



ANNUAL REPORT

**2025/26**



## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

As I write this message from GCF's Etosha Heights Conservation Centre in Namibia, I am surrounded by a room full of African wildlife veterinarians – ten participants and five experienced mentors from across Africa all sharing their knowledge and experience. Around me, discussions range from pharmacology and immobilization protocols to the practical realities of working with wildlife in the field and partnerships.

Moments like this remind me why conservation is ultimately about people.

At GCF, we are known for our work with giraffe, and rightly so. But behind every survey, every conservation translocation, every African student trained, and every success story are people who have chosen to dedicate their skills, energy and passion to securing a future for Africa's wildlife.

Conservation can be challenging work. Progress is rarely linear, and meaningful change often takes years – or even decades – to become visible. Yet every year, I am reminded that lasting impact is built through persistence, collaboration and a willingness to keep moving forward, even when the path ahead is uncertain.

This year offered many reasons for optimism.

Our veterinary training programme welcomed another group of dedicated wildlife professionals, bringing the total number of early-career African veterinarians trained through the programme to 42 from 15 countries. Each participant leaves with new skills, stronger professional networks and a deeper capacity to contribute to conservation in their own country. The ripple effects of that investment will continue long after

the training ends. It is truly a game changer for conservation in Africa and I am particularly proud of our commitment to this course.

I see similar impact through our environmental education programme in Namibia. In 2025, more than 4,000 primary school students and their teachers participated in our activities. What began as an effort to introduce young Namibians to conservation has grown into a programme that schools actively seek out, with demand now exceeding capacity. The enthusiasm we see from learners and educators alike reminds us that inspiring the next generation is one of the most important investments we can make.

This year also marked a watershed moment for giraffe conservation.

Following more than two decades of research, collaboration and advocacy, the global conservation community now officially recognizes four distinct giraffe species – finally. For many, this may seem like a scientific milestone. For giraffe conservation, it is far more than that and we are proud that our team played the leading role in all the critical work that has led to this change. I am truly in awe of our contribution to what has changed giraffe conservation forever.

Recognition of the four species fundamentally changes how giraffe are assessed, managed and protected throughout the continent. It provides a clearer understanding of the challenges each species faces and strengthens our ability to develop targeted conservation solutions. Most importantly, it ensures that the unique needs of each species can no longer be overlooked.

The announcement followed the release of our *State of Giraffe 2025* report, the most comprehensive assessment of all giraffe populations and distribution across Africa. The findings are encouraging. Three of the four giraffe species show positive population trends, while the fourth appears stable.

These results matter because they demonstrate that conservation works.

For many years, GCF has championed a simple but powerful principle: effective conservation begins with knowledge. By improving our understanding of giraffe populations, movements and threats, we can make better decisions and direct resources where they are needed most. The encouraging trends we are seeing today are not the result of chance. They are the outcome of sustained investment in science, partnerships, community engagement and practical conservation action.

They are also the result of people coming together around a shared purpose.

Whether you are a field researcher, a wildlife veterinarian, a teacher, a government partner, a donor, a volunteer or a supporter, your contribution helps ensure that giraffe are seen, valued and protected. Every achievement highlighted in this report reflects the collective effort of a growing community that believes giraffe deserve to be conserved long-term in the wild.

While our work is far from finished, I have never been more hopeful. Across Africa, we are seeing stronger partnerships, greater

awareness, improved knowledge and tangible giraffe conservation success. Together, we are proving that when we give giraffe a voice, positive change follows.

Thank you for standing with us and helping make that voice stronger every day.

**Be a voice for giraffe.**

*Steph Fennessy*

**Stephanie Fennessy**

Co-founder & Executive Director







# We are a voice for giraffe!

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.

|                                                                   |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| ■ ONE GCF, ONE PURPOSE                                            | 1  |
| ■ MEET THE TEAM                                                   | 3  |
| ■ BOARD OF DIRECTORS                                              | 5  |
| ■ GCF: A VOICE FOR GIRAFFE ACROSS AFRICA                          | 7  |
| ■ KEY PARTNERS 2025/26                                            | 9  |
| ■ A LANDMARK VICTORY: FOUR GIRAFFE SPECIES OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED  | 11 |
| ■ <b>STATE OF GIRAFFE 2025</b>                                    | 13 |
| ■ GIRAFFE ON THE MOVE: MAPPING A SILENT RECOVERY                  | 15 |
| ■ CONSERVATION SCIENCE: TURNING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION             | 20 |
| ■ PUBLICATIONS                                                    | 22 |
| ■ REWILDING: A LONG TERM COMMITMENT                               | 23 |
| ■ CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGY: CONNECTING DATA TO ACTION              | 25 |
| ■ TWIGA WETU: OUR GIRAFFE, OUR FUTURE                             | 28 |
| ■ UNIFIED FOR GIANTS: NATIONAL & REGIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGIES | 34 |
| ■ REGIONAL PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS                                   | 37 |
| ■ FINANCIAL SUMMARY                                               | 43 |
| ■ DONORS                                                          | 45 |
| ■ CONTACT                                                         | 48 |



# One GCF, One Purpose



**The Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF)** is the only organization in the world dedicated exclusively to the conservation and management of giraffe in the wild throughout Africa.

Our purpose is simple: **to be a voice for giraffe.**

We are dedicated to securing a future where all four giraffe species thrive across Africa, supported by a growing network of communities, governments, conservation partners, and supporters working together to protect them.

Today, GCF is involved in and supports giraffe conservation initiatives in 21 African countries. Our work influences more than 445,000 km<sup>2</sup> (110 million acres) of giraffe habitat and supports the conservation of all four giraffe species.

Our approach is guided by five core values that shape everything we do.

**Creativity & Courage** drive us to challenge assumptions, embrace innovation, and pursue bold solutions to complex conservation challenges.

**Respectivity** reminds us that successful conservation depends on listening, learning, and working alongside the people who share their landscapes with giraffe.

**Integrity** ensures that our actions are grounded in science, honesty, and a commitment to doing what is right for giraffe and their habitats.

**Accountability** guides us to measure our impact, use resources responsibly, and remain transparent with our partners, supporters, and stakeholders.

**Collaboration** sits at the heart of our work, recognizing that lasting conservation success can only be achieved by working together.

Across Africa, we work alongside governments, communities, conservation organizations, researchers, wildlife managers, and supporters to address the unique challenges facing giraffe populations. Our involvement ranges from field-based conservation and population monitoring to scientific research, conservation planning, environmental education, capacity building, translocations, and technical support.

Because giraffe conservation cannot be achieved by any one organization alone, partnerships are central to everything we do. We strive to be bold yet humble, innovative yet practical, and ambitious while remaining grounded in evidence and experience.

United by this shared purpose, GCF operates as a family of organizations that includes GCF Trust (Namibia), GCF-USA (Florida, USA), GCF-East Africa (Kenya), and Freunde von GCF (Germany). While each entity is legally and financially independent, all operate under the shared umbrella of GCF and are guided by the same mission, values, and commitment to giraffe conservation.

This structure allows us to combine local presence with international reach, bringing together expertise, partnerships, resources, and supporters from around the world while maintaining strong accountability and regional leadership.

Together, we are one GCF – working across borders, cultures, and continents to secure a future for giraffe in the wild and to be a stronger voice for giraffe across Africa.



# Meet the Team *the people who are a voice for giraffe*

Behind every survey, conservation translocation, research paper, education programme, partnership, and field operation is a dedicated team of people working together to secure a future for giraffe across Africa.

GCF's core team comprises 18 staff members representing 12 nationalities and based across five African countries. While our work spans diverse landscapes, cultures, and conservation challenges, this diversity is one of our greatest strengths.

Each team member brings a unique combination of experience, knowledge, perspective, and lived experience to our work. Together, these different viewpoints help us better understand the complex realities of conservation and strengthen our ability to work effectively with the many communities, governments, researchers, and partners who share our commitment to giraffe conservation.

Building a truly collaborative team across countries, cultures, languages, and disciplines does not happen by chance. It requires trust, respect, open communication, and a willingness to learn from one another. Over the years, we have intentionally invested in creating a culture where people feel valued, supported, and empowered to contribute their ideas and expertise.

Just as importantly, we invest in our people beyond their technical roles. Conservation is ultimately about relationships, and effective conservation practitioners need more than scientific knowledge. They need empathy, resilience, cultural awareness, and the ability to build meaningful partnerships across a wide range of perspectives and experiences.

At GCF, we encourage continuous learning and personal growth alongside professional development. Our team embraces honest conversations, listens with curiosity, and approaches challenges with humility and respect. Whether working with local community members, wildlife authorities, government officials, researchers, educators, or conservation partners, these qualities are essential to building the trust that underpins lasting conservation success.

The strength of GCF is not found in any single programme, project, or achievement. It is found in the people who bring our mission to life every day.

Together, they are helping ensure that giraffe have a voice across Africa—and that voice is stronger than ever.

**Naemi Antonius** – Program Officer, Environmental Education

**Frederike Broekhuizen-Otten** – Program Officer, Zambia

**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

**Courtney Marneweck** – Conservation Technology Coordinator

**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

**Sibolile Sankombe** – Junior Program Officer, Environmental Education

**Emma Wells** – Program Officer, Etosha Heights Conservation Centre





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS (GCF-USA)

As GCF continues to grow, so too does our responsibility.

With an expanding geographic reach, increasing conservation impact, and a growing network of partners and supporters, strong governance is essential to ensuring that we remain accountable, transparent, and focused on our mission.

Our Board of Directors plays a critical role in providing oversight, guidance, and strategic direction as we work to conserve all four giraffe species across Africa. The Board helps ensure that GCF remains financially responsible, operationally effective, and true to the values that guide our work.

