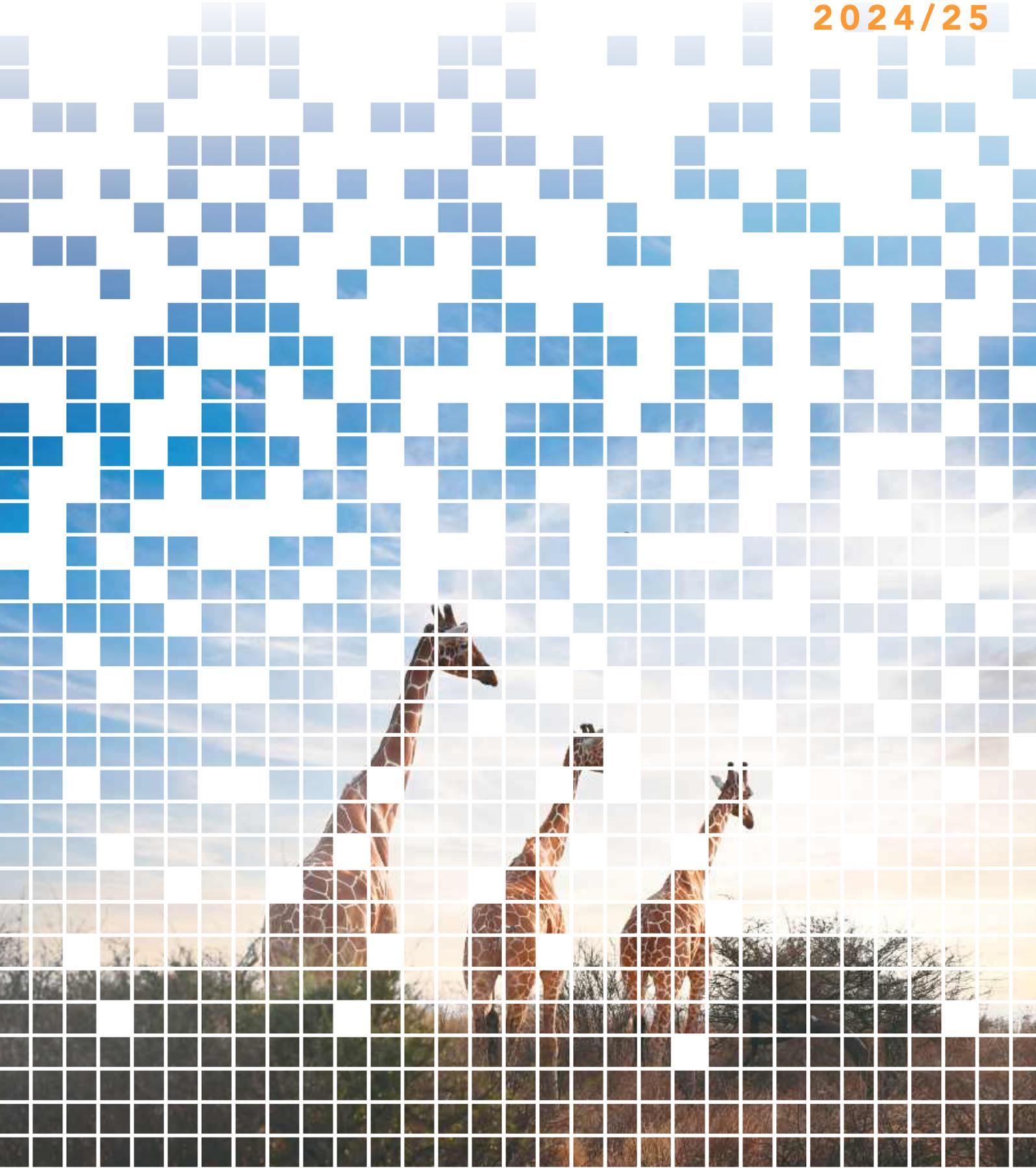




ANNUAL REPORT

2024/25



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:



GCF continues to stand at the forefront of giraffe conservation in Africa, and we are proud to be recognised as leaders in the field. Our approach is rooted in solid science and strengthened through enduring partnerships built on mutual respect and trust.

In 2024/25, we approached this partnership concept in a new way by bringing many of our conservation and science partners together in Windhoek, Namibia. What began as an exciting idea soon became an intense but truly rewarding few weeks. In collaboration with the Smithsonian National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI), we convened some of the brightest minds in conservation science for a five-day workshop to chart the next steps in giraffe conservation ecology. This inspirational gathering helped us review what we have done and identify critical knowledge gaps, revise strategies, and forge new partnerships – leaving us better equipped than ever to secure a future for all four giraffe species in Africa.

Immediately after this workshop, we followed up with another collaborative conservation milestone: GCF hosting the annual conference of the Southern African Wildlife Management Association (SAWMA). For the first time in its history, the conference moved beyond South Africa's borders. While the committee initially feared limited participation, the event broke attendance records and was a resounding success – not only for GCF, but also for Namibia.

With our entire team already in Windhoek, we took the opportunity to continue with an internal conservation planning session. Another inspiring week of collaboration reminded us of the importance of coming together – to share ideas, to brainstorm, and to strengthen our collective vision. Of course, we were also eager afterwards to dive back into the “real work” on the ground!

This annual report shares many more highlights of what we achieved this past year. In an increasingly busy world we have developed this Annual Report so it is easy to read, and hope you will see the incredible progress made possible by our dedicated team and our strong network of partners.

Together, we can achieve so much more than in isolation. Together, we stand tall for giraffe.

Stephanie Fennessy



Photo: by Hein Myers / Adobe stock

The Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) is the only organisation in the world that concentrates solely on the conservation and management of giraffe in the wild throughout Africa.

We are a voice for giraffe!

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WHO IS GCF?

WE ARE A VOICE FOR GIRAFFE

GCF is the only organization in the world that concentrates solely on the conservation and management of giraffe in the wild throughout Africa. We are dedicated to securing a future for all giraffe populations in the wild. We envision a world where all giraffe can live wild and free within their historical ranges or habitats throughout Africa and are protected by the people around them.

Currently, GCF is involved in and supports giraffe conservation initiatives in 21 African countries, and our work has an impact on over 445,000 km² (110 million acres) of giraffe habitat and concerns all four species of giraffe.

Our involvement is wide-reaching and ranges from project implementation to providing technical support to partners, from conservation monitoring to hands-on conservation actions, from environmental education for children to capacity enhancement of conservation experts including wildlife veterinarians.

WHAT ARE GCF'S CORE VALUES?

- Creativity & Courage
- Respectivity
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Collaboration

WHAT DOES GCF STAND FOR?

- GCF is an international science-based conservation organization that provides innovative approaches to save giraffe in the wild.
- GCF is the go-to organization for giraffe conservation that is proactive and reactive, with a strong collaborative and dynamic team working within a network of partners on all levels.
- GCF is a leader in supporting a sustainable future for giraffe in/and their natural habitats.
- GCF will continue to organically grow and increase awareness to save giraffe in the wild.

WHAT DRIVES GCF?

- To be a bold, independent organisation
- To be disciplined and 'always on'
- To be an open book
- To not over-promise
- To be passionate
- To be courageous and ready to push boundaries
- To be open-minded and flexible
- To be adaptable and dynamic
- To build trustworthy partnerships and relationships



United under a common goal, GCF is a family of organizations that consists of GCF Trust (Namibia), GCF-USA (Florida, USA), GCF-East Africa, and Freunde von GCF (Germany). All organizations are legally and financially separate entities with a shared commitment to a sustainable future for all giraffe populations in the wild operating under the umbrella of 'one' GCF.

Meet the Team

the people who are a voice for giraffe

GCF's core staff is made up of 18 people of 11 different nationalities, and who are based in five African countries. Such diversity is one of our most important strengths. Staff bring their experience and perspective from various backgrounds, education levels and family structures to the table and make it work. As an organization we have put a lot of effort into bringing this team together, overcoming challenges in communication and culture, resulting in a cohesive team.

GCF is forward-thinking and committed to the growth and development of their staff, not just in terms of the conservation issues they grapple with daily, but also in terms of personal and interpersonal growth. The team is open, honest, sensitive and are prepared to do the work of understanding another's perspective as they work with people, from community members to government officials, to do the necessary work to conserve giraffe.



Naemi Antonius – Program Officer, Environmental Education



Michael Brown – Conservation Science Coordinator



Petrus 'Audi' Ekandjo – Program Officer, NW Namibia



Julian Fennessy – Director of Conservation



Stephanie Fennessy – Executive Director



Martha Haukongo – Program Officer, Environmental Education



Rigardt Hoffman – Program Officer, Southern Africa



Adams Kipchumba – Program Officer, East Africa



Martina Küsters – Program Officer, Etosha Heights Conservation Centre



Courtney Marneweck – Conservation Technology Coordinator



Symon Masiaine – Program Officer, Reticulated Giraffe



Kudakwashe Mbaiwa – Finance & Office Assistant



Nicolette McNamara – Finance & Compliance Manager



Dominic Muema – Program Officer, KAZA TFCA



Arthur Muneza – East Africa Coordinator



Timoteus Mvula – Junior Program Officer, Environmental Education



Frederike Otten – Program Officer, Zambia



Sibolile Sankombe – Junior Program Officer, Environmental Education

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As GCF continues to grow in impact and in size, we are making sure that all checks and balances are in place to be fully accountable on all levels. Adding valuable skill sets and knowledge to the GCF-USA Board of Directors is a very important part of this process.

GCF's multi-national Board of Directors includes professionals from six countries, four continents and diverse business profiles. Here are the members:

- Julian Fennessy
- Stephanie Fennessy
- ShariLeigh Gordon (Treasurer, until January 2025)
- Till Hollmann (Chair)
- Chris Kelsch
- Lars Markgren
- Austin Stewart (Treasurer, since February 2025)
- Tim Tetzlaff
- Lindy van den Bosch

MESSAGE FROM THE GCF-USA BOARD CHAIR: TILL HOLLMANN

I could not be more proud of this team. As Chair of the Board, it is both an honor and a privilege to reflect on a year of remarkable progress – and to extend my heartfelt thanks to our donors, partners, and the dedicated team at GCF.

