton and Kayla are still to receive this training.

### Data Protection

Leighton, Kate, Faith, Zoe, Kayla and I all received Data Protection training in May and have signed necessary paperwork to acknowledge this.

### Fire Fighting, Health and Safety

Leighton and I completed a short fire fighting and health and safety course. Our off weeks do not coincide which means that there is always someone present who has experience with basic fire fighting if the need arises.



### Human Empowerment

Leighton, Faith, Kayla and Leah completed the Human Empowerment training in June.

### Child Protection and Residential Care

I completed the above training in August.

During 2019, I would like to continue to focus on empowering our staff by encouraging them to better their qualifications, especially those concerned with field guiding. It is incredibly important for GVI to support staff through constant growth and development, after all this is linked directly with retention. We aim to cover costs associated with up-skilling (within reason) to further support and empower the team.

### Further Training for 2019

*Venomous snake handling* – I need to refresh my snake handling skills and would like to complete this course with another staff member so there is always someone on base who is able to remove dangerous snakes from the house. We have very few incidents throughout the wet season but this is an important skill for the team to have.

*FGASA* – Leighton and myself will need to complete the Level Two practical drive upon passing the theory. I will be encouraging Zoe to work towards Level Two this year.

*EFRI* – Zoe will head to CT in 2019 to receive this training from Jill.

*EFR* – Leighton will need a refresher in March, Kayla will need a refresher in June.

*Track and Sign* – I hope to give all staff an opportunity to take part in a T&S course this year to allow them to gain or improve their Cybertracker qualification.

### 1.4 Ratios

At the Karongwe hub, the staffing to volunteer ratio is 1:3.6 when the hub is at its full capacity of 18. *If we are to increase our capacity to 26 the staff to volunteer ratio will be 1:5.2.*

Whilst the current ratio seems high, our daily project work involves two activities each AM and PM. During these scheduled activities a third staff member is required to stay base at all times to oversee volunteers rostered on base duty and respond to emergencies if need be.



Outside of AM and PM activities each staff member has extra responsibilities to fulfil. The introduction of two week start dates requires a second comprehensive training week every month. Ideally we need at least four staff members on base on any given day to allow for completion of activities and extra responsibilities.

Currently the staff work a three week on, one week off cycle. Although this leave system is effective and aligned with similar practices within the lodge industry it does result in two staff on leave at the same time during some weeks. This further reinforces the need for a minimum of 5 staff to ensure that there are at least 4 staff present at base each day.

## 2.0 Finance

The total monthly budget for the hub from January – Decemeber 2018 was R126,700. These funds are divided between the following fixed and variable costs (*see Table 1*).

Following year-end, I have made a few suggested modifications according to annual increases from relevant suppliers. We also saw a shift from international to South African staff in March and again in July, which required an increase in our budget.

Table 1. Karongwe fixed and variable costs

<b>KARONGWE BUDGET 2017</b>		
<b>Fixed</b>	<b>Budget (R)</b>	<b>Change?</b>
Rent	17,000	
Insurance (vehicles)	13,000	
Cruiser repayments	8,000	
Traversing	4,500	Increase by 100
Africa SAFE-T	1,000	Increase by 400
Vertel (radio channels)	1,000	
Tracker	550	Increase by 150
CPF	500	
<b>TOTAL FIXED</b>	<b>R45,550</b>	
<b>Variables</b>		
Food	25,000	
Vehicle maintenance	15,000	
Fuel (diesel)	7,500	Increase by 500
Fuel (petrol)	3,500	
Gas	2,900	Increase by 300



Vol training	2,000	Increase by 500
Stationary	2,000	
Household	2,000	
Science equip	2,000	
T-shirts	2,000	
Staff training	1,500	
Equipment (batteries etc)	1,500	
Staff food	1,000	
Gen maintenance	1,000	
Ecotraining (H2O)	750	Increase by 250
Comms (airtime)	500	
H&S	500	
Entertain	500	
Misc	500	
Bank charges	500	
Staff wages	9,000	Increase by 14,000
<b>TOTAL VARIABLES</b>	<b>R81,150</b>	
<b>TOTAL FIXED &amp; VARIABLES</b>	<b>R126,700</b>	
<b>New proposed TOTAL</b>	<b>R144,050</b>	Total increase R17,350

## 3.0 Capacity

### 3.1 Capacity to achieve objectives

The current participant capacity at the Karongwe hub is 18.