Reflecting the global nature of giraffe conservation, GCF's Board brings together professionals from six countries across four continents. Their collective expertise spans conservation, business, finance, governance, communications, law, and philanthropy, providing a diverse range of perspectives that strengthen our decision-making and support our long-term sustainability.

While their backgrounds may differ, Board members share a common commitment: helping ensure that giraffe have a future in the wild and that GCF continues to be a trusted and effective voice for giraffe.

We are grateful for their leadership, guidance, and ongoing support.

- **Till Hollmann** (*Chair*)
- **Austin Stewart** (*Treasurer*)
- **Julian Fennessy**
- **Stephanie Fennessy**
- **Chris Kelsch**
- **Lars Markgren**
- **Tim Tetzlaff**
- **Lindy van den Bosch**

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

It is a privilege to address you on behalf of the GCF Board of Directors as we reflect on what has been a truly landmark year for giraffe conservation.

When our board convenes, we do so with one shared purpose: to ensure that GCF remains a trusted, effective and enduring voice for giraffe across Africa. This year, more than any other in our history, demonstrated what that purpose can achieve.

After more than two decades of patient, evidence-based work, the global conservation community now formally recognizes four distinct giraffe species. The release of the State of Giraffe 2025 is the most comprehensive assessment of wild giraffe populations ever assembled, and it brought genuinely encouraging news: three of the four species are increasing, while the fourth remains stable. These are not the achievements of a single year. They are the result of persistence, scientific rigor and sustained partnership spanning decades, and they reflect precisely the kind of long-term thinking the board exists to protect and champion.

GCF's reach now encompasses conservation initiatives across 21 African countries, and with that growth comes a deepening responsibility to those who place their trust in us. The board's role is to provide oversight, strategic direction and governance that allow this organization to grow with discipline and integrity. Our members bring together expertise from six countries across four continents, spanning conservation science, business, finance, and philanthropy. What unites us is far greater than what distinguishes us: a shared conviction that giraffe deserve a future in the wild, and a deep respect for the dedicated team that turns that conviction into reality every single day.

We take our fiduciary duty seriously. Every donation entrusted to GCF is an investment in giraffe, and we are committed to stewarding those resources with care, transparency and fidelity to the values that have guided this organization from the very beginning. I am pleased to report that GCF's financial management, independently verified through third-party audit, continues to meet the highest standards of accountability.

On behalf of the full board, I want to express our profound gratitude to Julian, Stephanie

and the entire GCF team for their tireless commitment, scientific excellence and unwavering belief in what is possible.

And above all, I want to thank you, our donors, partners and supporters. None of this year's progress would have been possible without your generosity and trust. The formal recognition of four giraffe species and the positive population trends documented in State of Giraffe 2025 affirm a simple but powerful truth: conservation works. When knowledge, partnership and sustained commitment come together, recovery becomes possible.

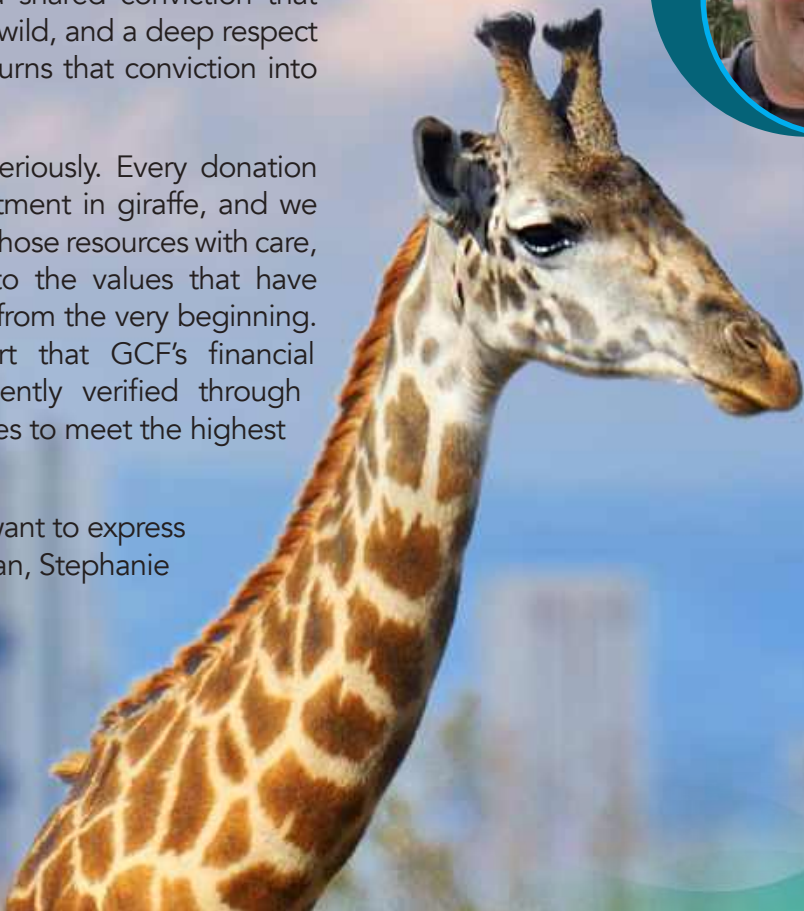
The work ahead remains significant. But the foundation has never been stronger, and we have never been more grateful for those who stand with us.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, thank you for standing tall for giraffe, and for helping ensure that giraffe continue to have a strong and lasting voice across Africa.

Regards,

*Till Hollmann*

**Till Hollmann**  
GCF-USA Board Chair





# GCF: A VOICE FOR GIRAFFE ACROSS AFRICA

*Giraffe conservation takes many forms*

# GCF IN ACTION

It can mean monitoring populations in remote landscapes, supporting communities that live alongside giraffe, training wildlife professionals, advising governments on conservation policy, restoring populations through carefully planned translocations, or conducting the research needed to better understand and protect these iconic animals.

Across Africa, GCF works wherever giraffe need a voice.

Our work spans the full spectrum of giraffe conservation, from hands-on field implementation and long-term monitoring to conservation planning, capacity building, education, and technical support. In some places, we lead projects directly. In others, we provide expertise, resources, training, or strategic guidance that helps partners achieve their conservation goals. Regardless of our role, our focus remains the same: securing a future for all giraffe species in the wild.

Collaboration is central to how we work.

As a network organisation, GCF often acts as a catalyst, bringing together governments, local communities, researchers, conservation organisations, zoos, donors, and other partners around a shared purpose. We do not seek to work in isolation or to do everything ourselves. Instead, we strive to strengthen conservation efforts by supporting and empowering those best positioned to make a difference on the ground.

There is no single blueprint for giraffe conservation.

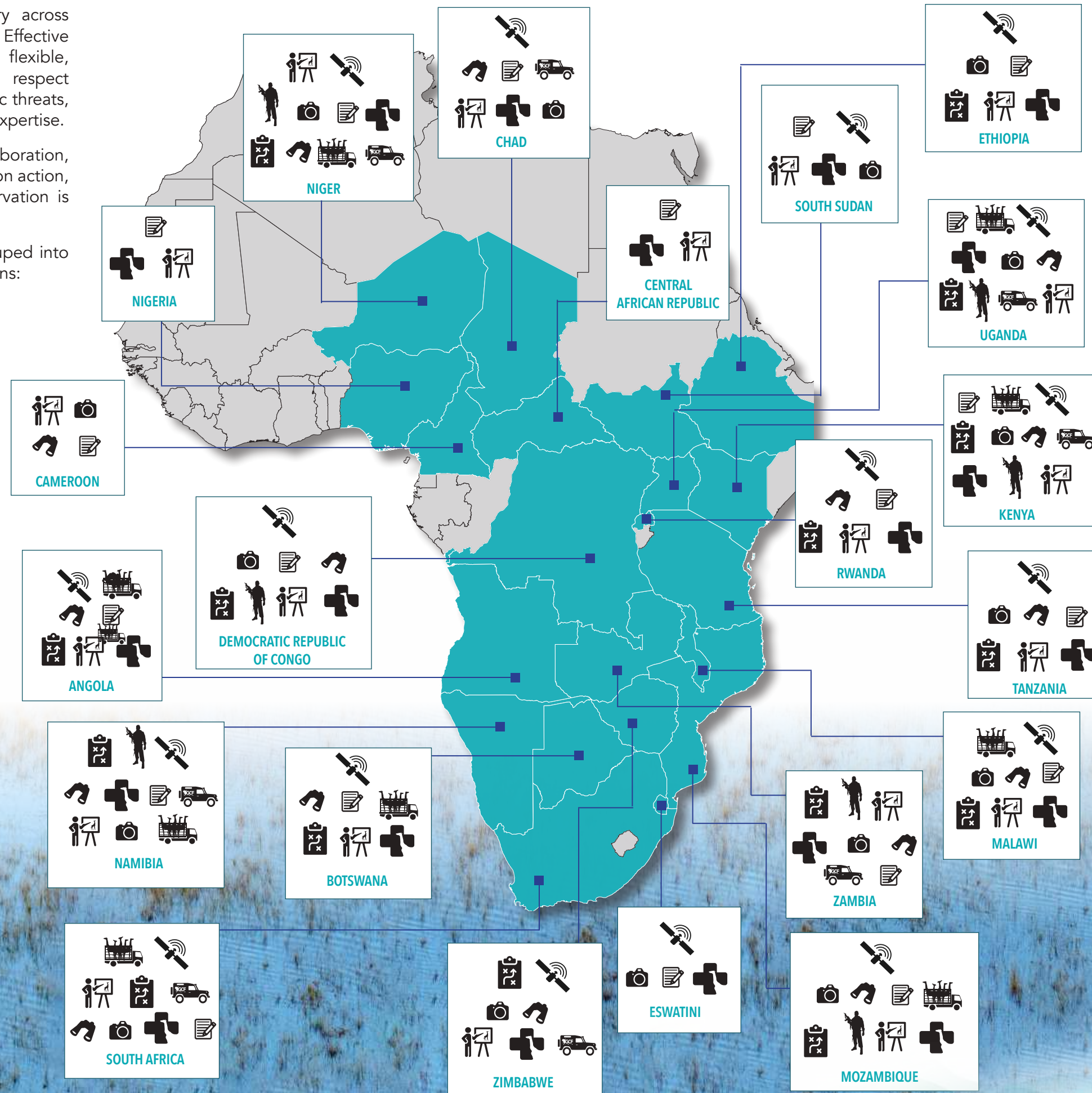
The challenges facing giraffe vary across countries, landscapes, and species. Effective conservation therefore requires flexible, locally relevant approaches that respect cultural contexts, respond to specific threats, and build on local knowledge and expertise.