This year marked a major milestone for GCF: hosting the first SAWMA conference ever held outside of South Africa. The event broke attendance records and celebrated the power of collaboration that is at the heart of our mission.

GCF's reach and impact continue to exceed our size. Though small in number, our team's dedication and expertise have extended our influence to 21 countries across Africa. Together with our partners, we launched new national giraffe

conservation strategies with governments and strengthened – strengthening our commitment to science-driven, locally led conservation. These frameworks are already shaping the future of giraffe conservation by ensuring that efforts are coordinated, effective, and sustainable.

Our work remains at the forefront of ecological research and innovative conservation. From advanced scientific studies and translocations to veterinary training and youth engagement through the KEEP program, GCF continues to take a holistic, science-based approach to securing a future for giraffe.

None of this would be possible without the generosity and trust of our donors and supporters.

Your belief in our mission empowers us to make a real and lasting difference for all four giraffe species in Africa.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who stands tall with us. Together, we are proving that a small team – united by purpose and supported by a global network of champions – can achieve extraordinary impact.

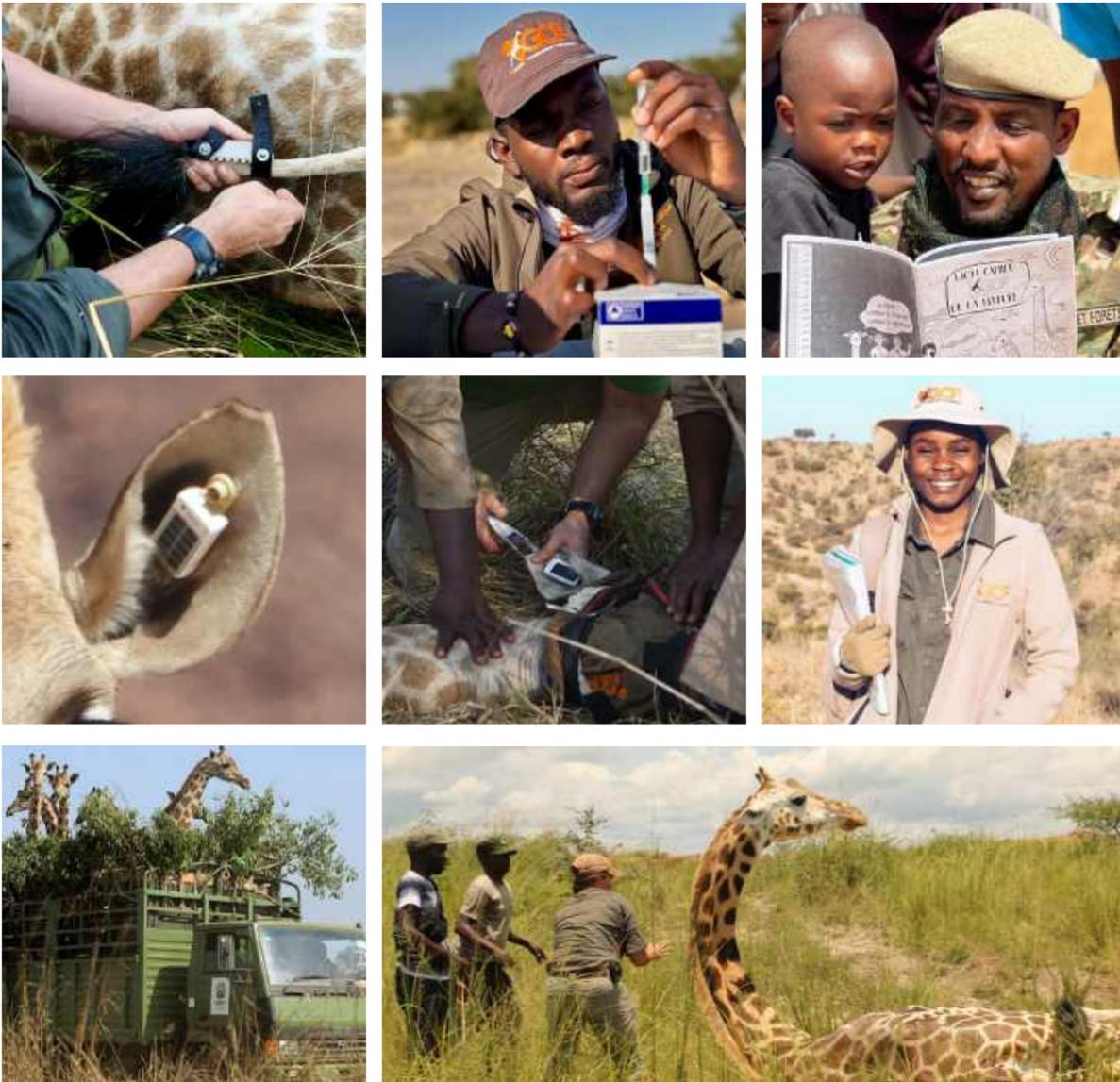
Thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your unwavering support. Thank you for standing tall with us.



CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY THEMES

GCF is a voice for giraffe in throughout Africa and internationally. Our small yet effective team currently supports giraffe conservation action in 21 African countries. Our involvement varies and is far reaching as shown on the map. However, across all countries, GCF underscores a consistent approach:

- **National Strategy Development:** Partnering with governments and stakeholders to design actionable, science driven conservation strategies
- **Translocation & Reintroduction:** Returning giraffe to historical ranges (e.g. Angola, Zimbabwe) with rigorous pre-project feasibility and post-release monitoring.
- **Technology & Research:** Deploying tools like GPS satellite tracking and genetic surveys to inform adaptive management decisions and assess long-term survival.
- **Capacity Building & Education:** Investing in local conservation skills – from wildlife vet training to bursaries for African students – to ensure sustainable, locally led action.



GCF IN ACTION

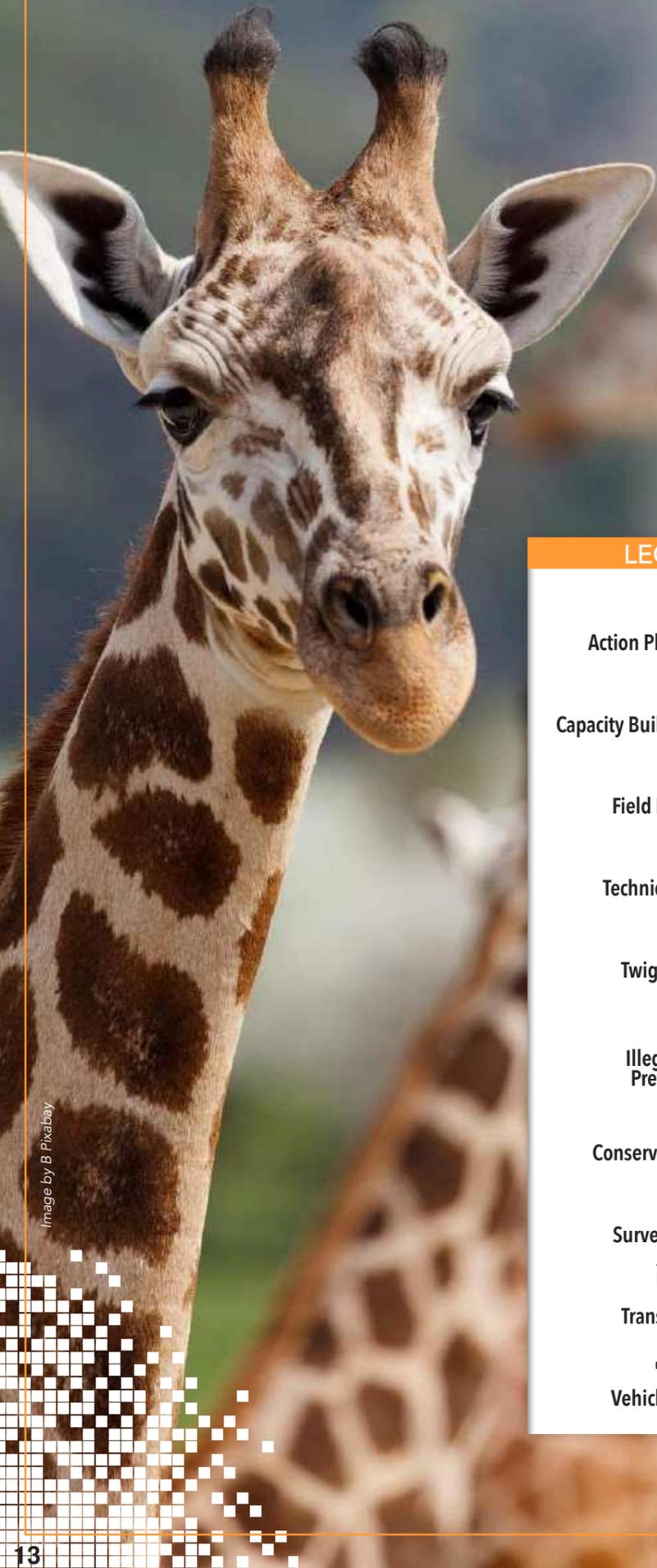
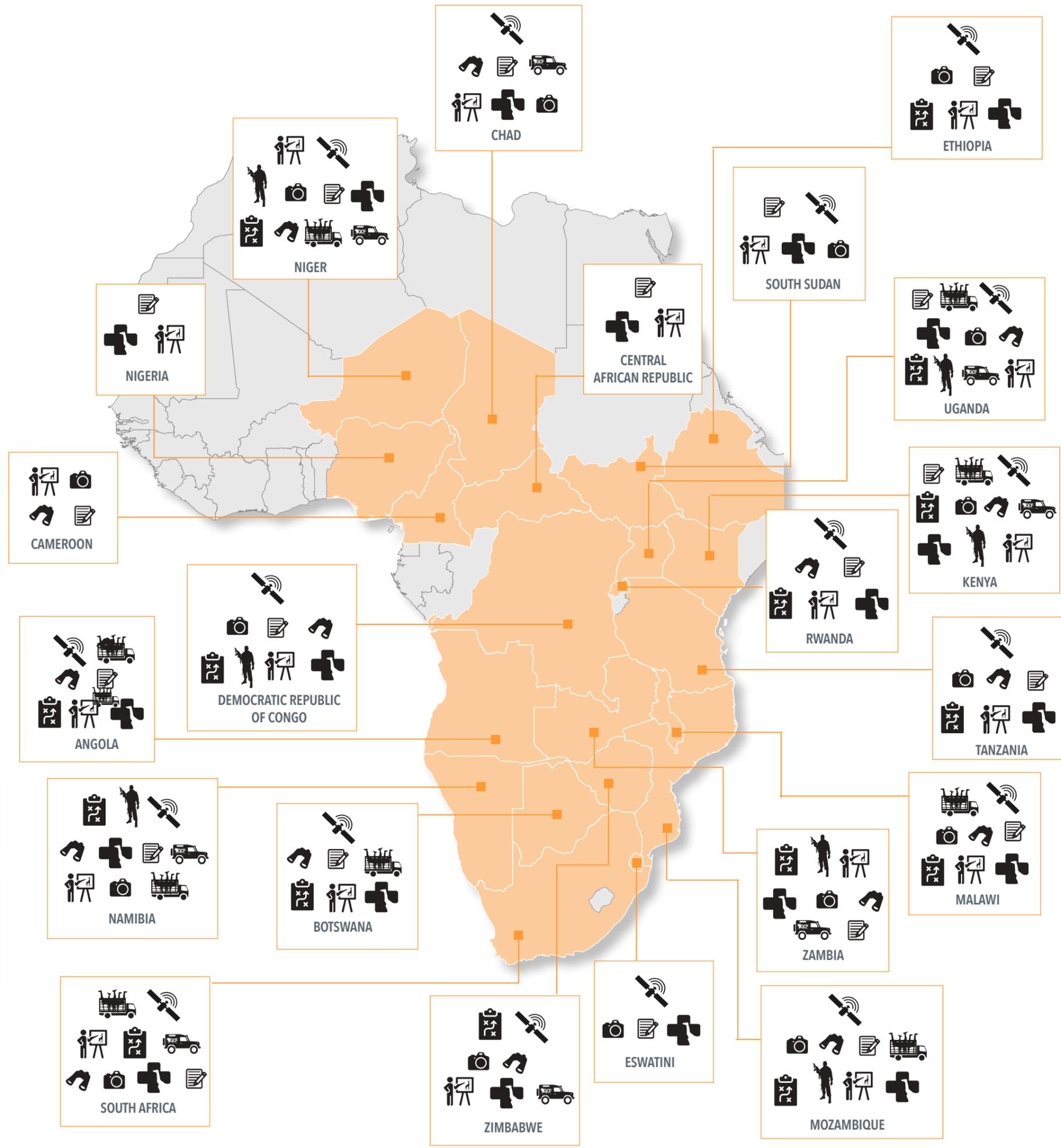