Our capacity is ideal for achieving our objectives whilst encompassing substantial participant involvement. Towards the end of 2018 we had an Elephant Impact PhD Study approved and early 2019 saw the approval of a Hyena Census Study. The maintenance and data handling of both of these projects will significantly increase the workload for the hub, however with the increase in intern number this will be tolerable.

There is certainly opportunity for us to increase our impact but we would require extra resources, such as extra staff and vehicles to do so. However, the current GVI house is being utilised to its capacity. Although there is physically enough room for people, our facilities and the atmosphere within the house would be compromised if we were to increase capacity. Participants are restricted as to how they utilise the current base for their own safety as we are unfenced and surrounded by Big 5 game. This leaves little





space for quiet reflection or a quick escape for those who need it. I have received negative feedback from several participants in response to our capacity increase plans and I worry that once upgrades have been made that we have spent money to the detriment of the hub.

### 3.2 Opportunities to expand our work and impact

Drawing upon Karongwe's current resources and expertise the hub does indeed have the ability to expand our work and in turn our impact.

#### 3.2.1 Scientific Output

A concerted effort was made during 2018 to engage and strengthen relationships with the greater scientific community. It is these partnerships that offer important mentorship to our relatively young science team and have been an invaluable addition to the scope of our program. Individuals from the staff team were involved in reaching out to bodies such as Elephants Alive, Endangered Wildlife Trust, Birdlife SA, DigTrace, independent scientists and several universities including Witwatersrand (SA), Stellenbosch (SA), UCT (SA) and Bournemouth (UK). During 2019 we will continue to nurture these relationships and aim to expand on this, focusing on connections with South African universities.

The addition of Kayla Geenen as Science Officer as well as our ongoing scientific partnerships has allowed expansion of our 2019 scientific objectives. We were incredibly happy to achieve one of our most important scientific objectives for 2018 – the approval of a research proposal by Karongwe GAMECO. We have spent the best part of three years developing trusting relationships with GAMECO to allow for published research. Katie Thompson from Bournemouth University will be embarking on her PhD study '*Determining ecological change and the functioning of an ecosystem with mega-herbivore presence on a spatio-temporal scale: Karongwe Game Reserve, Limpopo, South Africa.*' In addition to this, Kayla in collaboration with her supervisor from Stellenbosch University is confident that the utilization of our current data sets will enable a peer-reviewed publication by year-end 2019.

Our relationship with a previous staff member, Kutullo Shai and his new employer, Rene Koopman, proved to be rewarding in 2018. Rene, who is a shareholder on Karongwe's Mafunyane property, has offered to fully fund a large-scale camera trapping project. His interests lie with the abundance of hyena on Karongwe and their population dynamics. The project will be set-up and coordinated by GVI with all data to remain our property. We are waiting on approval from the board in early 2019 but are confident that this



study will go ahead. This project will allow us to accurately estimate predator populations on the property – namely hyena and a myriad of meso-predators, which are predominately nocturnal and illusive.

### 3.2.2 Community Outreach

Community outreach and environmental education are key to conservation success. Our impact here should always be critiqued, improved and expanded. The environmental education program currently delivered at Diputhi Primary School was qualifiedly tested for the first time in 2018. It was incredibly encouraging to see that our hours of work dedicated to these young minds is making a tangible difference in their attitudes towards the environment and wildlife.

In late 2018 Faith made contact with a local education centre called the Timbavati Foundation. Their mission 'To promote environmental and conservation awareness and ecotourism, including maintenance of the environmental school and expansion of teacher workshops at local schools.' We will be partnering with them in 2019 to ensure we allow access to as many children as possible to their worthwhile program. This will require funding through the GVI Trust.

During 2019 we will be reaching out to older audiences to deliver our conservation message. Changing perspectives and attitudes towards the environment is important at any age but targeting high school students when they are deciding on potential careers paths is key. We aim to visit several high schools/colleges during 2019 to inform them about possible career paths within conservation and our National Scholarship Program. These presentations will broaden the scope of selection for our National Scholarship Program and will make it a more competitive and sort after internship.