By combining science, collaboration, innovation, and practical conservation action, we help ensure that giraffe conservation is both effective and sustainable.

Our work across Africa can be grouped into the following key conservation actions:

## LEGEND

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







## None of our work happens in isolation.

Collaboration is at the heart of GCF's conservation approach, and every achievement highlighted in this report reflects the commitment, expertise, and support of a remarkable network of partners across Africa and around the world.

From local communities and government agencies to conservation organizations, academic institutions, private sector partners, and individual supporters, our work is strengthened by people and organizations who share our vision of a future where giraffe thrive in the wild.

Many of these partnerships have developed over years of working together, built on mutual trust, shared values, and a common commitment to conservation. Others were formed more recently to address specific challenges or opportunities. While each partnership is unique, all play an important role in helping us advance giraffe conservation across Africa.

Some of the partners recognized here have provided exceptional long-term support, strategic collaboration, technical expertise, or sustained investment that has helped shape and strengthen our work. Their contributions extend far beyond individual projects and have enabled us to grow our impact, expand our reach, and respond to conservation challenges with confidence and purpose.

As partnerships evolve, so too does our collective ability to make a difference. The successes celebrated throughout this report belong not only to GCF, but to the many individuals and organizations who choose to stand alongside us.

While we have done our best to acknowledge those who have contributed to our work during the year, we recognize that there is always a risk of unintentionally overlooking someone. To every partner, supporter, collaborator, donor, volunteer, and friend of GCF, please accept our sincere gratitude.

Thank you for helping us become an even stronger voice for giraffe.



# A LANDMARK VICTORY: FOUR GIRAFFE SPECIES OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED BY THE IUCN

For more than 250 years, giraffe were considered a single species. In 2025, that officially changed – finally. Our team and partners had been aware of this fact for over a decade already.

Following decades of research, collaboration, and scientific discovery, the global conservation community officially recognized four distinct giraffe species across Africa: the Masai giraffe, northern giraffe, reticulated giraffe, and southern giraffe.

For GCF and our partners, this milestone represents far more than a taxonomic revision. It marks a fundamental shift in how giraffe are understood, assessed, and protected, giving conservationists the clarity needed to develop more effective, species-specific conservation strategies across Africa.

The recognition follows more than a decade of collaborative genomic research led by the Senckenberg Biodiversity and Climate Research Centre (SBiK-F), under the leadership of Prof. Axel Janke, and GCF, led by Dr. Julian Fennessy. While the first groundbreaking genetic study revealing four distinct giraffe species

was published in 2016, building scientific consensus required persistence, patience, and a continued commitment to evidence-based science. Over the following years, additional genetic, ecological, and morphological studies led by GCF, strengthened the case until the evidence became impossible to ignore.

As Prof. Janke reflected: “To describe four new large mammal species after more than 250 years of taxonomy is extraordinary. Especially for animals as iconic as giraffe, which roam Africa in plain sight.”

What began as a practical request to develop genetic markers for giraffe fieldwork ultimately evolved into one of the most significant wildlife discoveries of the century. To make this research possible, teams travelled across some of Africa’s most remote and challenging landscapes, collecting samples from populations in almost all giraffe countries including Chad, DRC, Niger, and South Sudan. The achievement reflects the collaborative dedication of researchers, field teams, governments, protected area managers, and local communities working together toward a shared goal.

*Southern Giraffe*



*Reticulated Giraffe*



*Northern Giraffe*



*Masai Giraffe*



Photos by GCF

## TURNING SCIENCE INTO CONSERVATION ACTION

The recognition of four giraffe species is not simply a scientific achievement – it is a conservation imperative.

Each species occupies a different range, faces different threats, and requires different management approaches. By recognizing these distinctions, conservation efforts can now be tailored more precisely to the needs of each species and the landscapes they inhabit.

“This recognition is more than symbolic,” explains Dr. Julian Fennessy. “Each giraffe species faces different threats, and now we can tailor conservation strategies to meet their specific needs. It gives African countries and the global conservation community the tools to act before it is too late.”

For GCF, this milestone reinforces a principle that has guided our work from the beginning: effective conservation starts with knowledge. The better we understand giraffe, the better equipped we are to protect them.

By helping reveal the true diversity of giraffe across Africa, science has given these iconic animals a stronger voice in conservation decision-making. It ensures that their unique needs can be recognized, prioritized, and addressed before populations reach irreversible decline.

## THE WORK AHEAD

While the scientific debate may be settled, the conservation work is only beginning.

GCF team members, serving in their voluntary capacities within the IUCN SSC Giraffe and Okapi Specialist Group, are currently leading the official IUCN Red List assessments for each of the four newly recognized species. These assessments will provide the foundation for future conservation planning, policy development, and investment.

Early findings suggest that several of the four giraffe species may qualify as threatened due to population declines, habitat loss, and increasing fragmentation across their range. The recognition of four species therefore brings both opportunity and responsibility.

For the first time, conservationists have the clarity needed to understand the true status of each species individually. The challenge now is turning that knowledge into action.

As GCF Executive Director Stephanie Fennessy reminds us:

“What a tragedy it would be to lose a species we’ve only just discovered.”

This historic milestone represents the power of collaboration, perseverance, and science to drive meaningful conservation outcomes. Most importantly, it provides a stronger foundation for securing a future for all four giraffe species in the wild.



Photos by mijie shots / Adobe Stock



# STATE OF GIRAFFE 2025

In 2025, we reached an important milestone in giraffe conservation by moving beyond documenting decline to helping guide their recovery.

Over several years, GCF and our partners worked to bring together the most comprehensive collection of giraffe population and distribution data ever assembled. Drawing on aerial and ground surveys, camera trap records, scientific studies, government reports, community observations, and decades of field experience, we developed the Giraffe Africa Database (GAD) – a continent-wide platform that provides an unprecedented understanding of giraffe across Africa.

The culmination of this effort was the release of the *State of Giraffe 2025* report, the most up-to-date assessment of all four giraffe species and their conservation status.

Most importantly, the findings provide something conservation rarely receives: reason for optimism.

Despite decades of population declines and ongoing threats across much of their range, three of the four giraffe species are showing positive population trends, while the fourth appears stable. These encouraging results reflect the combined efforts of governments, protected area authorities, local communities, researchers, conservation organizations, and supporters working together to secure a future for giraffe in the wild.

## A CONTINENTAL SNAPSHOT

### ■ Northern giraffe

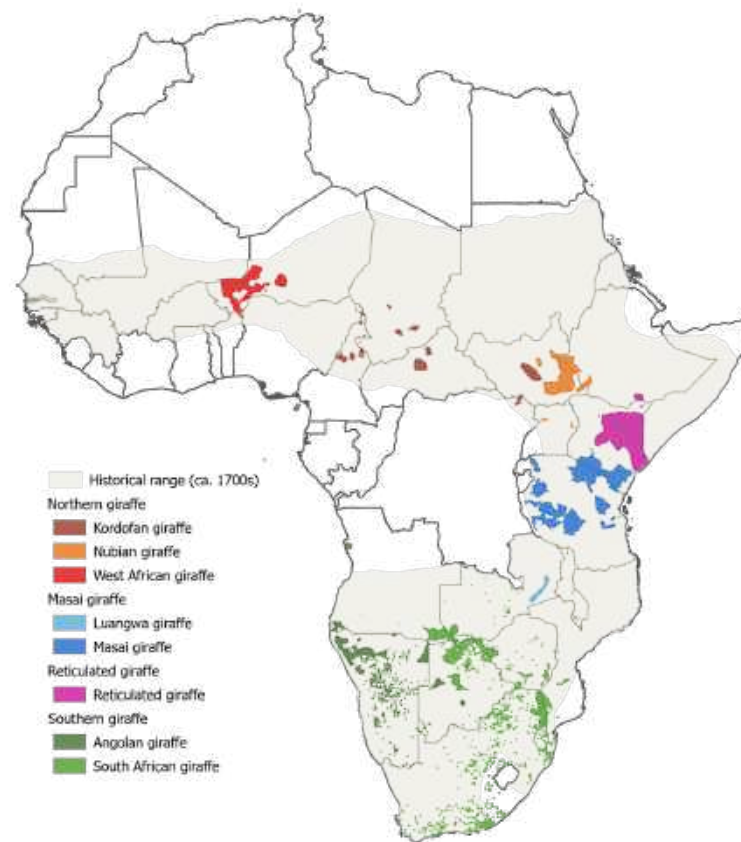
With an estimated **7,037** individuals remaining, the northern giraffe remains one of the world's most threatened large mammals. Yet there is hope. The population has increased by almost 20% in recent years despite ongoing insecurity and conservation challenges across parts of its range.

### ■ Reticulated giraffe

Estimated at **20,901** individuals, the reticulated giraffe appears to be increasing. Reliable population assessments remain challenging due to insecurity in parts of northeastern Kenya and limited access in Ethiopia and Somalia, highlighting the importance of continued monitoring and collaboration.

### ■ Southern giraffe

The southern giraffe shows some of the most encouraging recovery trends. An estimated **68,837** individuals now occur across southern Africa, representing a significant increase over the past five years. Improved monitoring, increased awareness, and sustained conservation efforts have all contributed to this positive trajectory.