Image by B Pixabay

LEGEND

-  Action Plan / Strategy
-  Capacity Building / Education
-  Field Resources
-  Technical Support
-  Twiga Tracker
-  Illegal Trade Prevention
-  Conservation Health
-  Survey Support
-  Translocation
-  Vehicle Support



KEY PARTNERS

Our work is never done in isolation. Outstanding collaborations and strong partnerships are key to our conservation approach.



GCF partners with many organizations, institutions and individuals in Africa and around the world to save giraffe in the wild. Our impactful work is only possible with and because of these partners. Some partners stand out. They provide significant on-going and long-term support or outstanding collaboration furthering our efforts to securing a future for all giraffe in Africa.

Over time, partnerships evolve – some become stronger and others only temporary and focused on a specific project. Here we list the most important partners and collaborators for 2024/25, but in highlighting some, we always run the risk of missing someone. We hope we don't. It is with huge gratitude and immense respect that we showcase a list of conservation partners and long-term donors here. Thank you for allowing to come an even louder voice for giraffe this year.



Image by GCF

NATIONAL GIRAFFE CONSERVATION STRATEGIES ONE COUNTRY AT A TIME!

As the leader in supporting the development and implementation of national giraffe conservation strategies and action plans throughout Africa, GCF continues to work hand-in-hand with governments, wildlife authorities, and local partners for more than a decade. Through this approach we have a proven track record and continue to make a difference for giraffe.

Providing technical expertise and facilitation to develop science-based, locally owned frameworks that guide long-term giraffe conservation in their respective countries, forms an important part of our work. These strategies ensure that conservation actions are coordinated, effective, and aligned with national biodiversity goals. GCF has supported the development of strategies in over a dozen African countries, helped to elevate giraffe conservation on

political and ecological agendas, and set the global standard for species-specific strategic planning.

Our commitment to science based, collaborative conservation, empowering local stakeholders, restoring ecological balance, and securing a future for giraffe across their native ranges illustrates the breadth of our work. This year, we provided targeted support to four giraffe range states to develop their own national strategies, which directly contributed to securing the future of two giraffe species: the northern and southern giraffe. At the same time, we continue to support all countries with existing National Giraffe Conservation Strategies and Action Plans in their implementation and we encourage the remaining range states to consider developing similar plans.

Cameroon



The first-ever National Giraffe Conservation Strategy for Cameroon (2025-2030) was developed by GCF in close collaboration with the Cameroonian government and local NGO partner Biodiversity-Environment & Sustainable-Development (BEDD). Conservation stakeholders from academia, government and the local and international NGO community played a valuable role in developing the strategy that focuses on key actions such as the need to improve giraffe population numbers and range, assessing translocation opportunities and importantly, building local giraffe conservation capacity.

Kordofan giraffe currently live in small and fragmented populations in Cameroon and proactive conservation efforts are needed to restore and safeguard this subspecies of the northern giraffe. Since its development, the first Kordofan giraffe conservation initiatives are under way in northern Cameroon, and GCF is excited to follow up our pivotal role in developing the first-ever National Strategy, with supporting the implementation of key projects such as Kordofan giraffe and human dimension surveys, as well as building local student capacity as long-term investment in the people of the country.

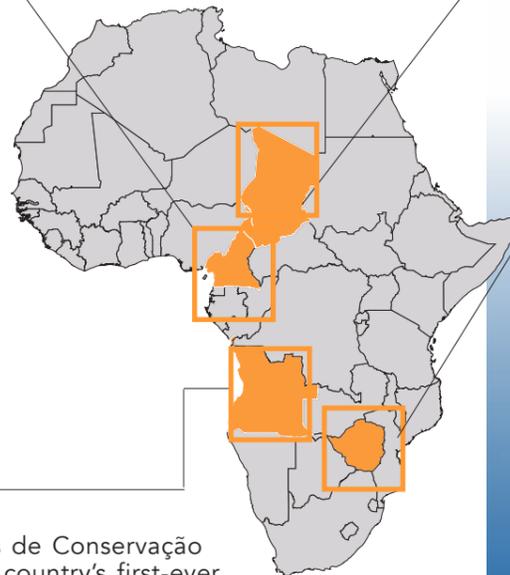
Angola



In Angola, GCF supported the Instituto Nacional da Biodiversidade e Áreas de Conservação (INBAC), a government organization, to spearhead the development of the country's first-ever National Giraffe Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2025-2030). The initial workshop in Luanda brought together partners from across the conservation sector in Angola and set the vision of 'a sustainable future for giraffe populations in Angola through good management of surveillance, ecosystems, research and dissemination, promoting regional cooperation and development'. Over the next five years Angola seeks to create an enabling environment to maximize the ecological and economic opportunities for southern giraffe conservation by:

- Increasing giraffe populations in Angola;
- Monitor the population dynamics of giraffe across their range; and
- Effectively protecting giraffe populations in key current and future areas: Iona, Kissama, Bicaur, and Luengue-Luiana National Parks.

These important first steps are key for southern giraffe conservation in the country and GCF is proud to partner with INBAC for continued implementation.



Chad

The GCF team was instrumental in the development of the first-ever National Giraffe Conservation Strategy (2024–2034) of Chad, providing critical technical facilitation throughout its development. The involvement of key stakeholders from across the country ensured that a strong strategy framework was developed for the long-term, wide-ranging, and included high-impact conservation actions. The optimistic vision of a “restored, viable, and widespread giraffe population in Chad’s natural habitats through the concerted engagement of all stakeholders” addresses critical knowledge gaps regarding Kordofan giraffe in the country, while aiming to develop and improve local giraffe management capacity.

The broad reaching strategy aims to raise awareness among stakeholders and communities to unlock conservation opportunities while at the same time strengthening large-scale support in key landscapes where these threatened Kordofan giraffe currently occur. Importantly, ensuring a coordinated effort to establish improved Kordofan giraffe conservation in Chad is critical, so that key actions can follow, such as augmenting small remaining populations, identifying historical areas where they were locally extirpated, improving law enforcement, as well as research, monitoring, and management. Ultimately, it is vital to monitor the implementation of the strategy and disseminate new findings where feasible.



Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, GCF collaborates closely with the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks) to roll out multifaceted southern giraffe initiatives over the past five years. This recently included crafting the first-ever National Giraffe Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2025-2035), along with conducting genetic assessments, supporting translocations, and carrying out population surveys. While the strategy lays the foundation for all southern giraffe conservation actions and guides their implementation, key activities were highlighted including country wide population surveys to understand where they live, how many there are, and how they are distributed, as well as genetic assessments to clarify subspecies status and ensure genetic diversity in conservation actions. Fitting GPS satellite tags to monitor movements, habitat use, and translocation outcomes was a major activity highlighted, along with emphasizing the need for improved capacity building such as training veterinarians, rangers and other conservation staff in best practices of capture, monitoring and management. Lastly, public awareness and environmental education, especially in and around protected areas, needs to play a critical role, alongside strengthening anti poaching measures, and fostering collaboration between private and public landholders. ZimParks has set the foundation for developing a solid giraffe conservation programme in the country and we are excited to continue supporting them.



Image by GCF

CONSERVING FOR THE FUTURE:

PLANNING A COLLABORATIVE SCIENCE-BASED APPROACH

In October 2024, in collaboration with the Smithsonian National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI), we hosted a pivotal international ecology-focused giraffe workshop in Namibia with partners from the academic and NGO community across Africa and around the world. Not only did we foster new and enhanced scientific partnerships, but we sought to strengthen the knowledge base, and advance future giraffe conservation actions across the African continent.

The workshop built upon GCF's longstanding mission to ground giraffe conservation in robust scientific insights. The programme emphasized ecological research, bringing together wildlife scientists, conservation practitioners, and institutional experts to examine population numbers and range, behaviour, movement, physiology, and conservation interventions.