### 3.2.3 Mirco fauna research

In response to a request for capacity increase in 2017, I was asked to research feasibility for a satellite camp close to the Karongwe hub. Micro fauna research is difficult to intimately monitor on Karongwe and so I looked intently for places where we could achieve this. Budgets were drawn up to investigate the feasibility of this venture on Lekgalameetse Nature Reserve, a nature reserve approximately an hour from base. At the time we were offered full support from the reserve manager and a local scientist who is closely affiliated with the reserve. The proposal did not go ahead as the need for capacity increase was disregarded.



However, this has now been revisited in response for a need for more internship placement partners. If long-term interns are to spend three months with us and then be placed in a reserve similar to Lekgalameetse they will walk away from their GVI experience well equipped to work with a myriad of species. Micro fauna research will offer a more valuable skill set to most who visit the Karongwe hub as these are species are more likely to be found in our intern's home countries.

## 4.0 Third party operators

### 4.1 Project Partners

Ashtons Tours & Safaris have been operating locally since 1993 providing a transfer service for people travelling across South Africa. GVI has been affiliated with them for many years and as a result are able to gain discounted rates for most transfers. Generally staff and participants use Ashtons to provide a cheap transfer from Karongwe to Johannesburg but occasionally we have employed their services when our taxi has been out of use. *A health and safety audit was completed for Ashtons in August 2018. This is due for review in February 2019.*

Khamai Reptile Park has provided an educational 'reptile orientation' to participants for many years. All new participants are taken to the park within the first week of our program and their experience always receives positive feedback. Here they will also learn how to identify common venomous snakes – an important lesson for rural living. *A health and safety audit was completed for Khamai in July 2018. This is due for review now.*

### 4.2 Placement Partners

Mogalakwena is wildlife research facility based approximately 5 hours drive north-east of Karongwe and is currently a placement option for our long-term interns. The reserve that the research hub utilises does not contain dangerous game and can be accessed wholly on foot. *A health and safety audit was completed for Mogalakwena in January 2019. This is due for review in July 2019.*

C.R.O.W is a well-known and reputable wildlife rehabilitation centre located in Durban's city centre. We have sent any interns here for more than two years, predominately due to lack of interest in wildlife rehab. *A health and safety audit was completed for C.R.O.W in October 2018. This is due for review in April 2019.*



Nature's Valley Trust located in Nature's Valley lies on one of the most sought after stretches of South Africa's coastline, and development in the area is occurring at an unprecedented rate. In 2000 a group of NV families launched an initiative whose goal was to involve all stakeholders and contribute to proactively maintaining the environmental integrity of Nature's Valley and the surrounding area. NVT is a new placement partner, secured towards the end of 2018. Our first group of interns were sent to the coast in December, thus far we have had fantastic feedback from the group. Unfortunately they do not have space for any of our interns until December 2019. *A health and safety audit was completed for NVT in November 2018. We will review them prior to December 2019 – not required in 6 months time.*

Struwig is a research hub based in the Balule conservancy of the APNR. Leighton and myself conducted a site visit in November and saw huge potential with them. They receive very few volunteers and as a result have not developed their science. If we are to commit to working with them closely, we will be able to develop a fantastic program for our interns. Unfortunately due to some issues with staff we had to pull our first group of interns out early. The staff involved has since been fired. We may try to send another group at some point during 2019. *A health and safety audit was completed for Struwig in November 2018. This is due for review in May 2019.*

Wild Volunteers is based in Hluhluwe, KZN. Their aim is to restore previously disused, inhabitable land space to wilderness areas. They are also involved in some animal rehabilitation and creation of innovative projects to improve on-site sustainability. We sent two groups of interns to WV at the start of 2018. Both groups left their placement early due to a lack of work availability, lack of professionalism, lack of opportunities for personal and professional growth and poor management. *We are no longer sending interns to this location due to the consistent negative feedback.*

## 5.0 Work and Objectives

### 5.1 Karongwe's Objectives for 2018

Karongwe's objectives from 2018 are presented in Appendix 1, alongside our brilliant objective rhino.