### ■ Masai giraffe

Masai giraffe populations remain relatively stable with an estimated **43,926** individuals, with populations in Kenya holding strong. At the same time, the single population in Rwanda continue to grow, while Zambia's Luangwa giraffe are expanding in both range and number – further evidence that targeted conservation action can deliver lasting results.

## FROM DATA TO ACTION

In 2016, giraffe were uplisted from Least Concern to Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List, drawing global attention to their “silent extinction.” Today, our understanding of giraffe conservation has evolved significantly.

The recognition of four distinct giraffe species, combined with the data presented in *State of Giraffe 2025*, provides a far clearer picture of the challenges facing each species. While the encouraging population trends offer hope, many giraffe populations remain small, fragmented, and vulnerable. Current assessments suggest there is a strong case for listing several of the four species in one of the threatened categories.

The threats have not disappeared – but for the first time, we have the information needed to respond more effectively.

GCF's Giraffe Africa Database (GAD) is helping make that possible. By bringing together information that was once scattered across countries, organizations, and individual projects, GAD provides a shared foundation for conservation planning across Africa. For the first time, governments, researchers, conservation practitioners, and other partners can access a coordinated, up-to-date picture of giraffe populations and trends at both national and continental scales.

What was once fragmented information has become a powerful tool for decision-making.

## A ROADMAP FOR RECOVERY

*State of Giraffe 2025* is more than a status report.

It is a roadmap for action.

Better information allows us to move beyond broad assumptions and develop conservation strategies tailored to the needs of individual species and populations. From guiding translocations and protected area management to informing national conservation strategies and future IUCN Red List assessments, the data are already helping shape conservation decisions across Africa.

At its heart, this work reflects a principle that has guided GCF from the beginning: knowledge is one of the most powerful tools in conservation.

By closing critical knowledge gaps, strengthening collaboration, and making information accessible to those who need it most, we are helping ensure that conservation action is guided by evidence rather than assumption.

In 2025, we demonstrated something that giraffe conservation has needed for a long time: when knowledge improves, recovery becomes possible.





# GIRAFFE ON THE MOVE: MAPPING A SILENT RECOVERY

For decades, giraffe conservation focused on a simple challenge: stopping population declines. Today, in some landscapes, we are beginning to witness something remarkable – the return of natural behaviours that had largely gone unnoticed for generations.

In Chad and Uganda, recovering northern giraffe populations are revealing an unexpected story. As numbers increase and landscapes remain connected, individuals are once again undertaking seasonal movements across large areas, demonstrating the importance of protecting not only wildlife populations but also the landscapes that sustain them.

These discoveries offer a powerful reminder that successful conservation is about more than increasing numbers. It is about restoring ecological processes and giving wildlife the space to behave as they have for centuries.

## THE RETURN OF MOVEMENT

For more than 35 years, giraffe populations across Africa continued to experience a slow and often overlooked decline – a crisis that became known as the “silent extinction.” Historically under-researched and underfunded, many populations shrank dramatically, including Nubian and Kordofan giraffe, which were listed as Critically Endangered in 2018.

Yet conservation investment, strong partnerships, and long-term commitment are beginning to change that story.

In Uganda, Nubian giraffe numbers have recovered to almost 2,000 individuals. In Chad, Kordofan giraffe populations are steadily rebounding following years of intense pressure. As these populations recover, researchers are observing something unexpected: the return of seasonal migratory movements.

“A little bit of conservation management can have really measurable impacts over a decade,” says Michael Brown, GCF Conservation Science Coordinator. “With buy-in and investment, these systems can recover.”



## FOLLOWING ANCIENT PATHWAYS

In partnership with the Global Initiative on Ungulate Migration (GIUM), GCF mapped the movements of Nubian giraffe in Uganda's Murchison Falls National Park and Kordofan giraffe in Chad's Greater Zakouma Ecosystem. The resulting maps, now featured in the Atlas of Ungulate Migration, reveal seasonal movements of up to 60 kilometres.

For a species not traditionally considered migratory, the findings were surprising.

Researchers believe these movements are driven by the highly seasonal nature of both

ecosystems. As rainfall patterns shift throughout the year, giraffe move to access different food resources, suitable habitat, and breeding opportunities.

“It's the perfect storm for exhibiting migratory behaviours for a species we don't typically consider migratory,” explains Brown.

Perhaps most importantly, these movements suggest that recovering giraffe populations are once again able to use their landscapes as they evolved to do.







## A LANDSCAPE UNDER PRESSURE

In Uganda's Murchison Falls National Park, Nubian giraffe move westward from the eastern delta as the rainy season begins, following changes in vegetation and habitat conditions.

Along the way, however, they encounter challenges that did not exist in the past.

Their migration route now intersects with a newly paved highway carrying increasing traffic volumes, while parts of their wet-season range overlap with expanding oil development. GCF continues to monitor how this infrastructure may affect wildlife movement and habitat connectivity over time.

Despite these pressures, their ability to move across the landscape remains critical. Seasonal movements allow animals to access shifting food resources, find mates, and maintain healthy, connected populations.

"It is a testament to what these animals can do when given the opportunity," says Brown.

## RESILIENCE IN CHAD

A similar story is unfolding in the Greater Zakouma Ecosystem.

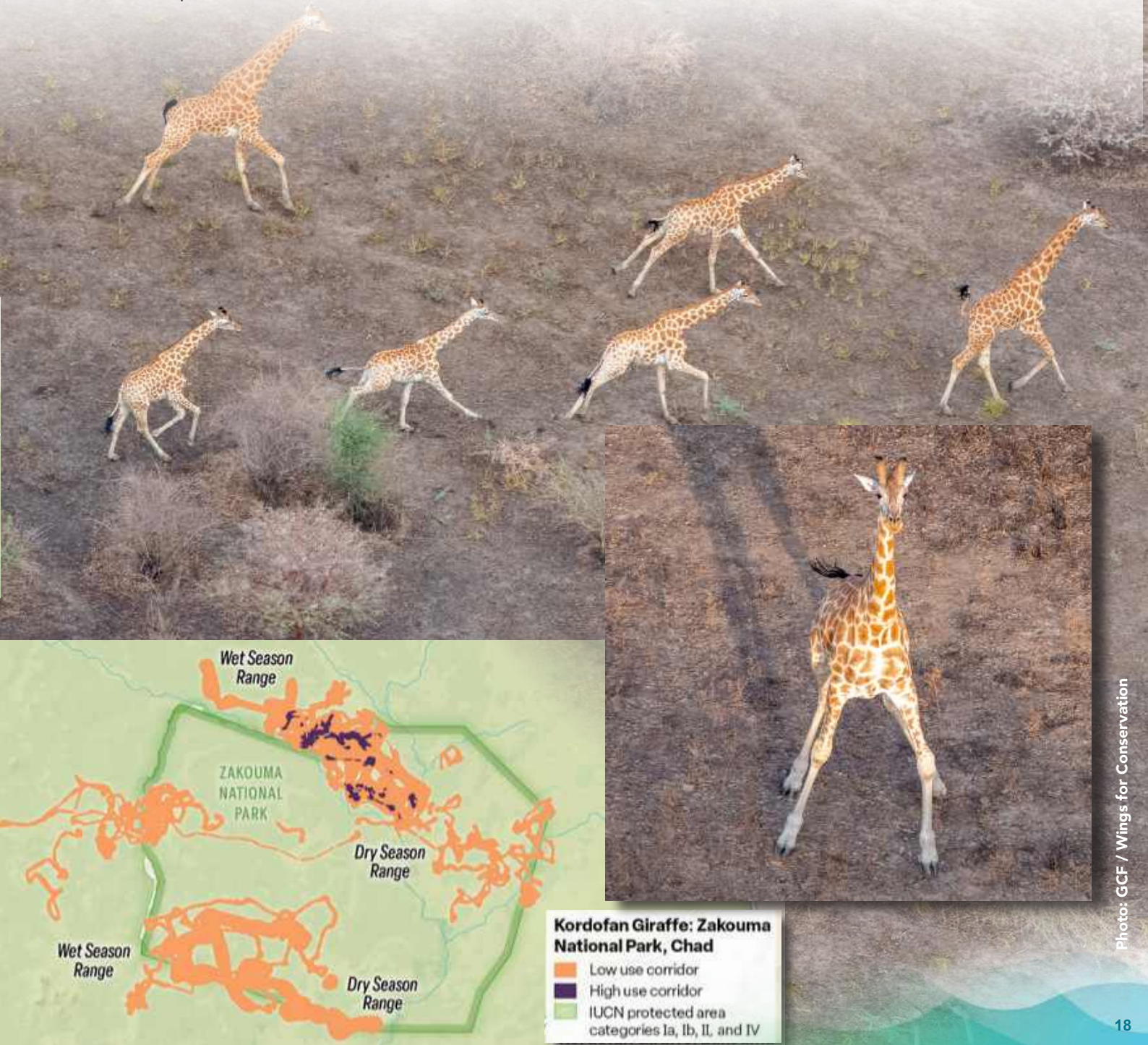
Following extensive poaching during the early 2000s, Kordofan giraffe populations declined dramatically. Over the past decade, however, improved protection and conservation efforts have helped the population begin a slow recovery.

To better understand their ecology, GCF established the first giraffe tracking programme in Chad, deploying GPS units on 36 animals over five years.

The data reveal that migration is not simply a behavioural curiosity – it is essential for survival.

During the wet season, rising water levels push giraffe westward, often beyond protected area boundaries. As conditions change and the dry season returns, the animals move back into the park where water and forage remain available.

These seasonal movements highlight the importance of landscapes that extend beyond the boundaries shown on maps.