Key Highlights

- **Focused Expertise:** Scientists and experts deepened ecological knowledge specifically relating to giraffe adaptive behaviour in varying environments, responses to threats like habitat loss and human encroachment, and landscape-level dynamics affecting giraffe distribution.
- **Collaborative Networks:** Fostered new partnerships across disciplinary silos – uniting ecologists, wildlife managers, and researchers from institutions in Namibia, across Africa and internationally.
- **Strategic Framework Development:** Participants worked toward strengthening regional conservation frameworks. They explored how insights from giraffe ecology can inform national strategies, data-driven translocations, habitat restoration, and management decisions.
- **Actionable Outputs:** Practical implementations of ecological findings, monitoring alongside targeted scientific studies were devised as key next steps for their conservation.

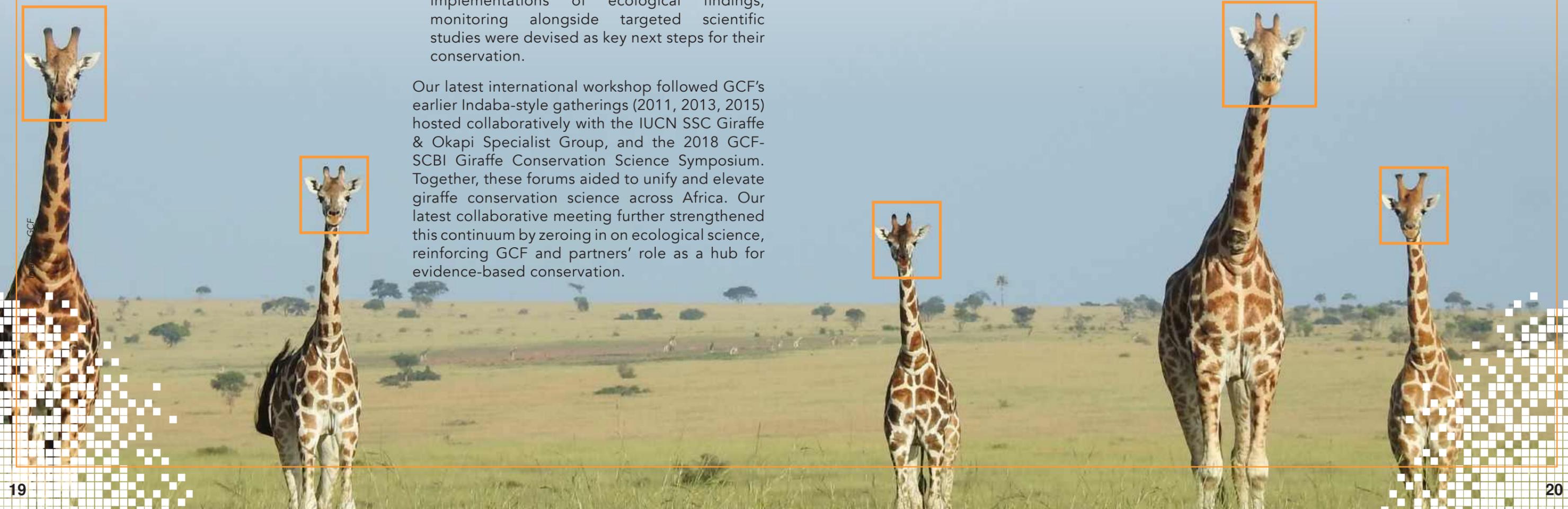
Our latest international workshop followed GCF's earlier Indaba-style gatherings (2011, 2013, 2015) hosted collaboratively with the IUCN SSC Giraffe & Okapi Specialist Group, and the 2018 GCF-SCBI Giraffe Conservation Science Symposium. Together, these forums aided to unify and elevate giraffe conservation science across Africa. Our latest collaborative meeting further strengthened this continuum by zeroing in on ecological science, reinforcing GCF and partners' role as a hub for evidence-based conservation.

Looking Ahead

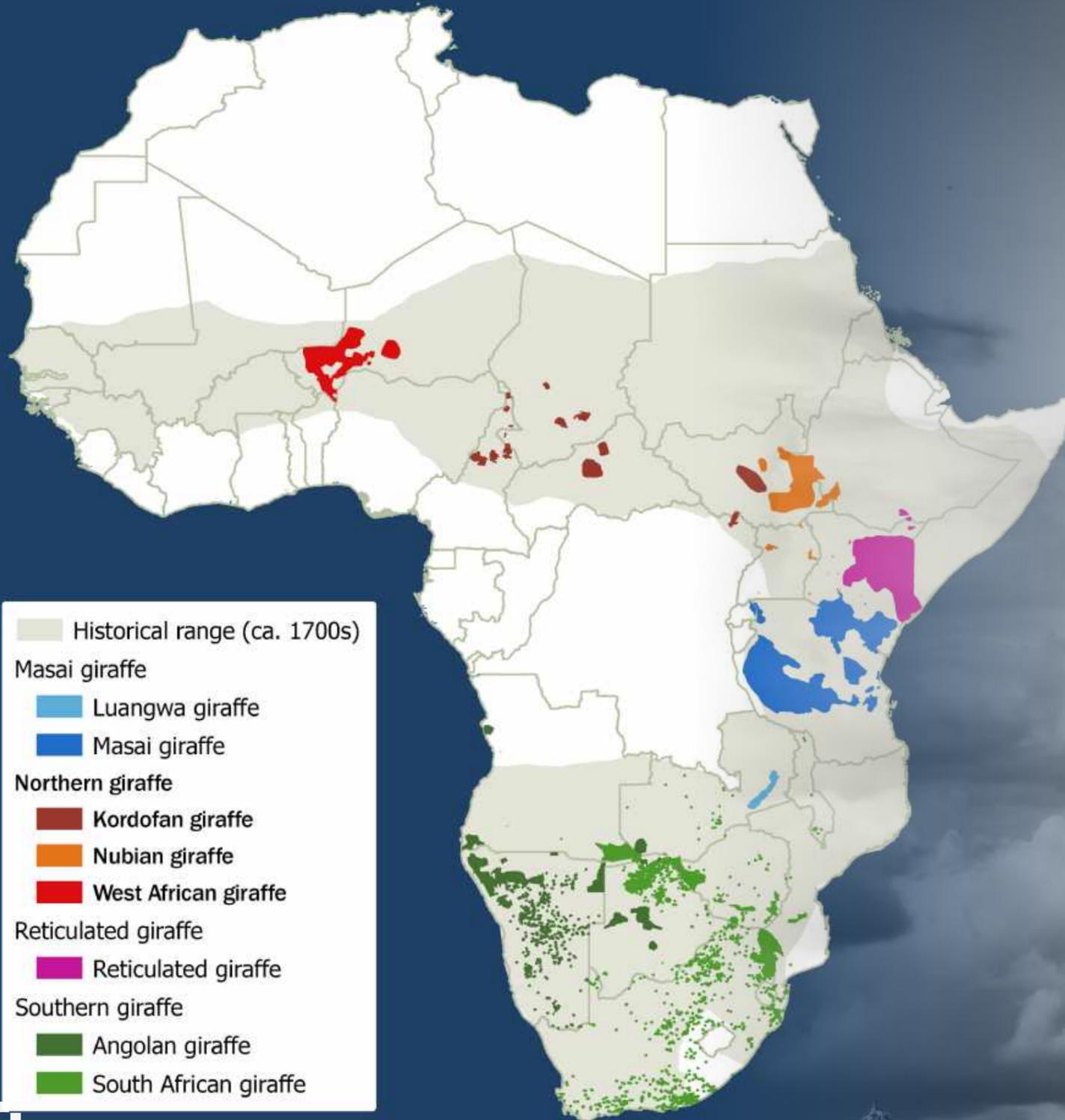
As a result, GCF and its partners are better positioned to:

- **Integrate ecological data** into future giraffe conservation plans and action strategies in Namibia and across Africa.
- **Enhance monitoring programmes** using refined ecological metrics to track giraffe health, movement, and habitat interaction.
- **Engage with governments and communities** by offering scientific legitimacy to policy and conservation interventions.
- **Scale up collaborative research** by leveraging SCBI partnerships and regional expertise for long-term impact.

This event marked a significant step in advancing giraffe conservation. By bringing ecological science to the forefront of strategic planning, the event strengthened scientific partnerships, provided actionable insights, and reinforced GCF's leadership in creating evidence-based, conservation-minded frameworks for giraffe across Africa.



A UNIFIED, OPEN-ACCESS LIFELINE: THE GIRAFFE AFRICA DATABASE (GAD)



In mid-2025, GCF plans to release the State of Giraffe 2025 – the most comprehensive review to date of all four giraffe species populations in the wild. Integrally connected with this has been the development of something truly groundbreaking: the Giraffe Africa Database (GAD). The backbone of all future giraffe numbers and distribution across the continent.

The GAD is the first ever, continent-wide, open-access database for all four giraffe species. It brings together information from across Africa into one powerful tool, helping us to monitor populations, identify worrying trends early, and act fast when they need us most.

Hosted on GCF's online geographic system (ESRI) platform, GAD draws from an incredible variety of data sources: aerial and ground surveys, government and NGO monitoring, scientific studies, interviews, and even expert estimates when no formal counts exist. Every new data point helps build a clearer picture of where giraffe species are thriving and where they are at risk.

With all this information in one place, we can track changes over time, compare populations within and across countries, and make smarter, faster conservation decisions. Very few species have the benefit of such a system. One of the leading examples is the African Elephant Database. We modelled GAD on that system so the two can work side by side. This means data on all of Africa's giraffe and elephant species can be compared more easily, helping us see the bigger picture of how Africa's wildlife is faring. Importantly, it gives us species- and population-specific insights. It's a step toward holistic, connected conservation where information isn't just species-specific, but part of a shared understanding of ecosystems across the continent.

The timing couldn't be better with combined giraffe numbers assumed to be increasing across the continent. These are hopeful signs after decades of decline, but we can't be complacent. Gains are fragile, and without close monitoring, they can be lost. GAD ensures we'll see any changes early and respond before it's too late.