### 5.2 Evaluation of Karongwe's Objectives

The Karongwe hub used a simple but effective way of illustrating steps towards achieving our objectives during 2018, our objective rhino. Sections of the horn were coloured as achievements were reached. An up-to-date objective rhino is presented to



each group of leavers to illustrate their contributions to the hub. This has proved to be an effective method of demonstrating how each group has contributed to the years objectives.

We fell marginally short of completing some of our objectives and significantly short of others, as can be seen represented on the objective rhino. Areas of weakness where these shortfalls took place were noted and revisited for 2019's objectives. Objectives where we fell significantly short can be attributed to the departure of a staff member (GIS skills and time needed for rhino digital footprints), lack of funds for equipment and uneducated judgement calls (high school talks). Rather than trying to expand in 2019 and potentially falling short again, the team spent hours discussing our 2018 achievements and collectively set realistic and achievable goals for 2019.

### 5.3 Karongwe's Objectives 2019

The 2019 objectives for the Karongwe hub are presented in Appendix 2.

## 6.0 Achievements and Highlights

In 2018 the Karongwe hub recorded **SIX-THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIVE** data points, produced **TWO** management reports, completed **ONE** crèche, hosted **FOUR** National Scholarship students, rehabilitated **TWO** sodic sites, delivered **SIXTEEN** environmental education classes, took **FOURTY-FIVE** learners on game drive and had **ONE** research proposal approved.

Here's all that and more in detail;

#### Mamoorare Creche

In September we were able to put the finishing touches on Mamoorare Day Care Centre in Bismark. It was great to see the kids benefiting from the fun and engaging space GVI had worked so hard to create. However, this project proved to be the most challenging construction undertaking to date. The GVI Trust contributed almost R67,000 to complete the project but had to consistently negotiate with difficult community members. The women who owned the land were not willing to contribute their time



and energy and builders who signed onto the project initially, left the project halfway through. Faith and I eventually had to visit the chief of the village in an attempt to ease the situation and ensure the project would actually be completed. As rewarding as the finished product was, we have decided to steer away from construction work, at least for 2019.



**The bare plot of land in Bismark**



**Mamoorare Creche complete!**

### National Scholarship Program

We had an incredibly successful year sourcing NSP's to complete our three-month internship. A total of three came through base, all of which completed the short-term internship, one further student joined us over the Christmas break. Since their departure one of the scholars, Tumelo, is now teaching environmental education in KZN. Ntombi is still looking for work but has kept in contact with us to keep her updated if any EE work becomes available – she is also now interested in the NSP at BW. Donald captured the hearts of everyone he met and is passionate about protecting wildlife – he is passionate about anti-poaching and has been offered a bursary to cover his costs for training. Amen only stayed with us for a short time and has now moved onto a 6-month course with BW covered by Make A Difference.

### The Qualitative Study

The results of the qualitative study are in! Last year the Diputhi Primary School learners took a qualitative test in January and then again in December to determine whether the hundreds of hours that we pour into environmental education classes are making a tangible impact. Statements such as 'There is no point in helping the environment because what I do won't make a difference' and 'It is okay to throw your rubbish on the



ground’ were given to learners who were required to rate their attitudes towards these statements on a scale of 1 - ‘Strongly Agree’ to 5 - ‘Strongly Disagree’.

We are thrilled to report that we recorded a 70% improvement in score. Our impact is making a difference and has positively influenced the attitudes of these 110 learners towards the environment, conservation and wildlife. We are incredibly excited to continue to educate these young minds throughout 2019 with the results of the study last year reinforcing the importance of our work.

### Fundraising for the GVI Trust

In support of the GVI Trust we co-ordinated two brilliant fundraisers this year. To contribute to our Community Fund we continued our annual tradition, the Spring Walk. On the first of September 150 people including GVI volunteers and staff joined Diputhi Primary School members and Oaks residents to take part in GVI’s Annual Spring Colour Walk. The walk spanned 10km – a round trip commencing and finishing at the focus of our work – the primary school. Congrats must be given to our star Community Officer Faith who co-ordinated the event and managed to raise over R12,000!



