

Declaration of the Directors of the Africa Protected Areas on Sustainable
Mechanisms in Finance, Disaster Risk Reduction and Cooperation for
Protected and Conserved Areas

Signed at Nairobi, Kenya on 18 November 2021

Preamble

WE, THE DIRECTORS OF THE AFRICA PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS :

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity (1963) outlines the duty to harness the natural and human resources of Africa for the advancement of Africa's peoples in sustainable development;

RECOGNIZING that the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (2003) acknowledges that soil, water, flora and fauna resources are of vital importance to the planet;

ACKNOWLEDGING nature's role in providing food, water, energy, shelter and other benefits that sustain humanity;

CONCERNED about the current and potential future impacts of pandemics such as COVID19 on protected and conserved areas in Africa;

RECOGNIZING the pivotal role of Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLCs) to contribute to and benefit from protected and conserved areas;

AWARE of the value that the network of protected and conserved areas, inclusive of State, private, community managed areas and other effective area-based conservation measures provide as the backbone of natural infrastructure underpinning Africa's development;

CONSCIOUS of competing pressures for land and resources from a growing human population posing threats such as habitat loss and fragmentation, marine degradation etc to the continent's protected and conserved area estate;

CONSCIOUS that the effects of climate change continue to undermine the integrity of protected and conserved area systems;

FURTHER CONSCIOUS that unsustainable production and consumption patterns accelerate the pressure on protected and conserved area estates;



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ACKNOWLEDGING THAT the limited resources (financial, human capital, technological, technical etc) for the continent's network of protected and conserved areas compromises the capacity of **these areas to deliver on their potential to serve Africa's development aspirations;**

APPRECIATING that Africa's protected and conserved area estates play an important role in the implementation of the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework;

ACKNOWLEDGING the commitment from governments, non-state actors and communities to protected and conserved areas to work towards closing the resourcing gap;

CONVINCED of the urgency for collective responsibility of African States, local communities, and stakeholders to address the myriad of challenges facing protected and conserved areas in Africa.

WE, THE DIRECTORS OF PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS¹ FROM AFRICAN COUNTRIES DECLARE

TO PURSUE

1. A shared Vision and Ambition
 - i. A SHARED VISION for **collaboratively strengthening Africa's networks of protected and conserved areas** as foundational to the development aspirations set out in Agenda 2063 and;
 - ii. A SHARED AMBITION to establish sustainable mechanisms in finance, disaster risk reduction and cooperation **to support Africa's protected and conserved areas;**
2. Guiding Principles in pursuit of the Vision and ambition,
 - i. OUR ASPIRATIONS are for these mechanisms to be resourced through diverse strategies bringing public and private actors from Africa and abroad;
 - ii. OUR RESOLVE is to work together as African Protected Area Directors to conserve and **manage Africa's natural heritage in protected and conserved areas;**
 - iii. OUR COMMITMENT is to work together with relevant stakeholders (communities and private sector) to conserve and manage **Africa's natural heritage in protected and conserved areas;**
 - iv. OUR DESIRE is to integrate the role of protected and conserved areas in disaster preparedness through disaster reduction and resilience actions;

¹ Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Niger, Rwanda, South Sudan, Togo, Zimbabwe



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- v. OUR AMBITION is to launch these mechanisms at the inaugural African Protected Areas Congress (APAC) planned for Kigali, Rwanda in March 2022;
 - vi. OUR CONVICTION is that these mechanisms **should be an integral part of Africa's** negotiating positions in global multilateral environmental agreements;
 - vii. OUR DETERMINATION is to advocate for the level of resource commitment required to endow these mechanisms to ensure sufficient and sustained resourcing **for all of Africa's** protected and conserved areas.
3. CALL UPON various arms of government, non-State actors, communities, development partners and other relevant stakeholders to support the establishment and operationalization of A Pan African Conservation Trust (A-PACT) that will bridge the gaps in **optimizing operations and investments in Africa's protected and conserved areas.**