GAD is more than just a database – it's a continent-wide collaboration. Wildlife authorities, researchers, and conservation partners from across range states can both contribute and request information. Sensitive raw data is kept safe and private, but summary population numbers are shared (with permission) to help with conservation planning. This open approach builds trust, transparency, and stronger partnerships across Africa. With future IUCN Red List assessments planned, we believe GAD will provide a solid foundation from which informed decisions can more easily be made.

By filling data gaps, connecting people, and giving everyone the same, up-to-date information, GAD strengthens the fight against threats like habitat loss, poaching, and climate change. In short, GAD gives giraffe species conservation both a heartbeat and a central nervous system.

It's proof that when science, openness, and collaboration come together, we can protect one of Africa's most iconic species and keep its future standing tall.

Image by GCF



EYES IN THE SKY:

Over the last three years, GCF has supported African Parks and the South Sudanese government to support the ongoing landmark GPS satellite tagging campaign across the Boma Badingilo Jonglei Landscape. A suite of wildlife – white-eared kob, Mongalla gazelle, tiang, African savanna elephant, African lion, critically endangered Nubian giraffe, and more – have been tagged to better understand local and seasonal movements, understand connectivity, and potential corridors. GCF has provided essential veterinary expertise and equipment, tracking devices, and operational support, culminating in the first-ever GPS tagging of Nubian giraffe in South Sudan.

Preliminary findings from these efforts have already yielded important movement data across multiple species,

including the Nubian giraffe. Early results highlight how migratory behaviors – especially among gazelles and kob – are shaped by interactions between wildlife and human communities within this mosaic landscape. Importantly, the data has improved our understanding of Nubian giraffe distribution, range, and spatial ecology in this key region, including transboundary conservation efforts with Ethiopia.

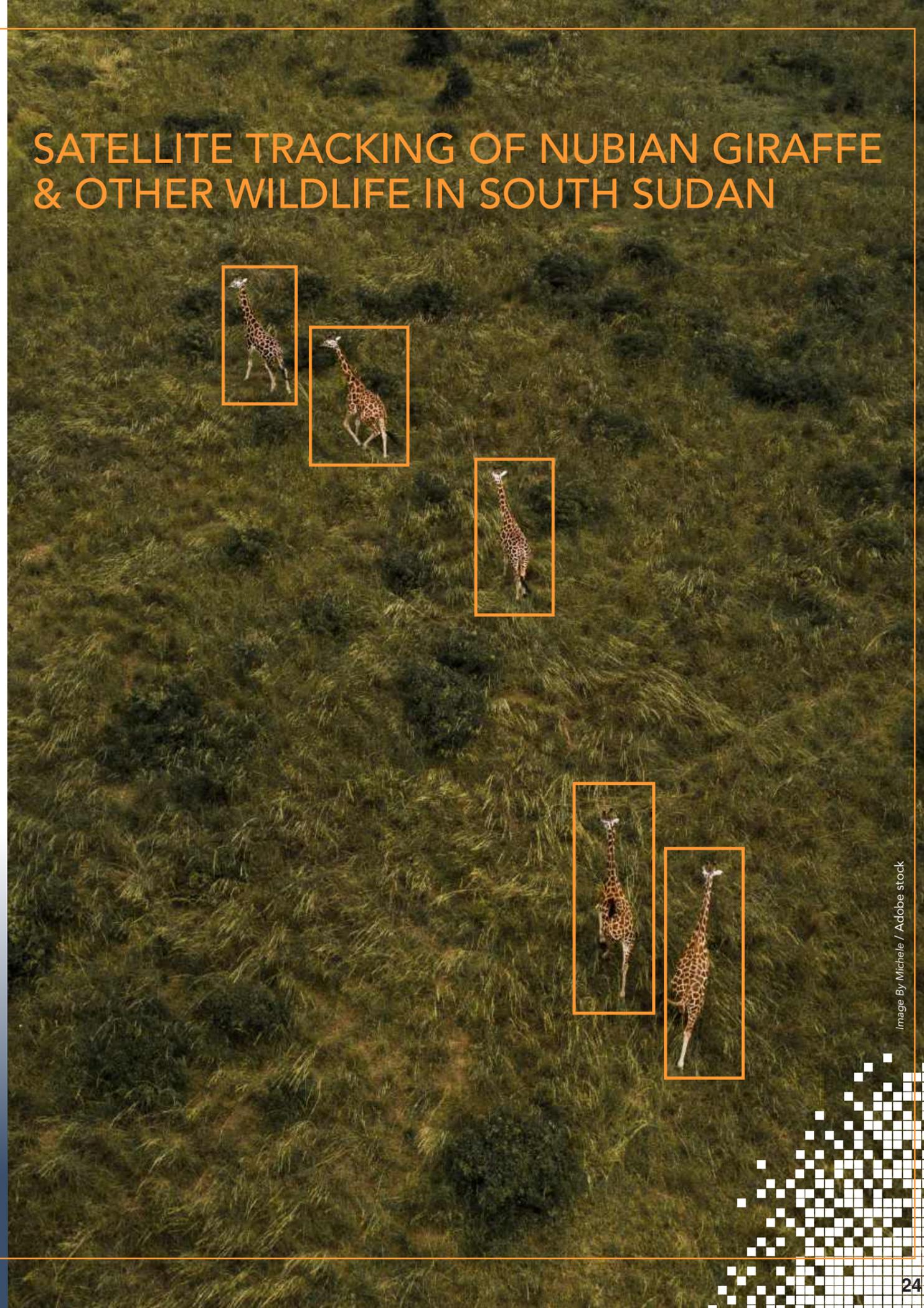
By tracking animal movements with solar-powered, lightweight GPS satellite units – now small enough to attach to tails and ears – GCF and African Parks are identifying vital habitats and movement corridors within the parks' combined 7.4 million acres. This knowledge is informing targeted anti-poaching patrol placement, habitat expansion planning, and community engagement strategies.

Importantly, we can't conserve what we don't understand.

GCF's role in this initiative underscores its strategic value in delivering cutting-edge conservation science that strengthens both policy and on-the-ground protection for Nubian giraffe and other wildlife in one of Africa's most critical ecosystems.

- 500+ individual wildlife tagged in the Boma Badingilo Jonglei Landscape.
- First-ever GPS tagging of Nubian giraffe in South Sudan.
- 7.4 million acres of critical habitat monitored.
- 6 species tracked: Nubian giraffe, white-eared kob, Mongalla gazelle, tiang, African savannah elephant, African lion.
- Giraffe home ranges larger than expected need for broader habitat protection.

SATELLITE TRACKING OF NUBIAN GIRAFFE & OTHER WILDLIFE IN SOUTH SUDAN



A FRESH DIGITAL HOME FOR GIRAFFE CONSERVATION

A key pillar of GCF's outreach, transparency, and scientific leadership is our online presence – especially our website, giraffeconservation.org. More than just a place to showcase our work, the site functions as a central platform where partners, supporters, academics, government agencies and the public can connect with what we do, explore giraffe conservation issues, access knowledge and environmental education resources, and engage with our impact.

In early 2025, we unveiled our redesigned website, offering a modern, accessible, and visually rich experience for visitors worldwide. The new platform is built to inspire, educate, and mobilize support for giraffe conservation, while reflecting GCF's position as the world's leading organization dedicated solely to saving giraffe in the wild.

The updated look features bold photography, clean layouts, and intuitive navigation, making it easier than ever to explore our global work – from translocations in Zimbabwe to community education in Niger. Streamlined menus guide visitors to country programs, research updates, and ways to get involved. The colour palette – drawn from giraffe coats, savannah grass, and African skies – creates a warm yet professional visual identity.

Functionality upgrades include interactive range maps, real-time project updates, and a simplified donation process and improved 'Adopt-a-Giraffe' platform. A dedicated 'Science & Data' section allows researchers and conservationists to access GCF publications and resources including the 'Giraffe Resource Centre'. The mobile-optimized design ensures the experience is seamless on any device, crucial for global audiences.

Most importantly, the site is designed to tell stories – spotlighting the people, partners, and communities behind giraffe conservation success. By blending powerful visuals, compelling narratives, and easy ways to act, the new GCF website is more than a digital hub

– it's a rallying point for a global movement to secure a future for all giraffe species in the wild.

In summary, giraffeconservation.org is more than just our digital presence – it's an active tool in GCF's strategy for science, engagement, transparency and impact. From research sharing to inspiring supporters, from capacity building to tracking outcomes, the website helps us deliver on our mission. As we move forward, investment in its content, usability, and reach will continue to pay dividends in how giraffe conservation is understood, supported, and enacted across Africa.