**2018 GVI Annual Colour Walk**



**Incredible scenes for a Spring Walk**

A few months later we held a Pub Quiz in aid of our White Rhino Fund. A small team lead by myself organised the event, secured major sponsors and raised almost R30,000. Not only did this event serve as a fantastic fundraising opportunity for GVI and our



Rhinos but it brought many estranged groups of people together from the local community who often forget to say hello to their neighbours. We heard belly laughs and watched teams work cohesively to fight for that first place, and to finish the evening with a standing ovation was the most rewarding donation we could have asked for. Due to the resounding success of the event we have been asked to make the Pub Quiz an annual event – we had so much fun putting it together we couldn't resist!

Through passive donations and the efforts of our fundraisers, once again, the GVI Trust provided great support to both of our projects this year. We funded major repairs and services for Karongwe's anti-poaching vehicles. Diputhi Primary School received an endless supply of sports equipment, books and stationary. We completed our construction work at Mamoorare Creche and took a group of Diputhi learners to the Timbavati Foundation on a 3 day Eco-Quest.

#### Karongwe GAMCO Meetings

We successfully presented at two GAMECO meetings throughout the year. The relationship with the board is one that is difficult to nurture as our interactions are infrequent but I firmly believe that we are finally gaining traction. Previously there were frustrations expressed by certain members surrounding the inconsistency of Program Managers. After serving as PM for two years, I have been able to build a trusting relationship based on honesty and openness. I took time to meet at least quarterly with some members of the board outside of scheduled meetings to gain further insight into the needs of the board and to allow for the delivery of high quality, relevant reports. Regular meetings held with the Reserve Warden were also key our success. I measure this success through the approval of our first research proposal in more than five years towards the end of last year and a well-received report during our AGM in October.

#### Publications

GVI Karongwe published four short articles in the Hoedspruit Herald, a small paper, published weekly and read by the greater Hoedspruit community. These publications provided us with an important platform to further spread the word about the positive impact we are having in the local communities and towards conservation. It is important for GVI to shake off this



Donald Rakgwale's journey in the conservation and wildlife sector is just beginning.

## Passion and perseverance pays off

GROWING up in a single parent family in Sekororo village, life was not always easy for Donald Rakgwale, but his life was to change drastically after his mother died in 2008.

endangered they are as a result of poaching, he took the animal home and immediately emailed Siyabonga Africa to inform them of his discovery.

### Donald's publication





common misconception that volunteer organisations are highly profitable-low impact conglomerates. I believe, short publications such as these help change these mindsets. Two articles were published detailing construction work completed at a local crèche - Mamoorare, a third providing readers with insight into the inspiring story of one of our NSP's Donald, and the last a fun piece about the annual Spring Walk.

### Groups Season

At the end of July Karongwe hosted their second under 18's group. Leighton, Armand and Malene lead nine volunteers from diverse backgrounds. Participants stayed on a neighbouring farm to Karongwe and were exposed to the wonders of the South African bush with an emphasis on engaging all senses, provoking thought and stimulating a hunger to seek further knowledge. The group cooked traditional food, taught local children, handled snakes, saw the craters on the moon through a powerful microscope, visited Kruger National Park and absorbed an incredible amount new knowledge. The program was a resounding success with great feedback from all participants. We are looking forward to a new exciting group of young minds in 2019.

### Science!

We collaborated with one student from Bournemouth University in the UK during the course of the year. Katie Thompson completed our 6-week internship towards the end of 2017. She then presented her PhD proposal to GVI in March 2018; *'Determining ecological change and the functioning of an ecosystem with mega-herbivore presence on a spatio-temporal scale: Karongwe Game Reserve, Limpopo, South Africa.'* During our June GAMECO meeting we presented Katie's proposal and were given the go ahead from the board. Katie visited the hub in December to collect elephant data and to start planning subsequent data collection at her study site. She recorded a short video to be played to all incoming participants so they may better understand her project and our affiliation with this young scientist. We are incredibly excited to be a part of her PhD study and will support her however we can to help her attain this monumental achievement.