## SECURING A CONNECTED FUTURE

The return of migration offers an encouraging sign that conservation efforts are working. At the same time, it reinforces an important lesson: protecting giraffe means protecting connectivity.

Wildlife does not recognise political boundaries, park fences, or administrative jurisdictions. Healthy giraffe populations depend on landscapes that allow movement between seasonal habitats, access to resources, and connections between populations.

For conservation planners and decision-makers, these findings provide valuable new insights into where protection, planning, and collaboration are needed most.

“Mapping the Kordofan giraffe’s movements in Zakouma and making these data and maps available for management and spatial planning is an important step for giraffe, and all wildlife, conservation in Chad,” says Stephanie Fennessy, GCF Executive Director. “The more we understand these iconic animals, the better equipped we are to secure their future in the wild.”

The story of these migrating giraffe is ultimately a story of hope. It shows that when populations recover and landscapes remain connected, wildlife can reclaim behaviours that have shaped their survival for generations. It is another reminder that conservation is not simply about preventing loss – it is about creating the conditions for nature to thrive.



Photo: GCF / Wings for Conservation

# CONSERVATION SCIENCE: TURNING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION

Every decision we make for giraffe has consequences.

Whether rewilding giraffe in their former ranges, protecting migration corridors, or advising governments on conservation priorities, the choices made today will shape giraffe populations for decades to come. In a world of limited conservation resources and growing environmental pressures, getting those decisions right has never been more important.

That is why science sits at the heart of everything we do.

At GCF, conservation science is not an academic exercise. It is a practical tool that helps us understand what giraffe need to survive and guides the actions required to secure their future. By combining research, monitoring, local knowledge, and on-the-ground experience, we ensure that conservation decisions are informed by evidence rather than assumption or goodwill.

## ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Effective conservation begins with understanding.

How many giraffe remain? Where do they occur? Are populations connected, or are they increasingly isolated? How do giraffe respond to changing environments? Which conservation interventions are working, and where should limited resources and efforts be focused?

These are the questions governments, protected area managers, and conservation partners face every day. They are also the questions that drive GCF’s conservation science programme.

To answer them, we combine long-term population monitoring, genetics, GPS tracking, habitat modelling, disease research, and ecological studies. Each approach contributes a different piece of the puzzle. Together, they provide a clearer understanding of giraffe populations and the challenges they face.

Most importantly, our science remains grounded in reality. Field observations inform models, models are tested against real-world data, and research findings are continually refined through collaboration with partners working on the ground.

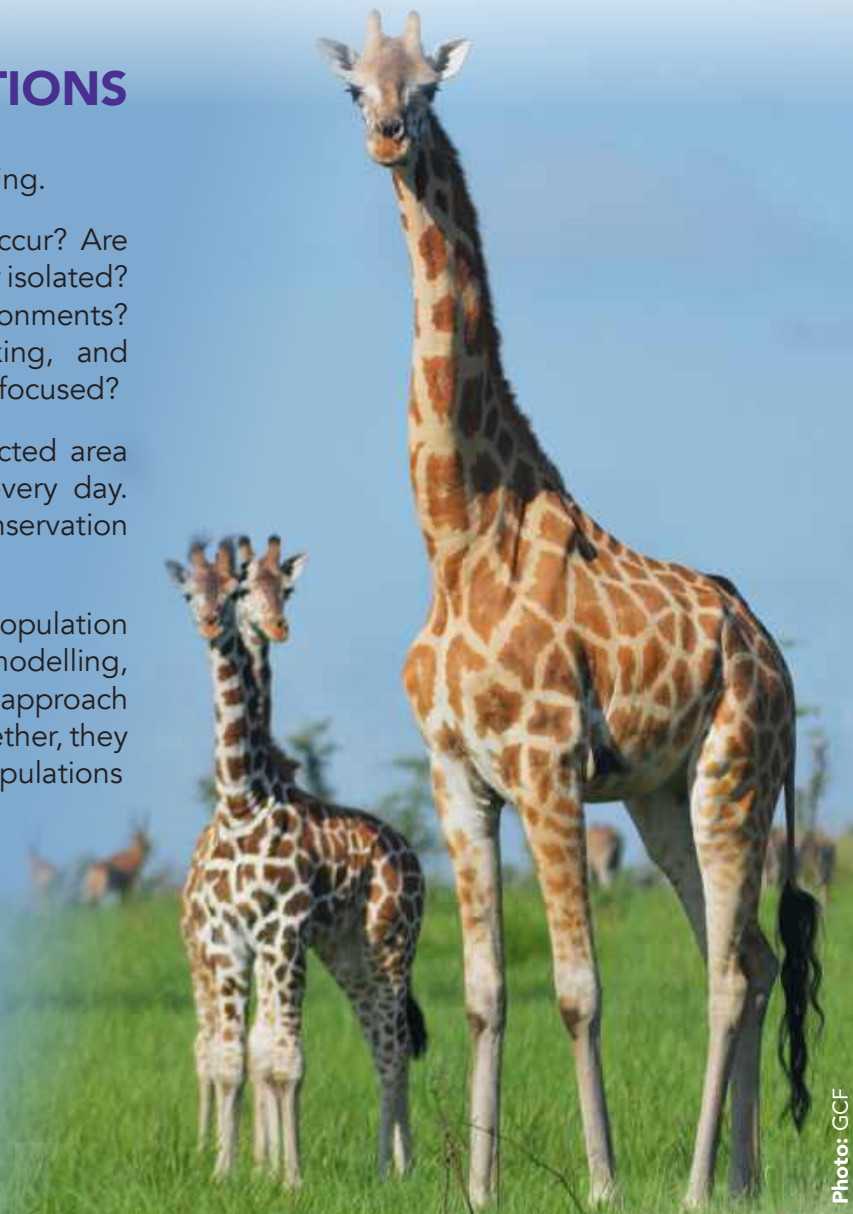


Photo: GCF



# ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE IN 2025

During the past year, several projects demonstrated how science can directly influence conservation outcomes.

In Angola, we validated habitat suitability models using real data collected from translocated giraffe to Iona National Park – a population that was successfully reestablished by GCF and partners in previous years in an effort to return the Angolan giraffe to their native home. By comparing predicted habitat quality with actual giraffe movements, we showed that carefully developed spatial models based on our extensive GPS satellite tag dataset can help identify suitable release sites and improve translocation planning.

Long-term monitoring in Namibia and Angola also revealed new insights into how giraffe survive in some of Africa’s most challenging environments. These findings challenge previous assumptions about habitat requirements and highlight the remarkable adaptability of Angolan giraffe when suitable conditions exist.

Research on giraffe skin disease continued to improve our understanding of how disease may influence movement patterns, behaviour, and long-term population resilience. While many questions remain, these studies are helping managers better assess population health and emerging conservation risks.

In Uganda, long-term monitoring of translocated Nubian giraffe provided further evidence that well-planned conservation translocations can successfully restore endangered populations. Following an initial adjustment period, these populations continue to demonstrate strong survival and sustained growth, reinforcing the value of long-term investment and monitoring.

Research also contributed to one of the most significant conservation milestones of the year: strengthening the scientific foundation for the recognition of four distinct giraffe species. This work ensures that conservation actions can be tailored to the unique needs of each species, rather than relying on outdated assumptions.

In every case, the goal remains the same. Science is not an end in itself. It is a tool that helps guide management decisions, inform policy, prioritize action, and improve conservation outcomes.

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# REWILDING: A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

Rewilding or conservation translocations are among the most visible tools available to wildlife managers. They can restore ecological function, re-establish populations, and help return species to landscapes where they have disappeared.

They are also among the most complex conservation interventions.

Successful rewilding requires far more than moving animals from one place to another. Before any giraffe is moved, we work with partners to assess habitat quality, population genetics, ecological suitability, carrying capacity, governance structures, and long-term management capacity.

The work does not end when the animals are released.

Using GPS tracking, population monitoring, and demographic assessments, we continue to evaluate survival, habitat use, reproduction, and integration into existing populations. This long-term commitment allows managers to adapt their approaches and respond to challenges as they emerge.

Recent work in Angola, Namibia, Mozambique, Niger, Uganda and elsewhere in Africa demonstrates that combining rigorous planning with sustained monitoring significantly improves the likelihood of success.

A translocation is not a single event. It is the beginning of a conservation journey.

## FOLLOWING GIRAFFE ACROSS BORDERS

Giraffe do not recognise political boundaries.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the Kavango–Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA), where wildlife moves across one of the largest connected conservation landscapes on Earth.

Through our Twiga Tracker programme, GCF and partners are using GPS technology to better understand how giraffe navigate this vast transboundary ecosystem.

In 2025, GPS units were deployed on southern giraffe in northeastern Namibia and southeastern Angola, expanding an existing network of tracked animals across the region. These giraffe are helping reveal the ecological corridors that connect populations across Angola, Botswana and Namibia.

The findings are already providing valuable information for land-use planning, infrastructure development, protected area management, and regional conservation strategies. Perhaps most importantly, they are reinforcing a simple reality: protecting giraffe requires protecting connectivity.

As conservation increasingly moves beyond individual protected areas and toward landscape-scale planning, understanding how giraffe move through the world is becoming more important than ever.

## WHY IT MATTERS

Conservation is operating in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world.

Climate change is altering vegetation patterns and water availability. Expanding human development continues to fragment habitats. Emerging diseases and environmental pressures add further uncertainty.

In this environment, effective conservation cannot rely solely on historical assumptions. It must remain adaptive, collaborative, and grounded in evidence.

Science alone cannot guarantee conservation success. But without it, conservation decisions become far more difficult.

Our role is to ensure that giraffe have a voice in those decisions.

By generating new knowledge, challenging assumptions, and sharing information with governments, communities, and conservation partners, we help ensure that actions taken today are informed by the best available evidence.

Because when knowledge improves, conservation becomes more effective. And when conservation becomes more effective, giraffe have a better chance of thriving in the wild.



# CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGY: CONNECTING DATA TO ACTION

Conservation decisions are only as good as the information behind them.

Across Africa, giraffe range spans vast and often remote landscapes. Monitoring populations, understanding movements, assessing threats, and coordinating conservation efforts across multiple countries requires more than fieldwork alone. It requires the ability to collect, manage, analyse, and share information quickly and effectively.

Technology helps make that possible.

As the only organisation dedicated exclusively to the conservation of all four giraffe species across Africa, GCF works at a continental scale. This unique position allows us to connect people, landscapes, and data in ways that help conservation practitioners make more informed decisions and respond more effectively to emerging challenges.

## TURNING INFORMATION INTO INSIGHT

From GPS tracking units and camera traps to field surveys and community observations, conservation generates enormous amounts of information. The challenge is not collecting data – it is ensuring that the right people can access and use it.

To meet this challenge, GCF works with partners to integrate technologies such as EarthRanger and GiraffeSpotter into day-to-day conservation operations. These platforms bring together information from multiple sources, allowing wildlife managers, researchers, and conservation practitioners to view and interpret data in near real time.

By streamlining information flows, we help transform individual observations into actionable insights, supporting faster responses and more effective management decisions.

## TECHNOLOGY IN SERVICE OF CONSERVATION

Technology itself is never the goal.

The most sophisticated platform has little value if it does not help people make better decisions for wildlife. For this reason, GCF invests not only in developing and adapting technological solutions, but also in ensuring that they are practical, accessible, and useful to the people working on the ground.

Our teams work closely with partners to provide training, technical support, and long-term capacity development. Together, we develop workflows, decision-support tools, and monitoring systems that translate complex information into practical conservation action.

In this way, technology becomes a bridge between data and decision-making.



Photo: GCF



Photo: GCF



## SHARING KNOWLEDGE ACROSS AFRICA

At GCF, we believe that conservation advances fastest when knowledge is shared.

Many of the digital tools, workflows, and monitoring approaches we develop for giraffe can also benefit other species and conservation programmes. As a result, we actively support the development and sharing of open-source solutions that can be adapted by partners across Africa and beyond.

By making these innovations freely available, we help strengthen conservation capacity, encourage collaboration, and improve access to information across the wider conservation community.

## BUILDING THE FUTURE OF CONSERVATION

The future of conservation will depend not only on protecting wildlife and habitat, but also on improving our ability to understand and respond to an increasingly complex world.

Technology is helping us do that.

By connecting data, people, and decision-making across landscapes and borders, we are helping ensure that conservation actions are informed, coordinated, and effective. In doing so, we are not only supporting giraffe conservation today – we are helping build the tools and systems needed to safeguard Africa's wildlife for generations to come.



# TWIGA WETU: OUR GIRAFFE, OUR FUTURE

Giraffe can only be saved in Africa – by the people who share their landscapes with them.

Conservation is often measured in population numbers, area of protected land, and scientific discoveries. Yet lasting conservation success depends on something far more important: people.

Communities, teachers, students, local leaders, wildlife authorities, researchers, and conservation practitioners all play a vital role in securing a future for giraffe. When people value wildlife and benefit from healthy ecosystems, conservation becomes stronger, more resilient, and more sustainable.

This belief sits at the heart of Twiga Wetu – Swahili for Our Giraffe.

Twiga Wetu is GCF's community conservation initiative, bringing together a diverse network of partners, communities, and conservation practitioners across Africa. While each programme is unique, they share a common goal: empowering people to become active participants in giraffe conservation and ensuring that local voices help shape the future of wildlife conservation.

Because ultimately, giraffe conservation is not only about protecting species – it is about building relationships between people and nature that can endure for generations.





## CONSERVATION ROOTED IN COMMUNITY

Across Africa, Twiga Wetu supports a wide range of locally led conservation initiatives that reflect the unique needs, opportunities, and challenges of each landscape.

Rather than applying a single approach, we work alongside trusted partners to develop programmes that are locally relevant and community driven. These partnerships strengthen conservation capacity, support livelihoods, encourage environmental stewardship, and help ensure that giraffe conservation delivers benefits for both wildlife and people.

In Cameroon, we collaborate with Biodiversity, Environment & Sustainable Development (BEDD) to support giraffe monitoring and community engagement activities in and around protected areas.

In northern Kenya, we support the Twiga Walinzi programme, a community-led initiative developed by the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance working with local partners. Through monitoring, camera trapping, school outreach, and conservation education, local community members are helping safeguard reticulated giraffe across their landscape.

In Niger, our partnership with Sahara Conservation and Wild Africa Conservation supports community-based monitoring of the last remaining West African giraffe. The programme has worked closely with AVEN, a local guides' association that helps diversify livelihoods and create economic opportunities linked to conservation.

In Uganda, our collaboration with the Snares to Wares Initiative combined community engagement, conservation education, anti-poaching patrols, snare removal, and veterinary interventions to reduce threats to wildlife in and around Murchison Falls National Park.

In Tanzania, we partner with Traditional Ecosystems Survival Tanzania (TEST) to help communities better understand giraffe populations and conservation challenges on village lands between Serengeti National Park and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Through education and community engagement, the programme strengthens local stewardship for wildlife and habitat.

Together, our Twiga Wetu initiative demonstrate that successful conservation is built through trust, partnership, and shared responsibility.



Photo: GCF



Photo: Billy Dodson

## GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSERVATION LEADERS

One of the most inspiring examples of Twiga Wetu in action is Namibia's Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP).

Now in its ninth year, KEEP continues to connect young Namibians with the natural world around them, helping build environmental awareness, curiosity, and leadership among future generations.

Since its inception, the programme has reached over 26,500 primary school learners, making it one of the largest and most successful environmental education programmes of its kind in Namibia.

### A RECORD YEAR FOR KEEP

In 2025, KEEP experienced its most impactful year yet.

Over 105 field days, the programme welcomed 4,086 students and 170 teachers from 36 schools and community groups. Participants represented a broad range of backgrounds and included learners with visual and hearing impairments, as well as students from community feeding programmes and orphanages.

This growing diversity reflects an important principle: environmental education should be accessible to everyone.

By creating opportunities for all learners to engage with nature, KEEP is helping ensure that the benefits of environmental learning extend beyond traditional classroom settings and reach communities that are often underserved.



Photo: GCF



## LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCES

Environmental stewardship is best learned through experience.

In 2025, KEEP strengthened its partnership with the City of Windhoek, giving learners the opportunity to engage directly with urban environmental specialists and explore topics such as water reclamation, waste management, and sustainable resource use.

These experiences helped students connect environmental concepts to everyday life and understand how conservation and sustainability influence the communities in which they live.

To keep the programme engaging and aligned with national educational priorities, the KEEP team also refreshed its curriculum and updated the KEEP Field Workbook with new interactive activities and learning resources.

Meanwhile, the reach of conservation education expanded beyond Namibia's borders through the translation of GCF's Nature Workbook into French, Portuguese, and Swahili, making environmental learning accessible to even more young people across Africa and already having reached over 30,000 students throughout the continent.

## INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES

Conservation extends beyond education.

In partnership with the Namibia Botanical Research Institute and B2Gold, GCF supported the country's Arbor Day activities by providing indigenous seedlings to schools and a local hospital. The initiative encouraged environmental stewardship while contributing to the restoration of indigenous plant species and greener community spaces.

These activities demonstrate how small, practical actions can inspire lasting connections between people and their environment.

## INSPIRING FUTURE CONSERVATIONISTS

A future for giraffe depends on the next generation of conservation leaders.

Throughout 2025, KEEP worked closely with university students and secondary school learners, helping them develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to pursue careers in conservation and environmental management.

The programme also welcomed young Namibian and international volunteers whose enthusiasm and commitment enriched the learning experience for participants while providing valuable professional experience for the volunteers themselves.

These opportunities are investments not only in individuals, but in the future of conservation itself.





## OUR GIRAFFE, OUR FUTURE

Twiga Wetu is built on a simple belief: conservation works best when people are part of the solution.

Whether supporting community wildlife monitors in Niger, empowering local conservation teams in Kenya, reducing poaching pressures in Uganda, or inspiring young environmental leaders in Namibia, the initiative demonstrates the power of collaboration to create lasting change.

Because safeguarding giraffe is not only about protecting wildlife.

It is about supporting the people who live alongside them, empowering communities to shape their own conservation futures, and ensuring that future generations inherit landscapes where both people and giraffe can thrive.

That is the vision behind Our Giraffe.

# UNIFIED FOR GIANTS: NATIONAL & REGIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

To secure a future for giraffe in the wild, long-term conservation must be driven from all directions. GCF works hand-in-hand with African governments to turn high-level commitment into lasting, on-the-ground survival.

True, sustainable conservation is never imposed from the outside; it must be championed by the nations that home these incredible animals. As a evidence-based organization, GCF brings innovative approaches to the field – but our greatest strength lies in our ability to build bridges.

Our partnerships span from local communities and academic institutions to international non-profit giants. Yet, our most vital allies are always the wildlife and national park authorities of African host governments. While working at the grassroots level is essential, lasting conservation commitment must start at the top.

By providing the technical expertise and financial backing that range-state governments need, we help them take total ownership of their wildlife's future. When a government owns the strategy, the giraffe win.

## FROM COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUE TO ACTIONABLE BLUEPRINTS

One of GCF's signature flagship programs is supporting African range states in developing national and cross-border regional giraffe conservation strategies and action plans.

This complex process is rooted in deep collaboration and mutual respect. It begins with foundational discussions, leading to targeted, expert-facilitated workshops. We bring together a diverse coalition of national and international stakeholders to:

- **Collate crucial data** on historical and current giraffe populations.
- **Identify knowledge gaps** that hinder field success.
- **Address immediate threats** like habitat loss and poaching.
- **Define clear priorities** and assign measurable, time-bound actions.