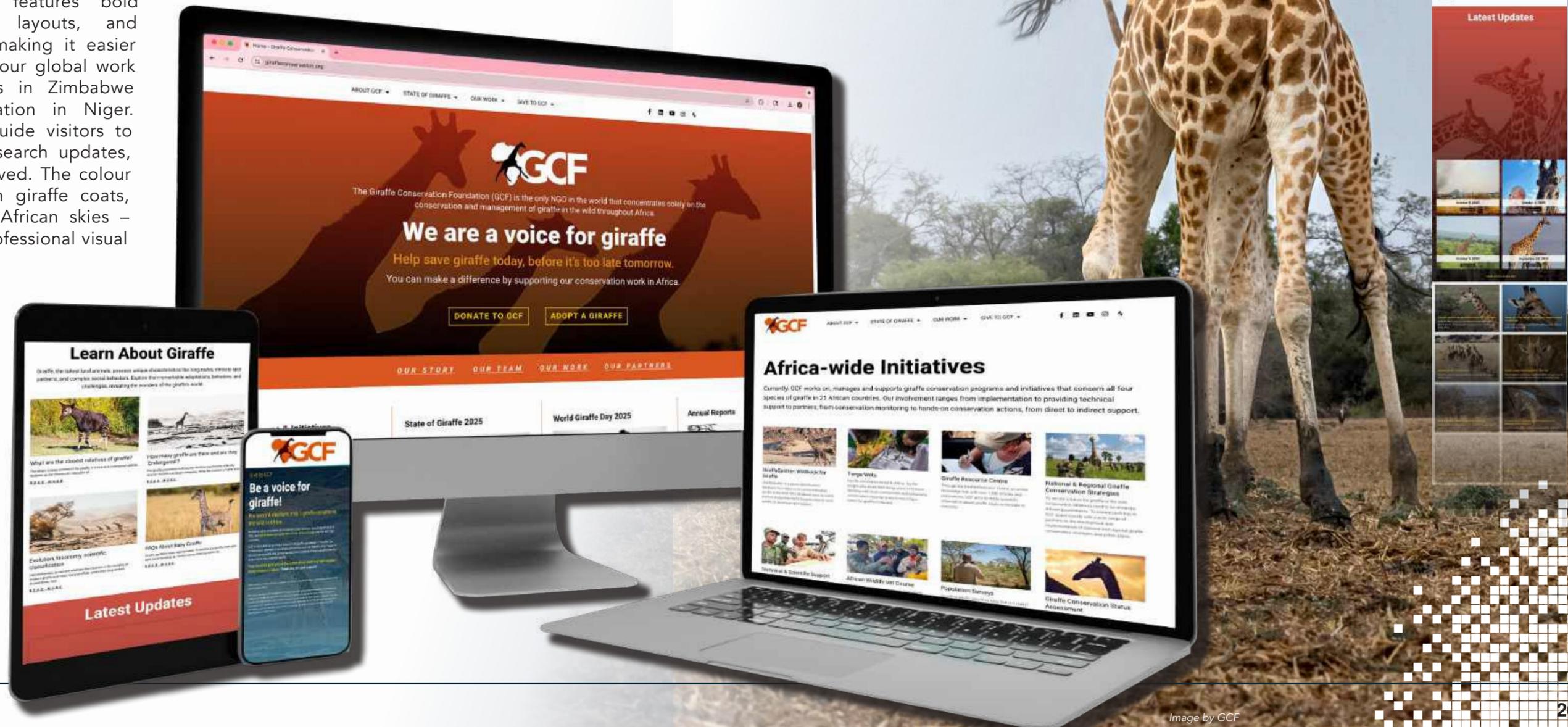


Image by GCF

TWIGA WETU: INVESTING IN PEOPLE, SECURING THE FUTURE



GCF's commitment to giraffe conservation extends far beyond protecting habitats and monitoring populations. We invest in people – from young schoolchildren in Namibia to early-career wildlife veterinarians across Africa – because we know that conservation success depends on skilled professionals and inspired future leaders. In 2024, two of our flagship initiatives demonstrated this commitment: training Africa's wildlife veterinarians and inspiring Namibia's youth. However, there is so much more we do. Visit our website to read more about the range of capacity building and environmental education support that we provide throughout Africa. Here we only highlight a small section of these efforts.

TRAINING AFRICA'S WILDLIFE VETERINARIANS

In June 2024, we hosted our annual Wildlife Medicine and Chemical Immobilization Course in Namibia. This 12-day, hands-on training equips early-career veterinarians with the skills and confidence to work safely with wildlife. Since launching in 2022, the course has trained 24 wildlife veterinarians from 12 African countries, building a growing network of skilled professionals who are already strengthening giraffe (and wildlife) conservation across the continent.

INSPIRING NAMIBIA'S YOUTH THROUGH KEEP

Closer to home, 2024 marked the eighth year of the Khomas Environmental Education Program (KEEP) – and another year of remarkable impact. KEEP reconnects young Namibians with nature, fosters sustainable living practices, and instills a lifelong sense of environmental responsibility.

This year, KEEP hosted 3,413 schoolchildren and 214 teachers from 31 schools and organizations, spending 91 days in the field. Since its launch in 2016, the program has now reached over 21,000 children and 1,100 teachers, making it a cornerstone of environmental education in the Khomas Region. Our Nature Workbook, widely used as a teaching resource, has been distributed Africa-wide with more than 15,000 copies in English, French, Portuguese and Swahili.

Importantly, KEEP continues to adapt, evolve and expand its impact:

- Children from underprivileged backgrounds, including those from informal settlements around Windhoek, participated in nature outings – often a once-in-a-lifetime experience.
- We piloted a new initiative with five schools in Windhoek, planting 35 fruit trees and supporting clean-up campaigns in collaboration with the City of Windhoek. These projects empower schools to implement tangible sustainability actions beyond the classroom.
- Our team engaged with university students, youth leaders, and teachers, sharing tools and strategies for effective environmental education and sustainability practices.

STANDING TALL FOR TOMORROW

Together, the African Wildlife Vet Course and KEEP represent the two ends of the conservation spectrum – from training the experts who safeguard Africa’s wildlife today, to inspiring the next generation of leaders who will protect it tomorrow. But both programs reflect our belief that conservation is, at its core, about people. By equipping today’s professionals and inspiring tomorrow’s leaders, we are securing a brighter future for giraffe – and for Africa’s wildlife as a whole.

By building capacity and fostering environmental stewardship, GCF is ensuring that giraffe – and countless other species – will have a brighter, more secure future across Africa.

Through your Twiga Wetu initiative we support tertiary level students throughout Africa and internationally

to increase giraffe conservation research that provides important insights for the protection of all four giraffe species. In addition, our conservation team is a world leader in giraffe conservation science, and directly contributes to many scientific publications each year – an amazing achievement from such a small team working with so many local and international partners. Here is a list of peer-reviewed papers that were published during this reporting period:

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Atmeh K, Bonenfant C, Gaillard J-M, Garel M, Hewison AJM, Marchand P, Morellet N, Anderwald P, Buuveibaatar B, Beck JL, Becker MS, van Beest FM, Berg J, Bergvall UA, Boone RB, Boyce MS, Chamaillé-Jammes S, Chaval Y, Buyanaa C, Christianson D, Ciuti S, Côté SD, Diefenbach DR, Droge E, du Toit JT, Dwinell S, Fennessy J, Filli F, Fortin D, Hart EE, Hayes M, Hebblewhite M, Heim

M, Herfindal I, Heurich M, von Hoermann C, Huggler K, Jackson C, Jakes AF, Jones PF, Kaczensky P, Kauffman M, Kjellander P, LaSharr T, Loe LE, May R, McLoughlin P, Meisingset EL, Merrill E, Monteith KL, Mueller T, Mysterud A, Nandintsetseg D, Olson K, Payne J, Pearson S, Pedersen ÅØ, Ranglack D, Reinking AK, Rempfler T, Rice CG, Røskaft E, Sæther B-E, Saïd S, Santacreu H, Schmidt NM, Smit D, Stabach JA, St-Laurent M-H, Taillon J, Walter WDavid, White K, Péron G, Loison A (2025) Neonatal antipredator tactics shape female movement patterns in large herbivores. *Nature Ecology & Evolution* 9. 142-152

Conteddu K, Kaur P, Brown M, Fennessy J, Fennessy S, Hart E, Amin B, David A, Griffin LL, Faull J, Grignolio S, Brivio F, Haigh A, Kirwan L, Salter-Townshend M, Ciuti S (2024) Random subsamples of animal populations can reveal intrinsic differences in sociality with key implications in ecology, conservation and disease transmission. *bioRxiv*

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Fennessy J, Brown MB, Ekanjo P, Fennessy S, Ferguson S, Tindall L, Tindall M, Marneweck CJ (2024) Homeward bound: post-translocation homing behaviour of an Angolan giraffe in Namibia. *Namibian Journal of Environment* 9 11

Ferguson S, Harvey RJ, Fennessy S, Fennessy J (2024) Immobilisation protocols for wild giraffe (*Giraffa* spp.) – A review. *Journal of the South African Veterinary Association* 95 74-79

Gašparová K, Fennessy J, Moussa Zabeirou AR, Abagana AL, Rabeil T, Brandlová K, Coulson G, Focardi S (2024) Saving the last West African giraffe population: a review of its conservation status and management. *Animals* 14

Gitau CG, Mbau JS, Ngugi RK, Ngumbi E, Muneza AB (2024) Activity budget and foraging patterns of Nubian giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis camelopardalis*) in Lake Nakuru National Park, Kenya. *Ecology and Evolution* 14 e11463

Hamutenya J, Hauptfleisch M, de Cauwer V, Fennessy J (2024) A suitability assessment for re-introducing locally extinct Angolan giraffe (*Giraffa giraffa angolensis*). *African Journal of Wildlife Research* 54 20-34

Harvey RJ, Ferguson S, Fennessy J (2024) Operation Sahel: translocation and reintroduction of West African giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis peralta*) in Niger. *Journal of the South African Veterinary Association* 95 193-196

Hejzmanová P, Gašparová K, Fedorova T, Vukelić M, Fennessy J, Moussa Zabeirou AR, Rabeil T, Brandlová K (2024) Diurnal activity and resting time allocation of the West African giraffe in an agropastoral human-dominated landscape. *Frontiers in Conservation Science* 5

Kargopoulos N, Marugán-Lobón J, Chinsamy A, Agwanda BR, Brown MB, Fennessy S, Ferguson S, Hoffman R, Lala F, Muneza A, Mwebi O, Otiende M, Petzold A, Winter S, Moussa Zabeirou AR, Fennessy J (2024) Heads up – four *Giraffa* species have distinct cranial morphology. *PLOS One* 19 e0315043

Kargopoulos N, Marugán-Lobón J, Chinsamy A, Brown M, Fennessy S, Ferguson S, Petzold A, Winter S, Moussa Zabeirou AR, Fennessy J (2025) A Reassessment of the Cranial Diversity of the West African Giraffe. *International Journal of Zoology* 2025. 8816347

Marneweck CJ, Brown MB, Fennessy S, Ferguson S, Hoffman R, Muneza AB, Fennessy J (2024) The evolution of tracking technology for wild giraffe (*Giraffa* spp.) *African Journal of Wildlife Research* 54

Muneza AB, Kavutha JS, Muruana MW, Ikime T, Kariuki L, Lekolool I, Fennessy S, Bett A, Kipchumba AK, Ngumbi E, Fennessy J (2024) Updated review of the conservation status of Nubian giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis camelopardalis*). *Kenya Biodiversity and Conservation* 33 1269-1284

Muneza AB, Brown MB, Fennessy S, Ferguson SD, Hoffman R, Janke A, Kargopoulos N, Kipchumba AK, Koepfli K-P, Marneweck CJ, Petzold A, Stabach JA, Winter S, Fennessy J (2025) Effective conservation and management of giraffe require adopting recent advances of their taxonomy. *Biodiversity and Conservation* 34 1211–1229

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Conservancy, Zimbabwe. *African Journal of Wildlife Research* 54

Prochotta D, Winter S, Fennessy J, Janke A (2024) Population genomics of the southern giraffe. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 201 108198

Sun C, Otten F, Hoffman R, Marneweck C, Maimbo H, Patre C-A, Joubert D, Roffel T, Becker MS, Fennessy S, Fennessy J, Brown MB (2025) First rangewide density estimate of the endemic and isolated Luangwa giraffe in Zambia. *Scientific Reports* 15. 16435

Videvall E, Gill BA, Brown MB, Hoff HK, Littleford-Colquhoun BL, Lokeny P, Musili PM, Kartzinel TR (2025) Diet-microbiome covariation across three giraffe species in a close-contact zone. *Global Ecology and Conservation* 58 e03480



HEADS UP ALL FOUR GIRAFFA SPECIES HAVE DIFFERENT SKULLS

Giraffe are one of Africa's most iconic animals, easily recognized by its long neck, towering legs, and distinctive patterns. For a long time, they were considered a single species. But our scientific work – first from genetics, and now from skull shape – shows that giraffe actually consist of four distinct species, each facing different conservation challenges.