### Reserve Work

2018 saw the completion of a large-scale reserve management project, Tsuku's Pan. The project aimed to improve the quality and productivity of the once sodic and degraded area of Tsuku's Pan on Karongwe Private Game Reserve by implementing rehabilitation methods to encourage the regrowth of native vegetation. Staff and participants spent the best part of 12 months completing this project, which was consistently hindered by



the presence of dangerous game and lack of working vehicles. The 4,200m<sup>2</sup> site was sectioned into three, ploughed, sprinkled with carbon, had logs laid to reduce run off and covered with horse manure and reeds. After the completion of the project in July we have seen remarkable regrowth including the establishment of a woody layer within first section started in 2017. The success of regeneration at this site means our rehabilitation methods can also be utilized elsewhere. We took on a second rehabilitation project directly south of the first site. This was a much smaller area, and without any setbacks we were able to complete this site in a mere few months. We aim to identify another site to be treated in 2019.



The three sections of the total 4,200m<sup>2</sup> treated area



Participants placing reeds at Tsuku's Pan



The final reed was placed in July 2018



## 7.0 Feedback – summary

According to responses from Survey Monkey Karongwe still performed incredibly well although we saw a drop in our annual score from last year. Our overall NPS decreased from 85% in 2017 to 76% in 2018. For a detailed look at the statistics feedback for this year please refer to Appendix 3.

As our NPS score decreased slightly it was expected that we would see a decrease in other scores within the survey. I believe that majority of the negative feedback we received relates directly to the departure of long-term staff and the disruption that this causes to the program. These staff changes influenced the delivery of the internship and placements. Of the 82 responses that we received only 3 of them were detractors, accounting for 4% of the total.

Upon review of the general trends for suggestions, majority of these pertained to the internship. The internship is by no means an easy role to fulfil. Interns come with very high expectations and even when offered a lot will always expect/want more. Leighton took over the role in March and only had a short hand over period due to the resignation restrictions at his previous role. He then spent some time acclimatising to the role and shaping the program to one that he preferred to deliver. He was also left responsible for sourcing an entire range of new placement options as this has not been actioned by the person in the role previously. He now has a solid program in place and I am confident that 2019 will be a rewarding year for the interns.

Some comments were made about the lack of power, which is an issue we have since resolved. There was also feedback left about upgrades that should be made to base eg. broken bunk beds, faulty spotlights etc. Our house/equipment is heavily utilised and so wear and tear is expected. We need to ensure equipment is replaced before it breaks completely and reduces our ability to deliver the program or causes a health and safety issue. This heavy utilisation will worsen with an increase in our capacity.

Weekly feedback sessions were held throughout 2018 and were a brilliant forum for conveying smaller issues that then did not filter through to Survey Monkey forms. Volunteers were generally impressed with the manner in which feedback was received and responded to promptly.



## 8.0 Service Learning

No service learning groups visited Karongwe during 2018.

## 9.0 Lessons learned for next year

Based on this report, the following lessons have been noted for improvement.

- Better support for Internship Co-ordinator.
- Improved communication with internship placement partners.
- Increase staff training.
- Continue to involve participants in science projects on base – beneficial for professional development and to expand our impact.

It should be noted that an updated memorandum of understanding was signed between Karongwe GAMECO and GVI Karongwe, taking effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 for a period of two years.



## 10.0 Appendices

### Appendix 1. Karongwe's Objectives - 2018

Objective	Achieved Yes/No	Comments
Train 4 interested individuals research techniques through the National Scholarship Program.	Yes	We had four fantastic NSP's join this year. Tumelo is now teaching environmental education in KZN. Ntombi is still looking for work but has kept in contact with us so we can keep her updated if any EE becomes available – she is also now interested in the NSP at BW. Donald captured the hearts of everyone he met and is passionate about protecting wildlife – he would like to go into anti-poaching and has been offered a bursary to cover his costs for training. Amen only stayed with us for a short time and has now moved onto a 6-month course with BW covered by Make A Difference.
Provide research opportunity for 2 South African University students.	Partial	Unfortunately we did not have any South African students join us this year but we took big steps forward with our relationships with South African universities. We did have a student from Bournemouth Uni join us after the approval of her PhD study! She is a GVI Intern turned GVI alumni scholar.
Provide training for 8 project partners.	Yes	We had more than 8 partners join us on research drives, a fantastic way to ensure a transparent relationship with them.
Publish 8 newspaper or magazine articles.	Partial	We published 4 articles in a local paper, the Hoedspruit Herald – Mamoorare Creche work, Donald our star NSP and The Spring Walk. We were not aware that we would have to pay such large sums to publish in magazines. This has been removed for next year.
Conduct 4 reserve census to determine herbivore population dynamics.	No	2018 saw the implementation of a different approach to counting prey. The equipment that we required to complete a census was delayed due to lack of hub budget and then held at customs for more than six months. We have what we require for 2019 and will be completing this next year with flying colours!
Present 1 progress report and 1 annual report to project partners and reserve management.	Yes	Both meetings ran smoothly – with comments from the board that the AGM was one of the best they have seen. Our success during these meetings has further strengthened our relationship with the board and has resulted in the approval of one