While range-state governments proudly host these strategic meetings, GCF provides the essential technical facilitation and financial backing to bring these blueprints to life. Once officially endorsed and launched, these plans serve as the definitive roadmap for government rangers, researchers, and field teams.

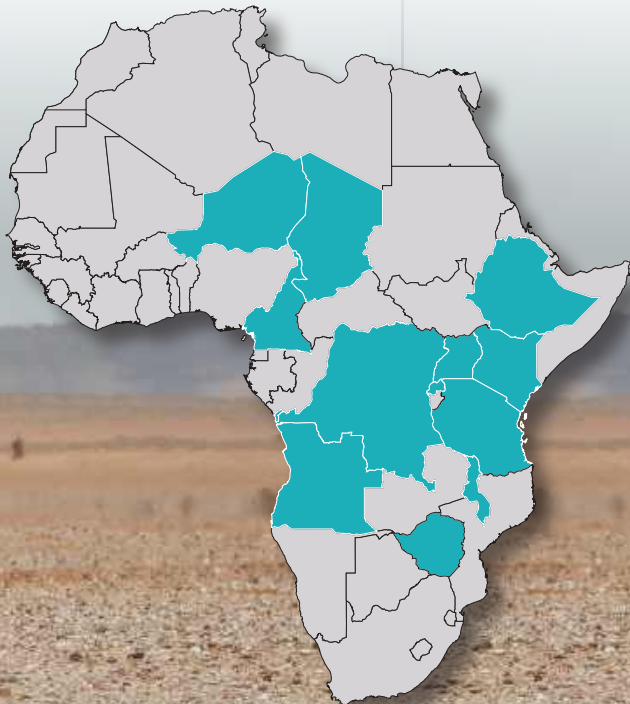




A GROWING FOOTPRINT OF SUCCESS

To date, GCF has successfully facilitated, co-developed, and supported the implementation of Park, National and Regional Giraffe Conservation Strategies and Action Plans across the continent – many of which are the first-ever in their respective nations’ history:

| Country / Region                                                                                                                                                   | Strategic Focus & Implementation                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>Angola</b>                                                                    | Charting a path for the return and recovery of southern giraffe populations.                                |
|  <b>Cameroon &amp; Chad</b>                                                       | Establishing vital defenses for the critically endangered Kordofan giraffe.                                 |
|  <b>DRC</b><br>(Garamba NP)                                                       | Protecting vulnerable Kordofan populations in complex, remote wilderness landscapes.                        |
|  <b>Ethiopia &amp; Kenya</b>                                                      | Driving East African initiatives for reticulated, Masai, and northern giraffe.                              |
|   | Shaping massive cross-border, multi-nation regional strategies for southern giraffe.                        |
|  <b>Malawi &amp; Rwanda</b><br>(Akagera NP)                                       | Managing reintroduced populations of southern and Masai giraffe, and securing newly restored habitats.      |
|  <b>Niger</b>                                                                   | Continuing the historic community-led recovery of West African giraffe.                                     |
|  <b>Tanzania &amp; Uganda</b>                                                   | Spearheading country-wide frameworks to protect massive population strongholds of Masai and Nubian giraffe. |
|  <b>Zimbabwe</b>                                                                | Building sustainable regional models for local South African giraffe populations.                           |



THE ROAD AHEAD

*These official documents are far more than ink on paper; they are active, living promises. With your support, GCF will continue to ensure key aspects of these plans are funded and actively implemented across every landscape we touch.*



Photo: GCF

Photo: GCF



# REGIONAL PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS



## EAST AFRICA: PROTECTING GIRAFFE ON SHARED LANDS

Much of East Africa's giraffe range sits outside state-protected areas. Because of this, our East Africa Programme focuses on navigating complex, human-dominated and ever-changing landscapes to keep habitats connected and secure a wild future for the region's three unique species.

### High-Tech Tracking in the Masai Mara

In a major collaborative effort, we deployed **23 GPS satellite tail tags** across the Greater Masai Mara Ecosystem (GMME) to map exactly how Masai giraffe move through increasing community fencing and infrastructure.

- **The Reality:** Our extensive surveys confirm the GMME supports Kenya's third-largest Masai giraffe population.
- **Science-Led:** Through partnerships with University College Dublin and the Smithsonian, we turn this data into rock-solid, evidence-based recommendations for local authorities.
- **National Impact:** We financially anchored the **2025 National Wildlife Census**, providing the baseline data that proves Kenya's overall giraffe population is holding stable.

### Twiga Wetu: Community-Led Defense

Giraffe will only survive if the people who share their land choose to protect them.

- **Tsavo Conservation Area:** Partnering with the Taita Taveta Wildlife Conservancies Association (TTWCA), community scouts recorded 862 Masai giraffe encounters across 19,500 in nine months.
- **Inspiring the Next Generation:** TTWCA and the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya (WCK) used our GCF Nature Workbooks to educate over 11,400 local students and hundreds of teachers, taking thousands of them on life-changing educational field trips into national parks.



Photo: GCF



### Filling Critical Data Gaps in Tanzania

In partnership with the Tanzania Research and Conservation Organisation (TRCO) and the University of Dar es Salaam, we funded local students to survey remote, vital transboundary corridors bordering the Serengeti and Tsavo ecosystems. We also backed a vital community attitude assessment in western Tanzania to ensure local voices are directly involved in future conservation planning.



Photo: GCF



Photo: GCF





## THE KAZA PROGRAMME: FLUID CONSERVATION ACROSS FIVE NATIONS

The Kavango–Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) is a massive biodiversity stronghold. Because giraffe don't care about geopolitical borders, our work here acts as the "tactical glue" connecting four distinct levels of action.

### *Operationalizing the Connectivity Grant*

Supported by the German government via the SADC TFCA Financing Facility, we are executing a three-year initiative to turn the multi-nation KAZA Giraffe Conservation Strategy into active, frontline reality:

- **Boots on the Ground:** Moving from high-level planning to active, funded field projects.
- **Bringing Them Back:** Preparing transboundary translocations to restore southern giraffe to depleted historical ranges.
- **Unified Science:** Synchronizing survey methods across the KAZA landscape.

### *Southern Africa: Mapping Connectivity in Fragmented Wilds*

Our Southern Africa programme tackles the reality of heavily fenced, fragmented landscapes. By generating reliable data on population sizes, movements, and genetics, we give land managers the tools they need to protect southern giraffe.

- **South Africa Baseline:** We completed and published an updated National Population Estimate. Concurrently, our team is finalizing a country-wide tissue analysis to map subspecies composition, which is slated for peer-reviewed publication in late 2026.
- **Sabi Game Park Tracking:** We deployed GPS tracking units in Mozambique's Sabi Game Park. Early data confirms active cross-border movements into South Africa's Kruger National Park, emphasizing the need for open transboundary corridors.
- **Banhine Reintroduction Prep:** We completed a comprehensive translocation feasibility assessment for Mozambique's Banhine National Park, paving the way for a historic giraffe reintroduction in late 2026.



## NORTHWEST NAMIBIA: THE LONGEST-RUNNING GIRAFFE STUDY IN AFRICA

This is where the GCF story began in the late 1990s. Our multi-decade ecological study of desert-dwelling Angolan giraffe continues to provide the baseline data that informs giraffe conservation across the entire continent.

### *The 2025 Deluge & The Early 2026 Return*

Record-breaking countrywide rains completely transformed the landscape in 2025. While the sudden flush of green was ideal for the Angolan giraffe, it sent them dispersing deep into un-surveyed, rocky mountain interiors, making tracking exceptionally challenging.