Our team, including researchers from University's of Cape Town and Madrid, analyzed the skulls of 515 individual giraffe, making this the largest dataset of its kind ever compiled. These specimens came from across Africa and were collected over decades in museums, field surveys, and taxidermy records. Using 3D scanning and advanced shape analysis techniques, we were able to study how skulls differ based on sex, age, and species.

WHAT DID WE FIND?

Males and females grow differently

Male giraffe have larger skulls with more pronounced bony features, including thicker ossicones (the horn-like structures on top of the head). Female skulls tend to be smaller and more slender. These differences are likely driven by mating behavior and competition among males.

Giraffe in the north and south of Africa grow differently

As giraffe mature, the shape of their skulls changes – this process is called ontogeny, and varies between populations in northern and southern Africa. This difference in growth patterns leads to adults with distinctly different skull shapes.

Four giraffe species are clearly distinct

The study provides strong evidence that skull shape can reliably distinguish between the four genetically defined giraffe species. In particular, the shape and position of the ossicones vary between species. These physical differences support earlier genetic studies and help solidify the case for recognizing four separate species of giraffe.

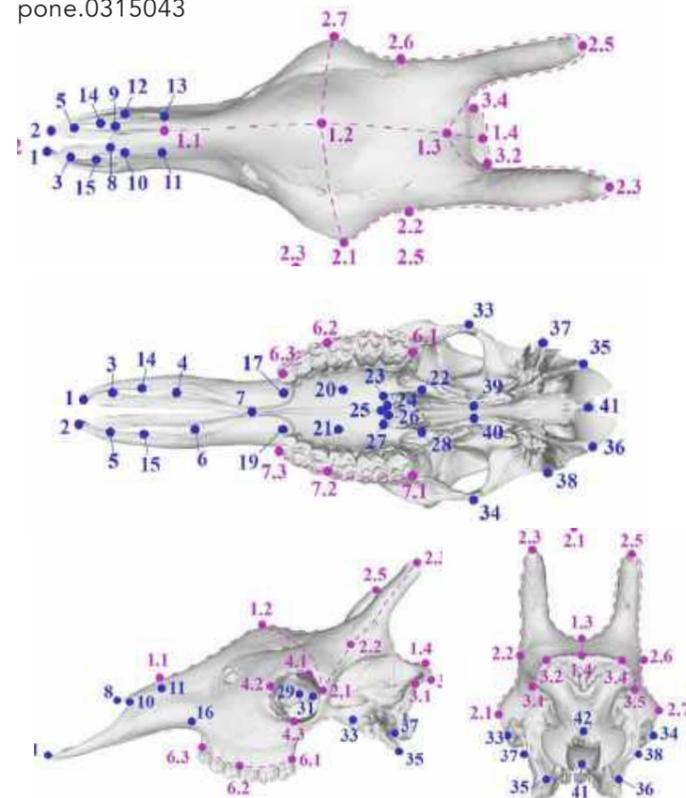
Conservation depends on correct classification

When treated as one species, their conservation status looks stable. But as four species, some qualify as Endangered or Critically Endangered. Accurate classification is therefore essential for designing targeted conservation actions and ensuring that no giraffe species is overlooked.

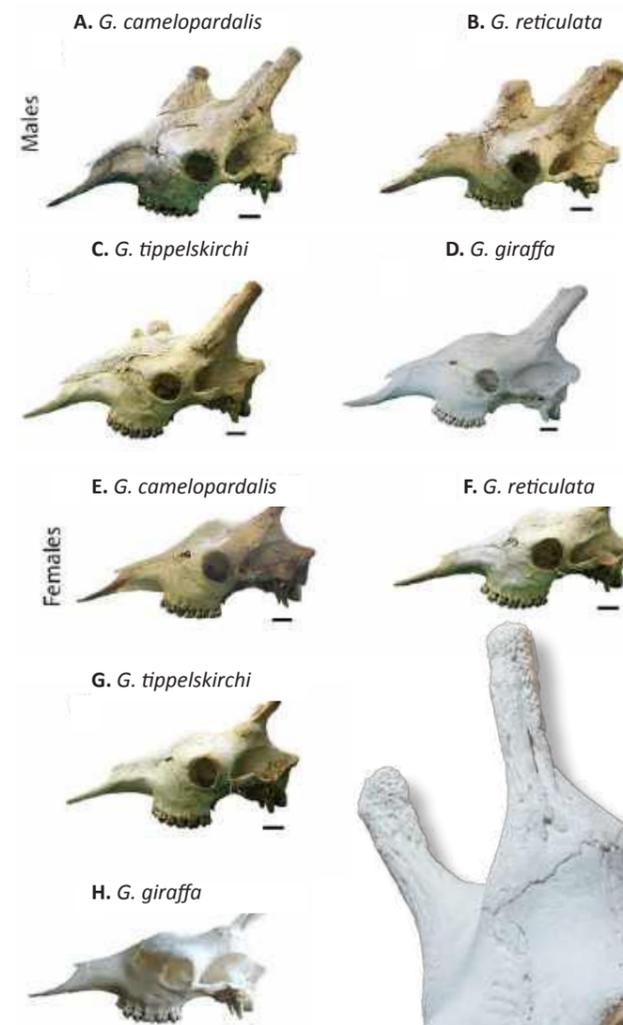
Our exciting collaborative research shows that giraffe are not just one species but a group of four, each with unique traits and needs.

By studying the skulls of giraffe using 3D technology, we have provided a valuable new tool for species identification of giraffe which clearly marries our fascinating genetic results. For conservation, this means protection efforts must be adapted to the specific threats faced by each species. Recognizing giraffe's hidden diversity is a critical step toward ensuring the long-term survival of all four giraffe species in the wild.

Kargopoulos N, Marugán-Lobón J, Chinsamy A, Agwanda BR, Brown MB, et al. (2024) Heads up—Four *Giraffa* species have distinct cranial morphology. PLOS ONE 19(12): e0315043. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0315043>



SPECIES HAVE DIFFERENT SKULLS



Males
Females



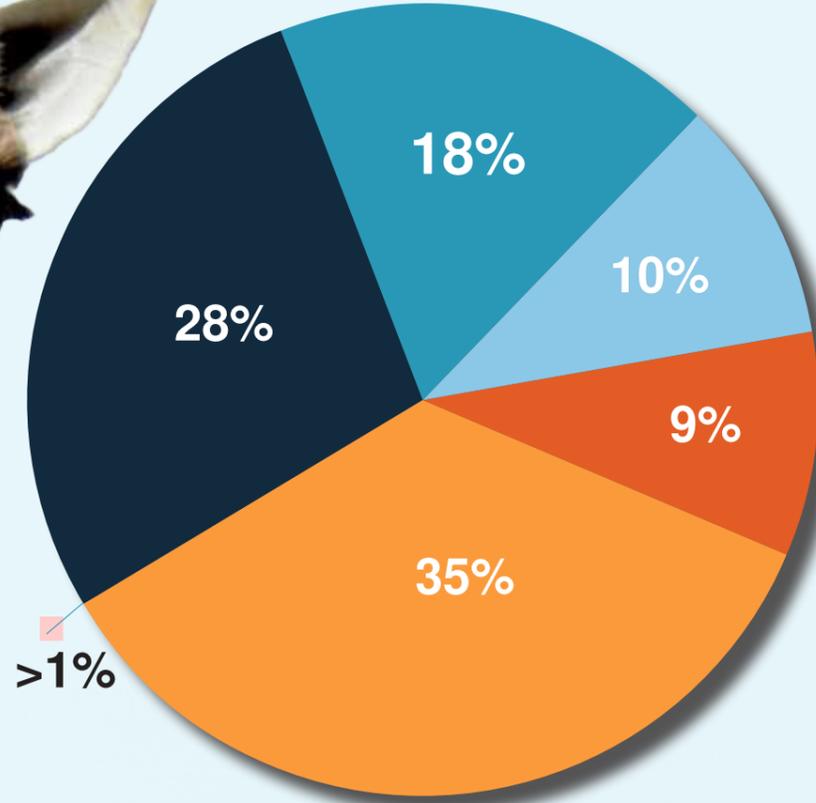
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Our vital conservation work across Africa is only possible thanks to the generosity of our incredible donors and supporters. As priorities shift between giraffe species and across countries, our projects are often guided by the expertise and insights of our trusted partners. Throughout this process, we remain committed to keeping administrative costs as low as possible, ensuring that the majority of resources

go directly toward conservation impact. At the same time, as a growing organization navigating challenging economic times, it is equally important that we demonstrate strong financial management and effective administrative systems. To reinforce this commitment, we have voluntarily undergone an independent audit of our financials, providing an additional layer of accountability

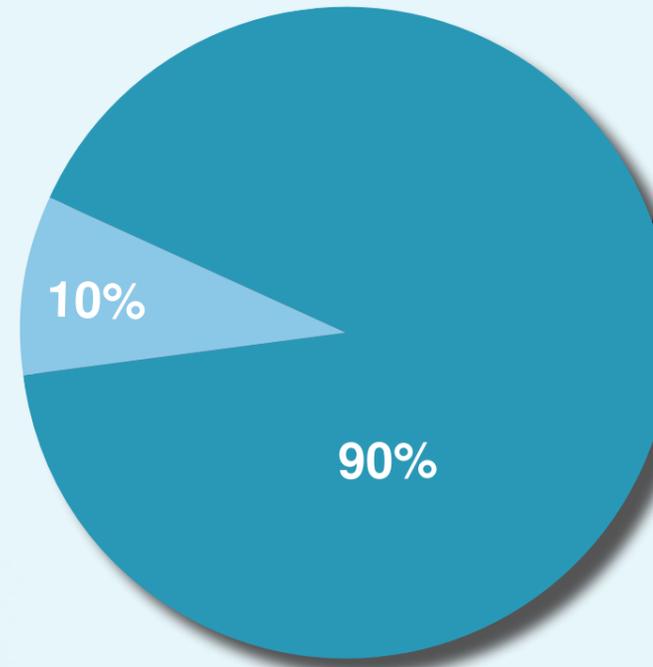
and transparency. This allows us to maintain trust and ensure that every contribution is used wisely. Fortunately, giraffe capture the hearts of people everywhere. Their universal appeal helps us secure the support needed to continue our mission year after year. With your partnership, we can keep expanding our impact and safeguarding giraffes for future generations.