		major study.
2 research proposals approved by landowners and reserve management.	Partial	PhD Elephant Impact Study approved. Katie Thompson from Bournemouth Uni to be conducting her research on Karongwe alongside GVI.
Complete 4 short-term reserve management projects using Geographical Information Systems.	Partial	We repeated the road quality study again towards the end of 2018 and continued with soil sampling. The departure of our GIS enthusiast, whom this objective was created for, made it difficult to achieve 4 projects.
Publish 2 scientific articles.	Partial	2 articles were submitted to an online platform, Biodiversity Observations, but have not yet been published.
Create 4 rhino digital footprints.	No	We thought that setting ourselves a lower target of four would make it relatively easy for us to achieve this objective. It has been incredibly difficult to collect the data we require to create a digital footprint. We have removed this for 2019 but will continue to try and collect track data.
Eradicate prickly pear from two farms on Karongwe.	Partial	Poison was purchased halfway through last year, once budget allowed. We managed to complete the equivalent of one farm but not two. Towards the end of 2018 we combined intern walks with prickly pear. We will continue to do this in 2019.
Rehabilitate two eroded sites on Karongwe.	Yes	In 2017 we started work on a 4,200m <sup>2</sup> sodic site, which we were finally able to complete in 2018. We were hindered by lack of vehicles and dangerous game disturbing our scheduled sessions. Directly south of the first site was another identified sodic site. We attempted a different method of rehabilitation and managed to complete this project before the end of 2018.
Sustain 50 saplings in a tree nursery.	Partial	After testing numerous different methods for cultivating trees throughout 2017/18 we finally managed to get the mix right. Once the trees started sprouting we realised that our nursery wasn't big enough to sustain 50 saplings, so we fit in what we could! We were able to cultivate around 40 trees and will continue to watch them grow in 2019.
Deliver 16 environmental education, youth development and sports classes at Diputhi Primary School.	Yes	We reduced this objective from 2017 as there were strikes and school dismissed early unannounced. 16 classes were delivered and the introduction of our qualitative study last year showed that our time spent there is certainly worthwhile.
Deliver environmental education, conservation career advice and NSP presentation to 4 high	Partial	Contact was made in the middle of the year to a number of different local high schools. We believed this would give us enough time to squeeze into the syllabus but



school classes.		unfortunately this was not the case. We however presented at the African Wildlife College and have now established relationships with a number of different schools that will allow us to present in 2019.
Complete 2 upliftment projects.	Yes	Construction at Mamoorare crèche was completed in July. This was a challenging project and resulted in the decision to move away from construction work and rather focus our upliftment projects on environmental education. In November 2018 we took a group of 8 students on a three-day Eco-Quest with the Timbavait Foundation. This was incredibly successful, we will continue to take groups throughout 2019.
Provide 45 learners from Diputhi with the opportunity to go on game drive.	Yes.	We more than doubled the number of learners who joined us on game drive from 2017. A sound schedule and accounting for school holidays meant that this was achievable. During 2019 we will be taking the learners on a combination of game drives in the KNP and on Karongwe.