FUNDS RECEIVED (BY SOURCE)



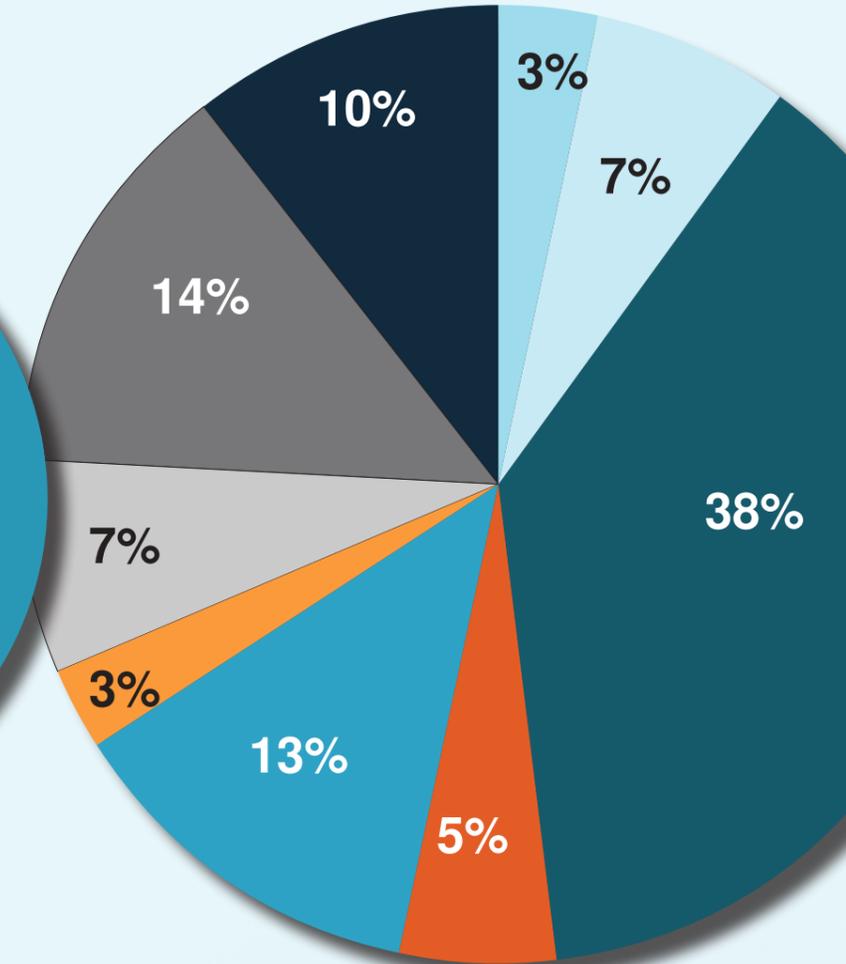
Zoos /AAZKs	\$575,791
Individual / Private	\$450,746
Foundations / Funds	\$296,046
Corporate	\$168,675
Donor-Advised Funds	\$149,526
Grants	\$4,749
TOTAL	\$1,645,533

EXPENDITURE



Programme & Grant Expenses	\$1,590,786
<i>(Conservation, Education & Awareness)</i>	
Administrative Expenses	\$182,568
TOTAL	\$1,773,354

**All amounts are in USD.*



Conservation Health Initiative	\$62,776
Giraffe Action Fund	\$118,794
Operational Expenses	\$673,096
National Conservation Strategies	\$93,517
Giraffe Surveys	\$222,838
Conservation Translocations	\$48,480
Twiga Tracker Initiative	\$126,268
Twiga Wetu Initiative	\$245,017
Administrative Expenses	\$182,568

TOTAL \$1,773,354

GCF is proud to have once again earned the Platinum Seal of Transparency from Candid (formerly GuideStar). This marks the sixth consecutive year we have received this recognition, awarded for meeting the highest standards of accountability and openness in our operations and results. With this continued commitment to transparency, you can support our work to save giraffe in Africa with even greater trust and confidence.

Platinum
Transparency
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Candid.

DONORS

At GCF, we are constantly inspired by the incredible community that makes our work possible. Our wide donor base reflects a beautiful tapestry of support – from passionate zoo staff who go above and beyond for giraffe conservation, to individuals, companies, and foundations who believe in our mission and trust our team to deliver real impact. Together, you form a global network of giraffe champions, standing tall with us to secure a future for these gentle giants.

The passion and dedication of zoos around the world and their staff is truly unmatched, and their tireless efforts continue to be a cornerstone of giraffe conservation. But just as powerful are the countless individuals, families, and organizations who choose to give – sometimes in big ways, sometimes in smaller ways, but always with the same heart and determination to make a difference. Every contribution tells a story of hope, commitment, and love for giraffes.

While this report lists donations of US\$300 and above, we want to emphasize that every single gift matters. Whether large or small, your generosity fuels conservation on the ground in Africa. To each and every one of you – we extend our deepest gratitude. Thank you for walking this journey with us and for standing tall for giraffe.

We would also like to shine a special spotlight on Shores, Tagman, Butler & Company, P.A. in Orlando, Florida, whose generosity goes far beyond financial contributions. By allowing us to use their postal address, offering pro bono administrative support, preparing our annual financial statements, and guiding us through U.S. compliance, they are true partners in our mission. In addition, the Metzger Group at Morgan Stanley provides expert care and stewardship of our investment portfolio, ensuring that your donations are managed wisely and sustainably for maximum impact.

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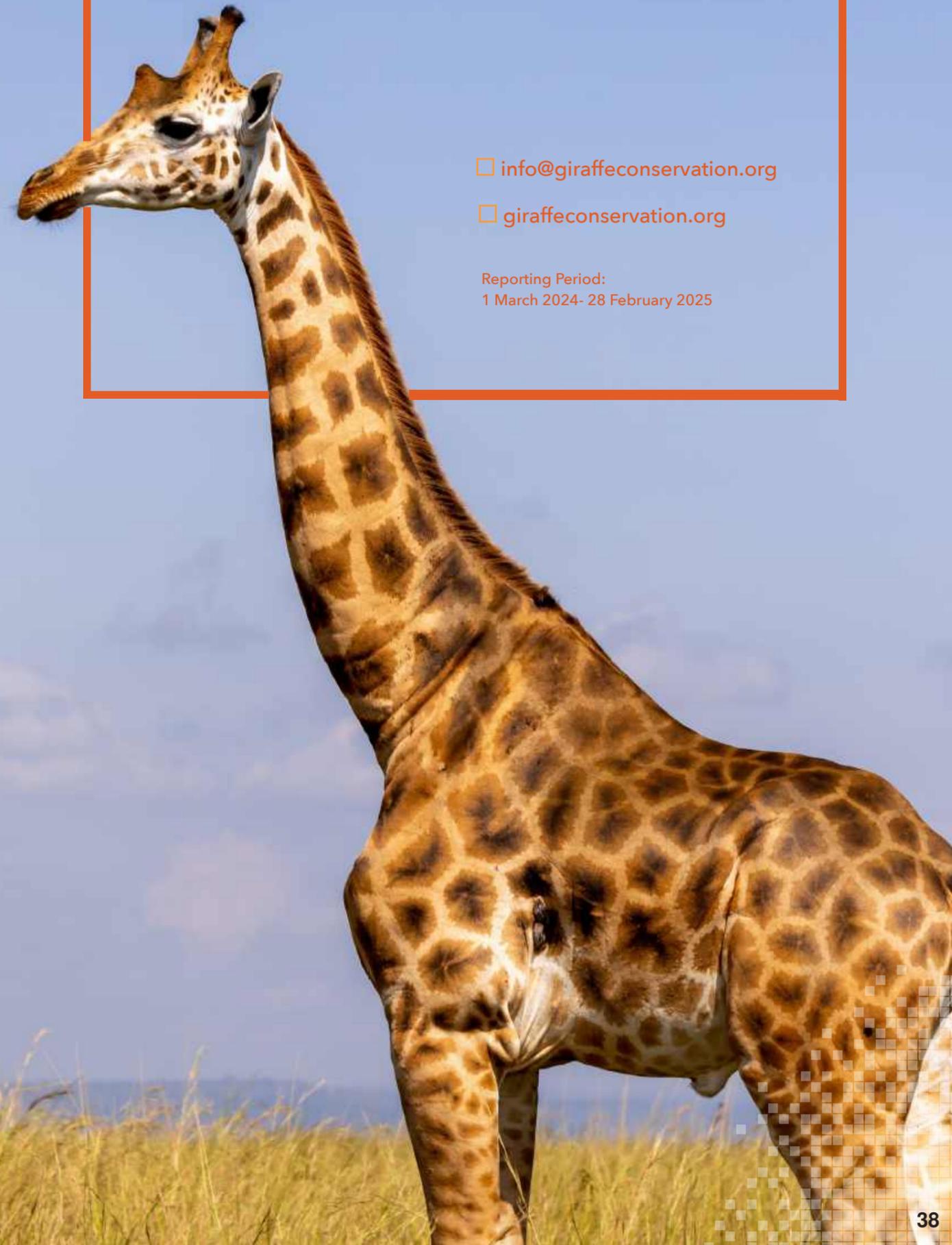
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