# Limpopo 2019 Hub Objectives



- 1   Train interested individuals in research techniques through the National Scholarship Programme.  
4 x NSP interns
- 2   Provide research opportunity for University students.  
2 x students in partnership with a South African University
- 3   Provide training for project partners.  
8 x partners
- 4   Publish one newspaper article per quarter.  
4 x publications
- 5   Analysis of herbivore population dynamics presented to project partners and reserve management.  
4 x reserve census
- 6   Ecological reports presented to project partners and reserve management.  
1 x progress report, 1x annual report
- 7   Improve scientific output.  
2 x approved research proposals crediting GVI's contributions  
2 x short term reserve management focus studies using Geographical Information Systems  
2 x GVI popular scientific articles  
1 x peer reviewed publication
- 8   Reserve management projects approved by the reserve manager.  
Eradicate prickly pear from 15 blocks  
Complete two major reserve work projects  
Sustain 30 saplings in a tree nursery  
Transplant 10 trees
- 9     Continue our partnership with Diphuti Primary School.  
16 x environmental education classes  
16 x youth development classes  
16 x sports practices
- 10   Practical conservation education.  
2 x practical environmental education classes
- 11   Environmental education outreach.  
4 x environmental education, conservation careers advice and NSP presentations to high school/college students
- 12    Provide children with the opportunity to go on game drive.  
55 x learners from Diphuti
- 13    Community upliftment projects.  
2 x completed projects
- 14    Qualitative study.  
70% increase in environmental awareness attitudes
- 15   Team leading projects.  
30 x completed projects





### Appendix 3. Feedback statistics for 2018

After review of the feedback from 2018, these are the statistics and identified general trends. 2018's scores have been highlighted in either red or green according an increase or decrease in score from 2017. Interpret as follows; (2018 score), (2017 score).

- 76% Net promoter score, 85%
- 92.5% Were more aware of global issues, 91%
- 78% felt like they made a difference, 88%
- 92% felt supported throughout their GVI experience, 98%
- 91% felt that it increased their employability, 85%

#### Average score:

- Quality of standard equipment 7/10, 7.5/10
- Quality of training 9/10, 9/10
- Pick up service and initial orientation 9/10, 9/10
- Condition of the base 8/10, 8/10
- Felt that they contributed to the long-term objectives 8/10, 8.5/10
- GVI's health and safety standards 9/10, 8.5/10
- Understanding of the long-term objectives 9/10, 9/10

#### General trends for suggestions:

- More internship activities, assignments, lectures
- Fix the power issue
- Maintain resources/equipment

#### General trends for best aspect of the programme:

made<sub>base</sub> people met<sub>lot</sub> meeting<sub>volunteers</sub> work<sub>seeing animals</sub>  
 amazing<sub>Going drives</sub> people<sub>meeting new people</sub>  
 wildlife<sub>drives</sub> staff<sub>GVI</sub> Learning<sub>conservation</sub>  
 animals<sub>family</sub> experience<sub>friendly</sub> great<sub>learned lot</sub>  
 staff volunteers<sub>everyone</sub> Everything African



**General trends for feedback regarding staff:**

Kayla thanks Leighton think staff Zoe overall  
amazing end staff passionate jobs made incredibly  
Leah happy time different us need one think drives much  
great day know willing things Leah Zoe work even though  
around never bush something cares good time people however interns great teacher  
knowledge especially really help us fun important everyone  
really passionate volunteers want awesome hard working  
community spend go pass always lot job birds  
passionate feel given also base incredible Faith learn  
knowledgeable work hard good another way base manager Leah  
love plants friendly put Every staff member extremely say told  
staff members set everything place welcoming happened help start

**General trends for keep doing:**

- Offering scholarships to locals
- Continue community work
- Hiring friendly, approachable, passionate staff
- Weekly themes
- Enthusiasm staff have for their jobs
- Creating an inclusive, welcoming, family environment
- Inviting other volunteer programs to the hub to network
- Being organised
- Everything!

**General trends for start doing:**

- Publicise work so the greater community is aware



- More detailed program write up on website, include videos, more domestic marketing
- More placement options for interns
- Litter picking with community
- Night drives and sleep outs, briefs before drives
- Use data to publish scientific papers
- Facebook page only for volunteers
- More base projects/midday activities
- Repairs around base camp

**General trends for stop doing:**

- Expanding the base, more people would be too cramped
- Charging for Wi-Fi
- EFR
- Living without power
- Internships/placements
- Mid month start date
- Nothing!