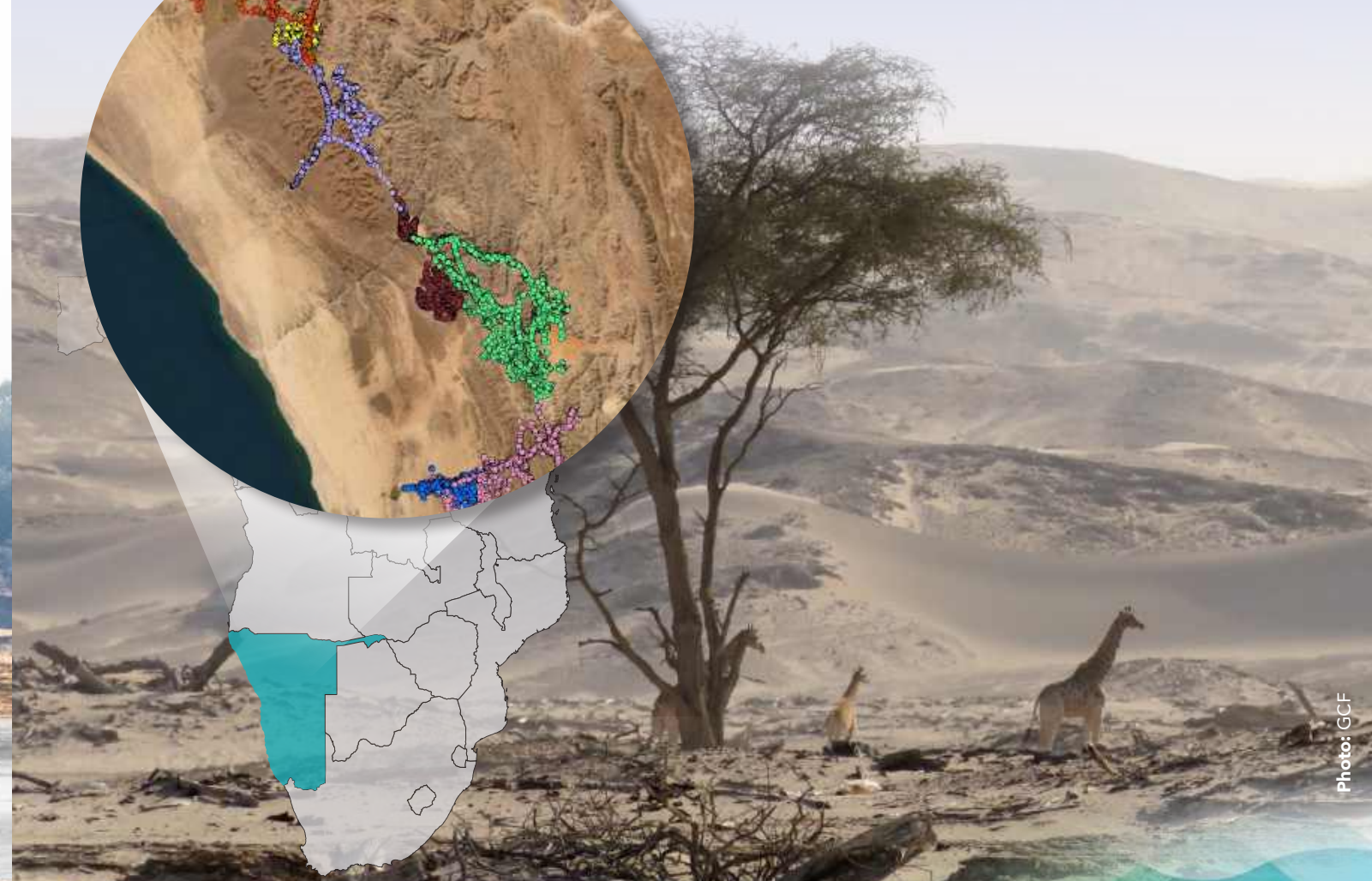
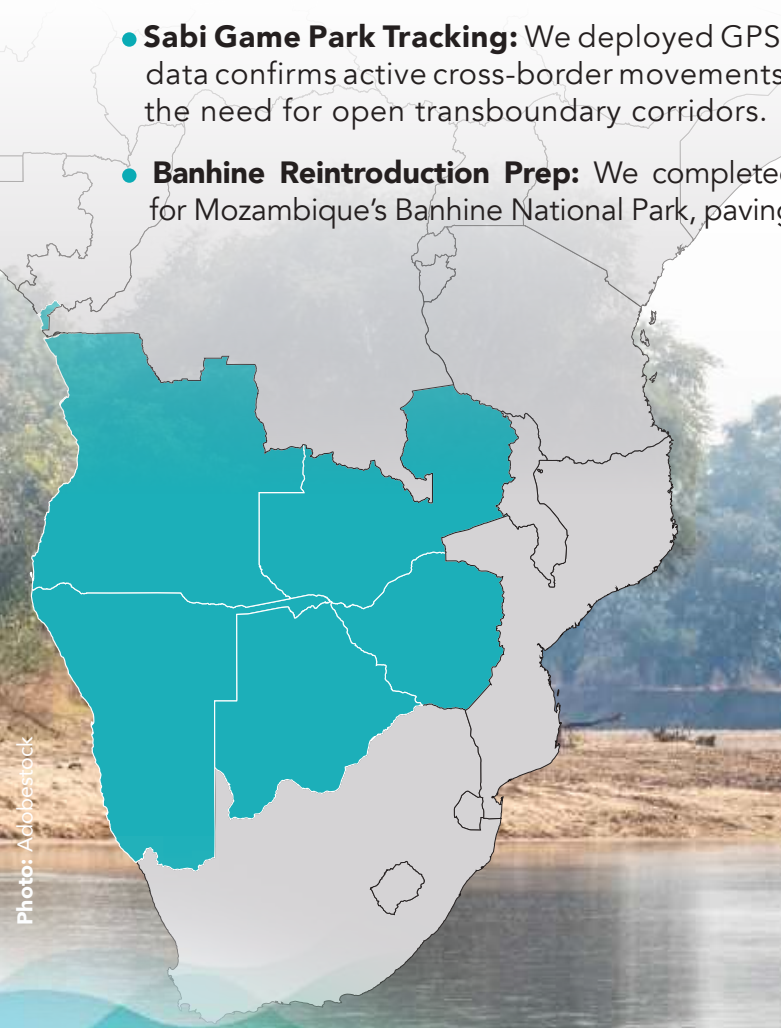
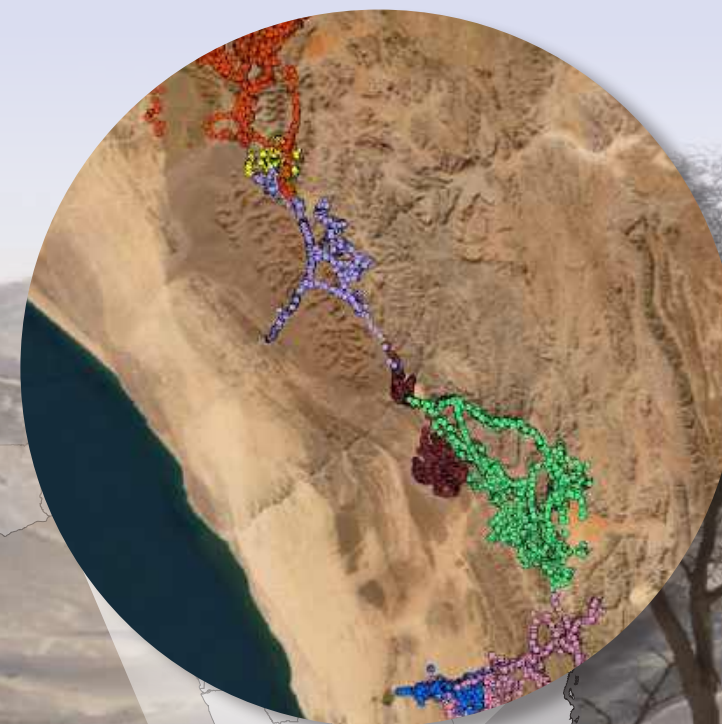
However, early 2026 saw a massive return. As the landscape dried, giraffe descended back into their familiar riverbed territories. Our first survey trip documented **20 completely new adult giraffe** emerging from the mountains – proving the population is doing even better than we thought.

### *Wild Longevity & Spatial Endurance*

Auditing our multi-decade database revealed astounding milestones:

**Astounding Lifespans:** We have verified wild females living **beyond 30 years**, with several individuals first cataloged as adults by Julian in the late 1990s still healthy and monitored today.

**Incredible Journeys:** Our telemetry highlighted jaw-dropping spatial endurance – one tracked giraffe, Sunburst, traveled an incredible **2,783 km** in a single year.







## ETOSHA HEIGHTS CONSERVATION CENTRE (EHCC)

Operating as a vital field hub bordering Etosha National Park, EHCC embodies our **“Larger-than-Giraffe” philosophy**: we protect entire ecosystems so that giraffe can thrive.

### 2025 Field Actions

**Continuous Monitoring:** We maintained rigorous Angolan giraffe surveys across the Etosha Heights Private Reserve (EHPR), tracking individual herd dynamics and fitting individuals with GPS satellite units in both the Reserve and Etosha National Park to map boundary crossings and local use.

**Global Collaboration:** We integrated international GCF Conservation Supporters directly into frontline field operations – collaborating on field surveys, camera trap maintenance, fence gap monitoring, and data analysis.

**Capacity Building Base:** In June 2025, the center hosted GCF's fourth African Wildlife Veterinary Course, expanding our total continental training impact to **32 wildlife veterinarians across 14 African countries** since 2022.

### Responding to Real-World Challenges

**Investigating Mortalities:** When an unusual spike in Angolan giraffe mortalities occurred across central and northern Namibia between April and June 2025, our team collected pathology samples in partnership with Wildlife Vets Namibia. Rigorous monitoring and analysis remain ongoing with Lumpy Skin Disease assumed.

**Rapid Snare Response:** In July 2025, we coordinated a rapid helicopter intervention alongside the Ministry of Environment, Forestry & Tourism to successfully dart a young bull elephant and remove a deadly wire snare from his leg.

**Wildfire Resilience:** In late September 2025, a massive fire swept through neighboring farmlands, burning 5,000 hectares of EHPR and over 775,000 hectares of Etosha National Park. GCF teams immediately stood alongside park authorities to control the blaze. Fortunately, within a single week, perennial grasses were already sprouting back.

### Landscape-Level Science

**Carnivore Tracking:** Our 2024 predator playback surveys in the reserve as part of the Greater Etosha Landscape revealed vital predator baselines: 2.6 lions, 4.8 spotted hyenas, and 7.4 black-backed jackals per 100 km<sup>2</sup>.

**Fence Gap Data:** We monitor a 24 km boundary fence section with Etosha National Park, logging 384 structural gaps. Camera traps at these locations are capturing vital data on how collared giraffe and other wildlife utilize these border crossings.

At EHCC, we don't just count Angolan giraffe. We strengthen ecosystems, build African conservation leadership, and turn raw science into immediate, field-proven survival.



Image by AdobeStock



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Every giraffe protected, every student inspired, every population surveyed, and every conservation partnership strengthened is made possible through the generosity of our donors, supporters, and partners.

Their investment allows us to work across Africa to conserve all four giraffe species, respond to emerging conservation challenges, and build long-term solutions that benefit both wildlife and people.

As conservation priorities evolve across countries and species, we work closely with our partners to ensure that resources are directed where they can have the greatest impact. At the same time, we remain committed to responsible financial management, strong governance, and the effective use of every

contribution entrusted to us.

Conservation is a long-term commitment, and maintaining the systems, expertise, and operational capacity needed to deliver meaningful results requires both careful planning and financial discipline. As GCF continues to grow, we remain focused on balancing conservation impact with organizational sustainability, ensuring that we can continue to serve as a trusted voice for giraffe well into the future.

To strengthen our commitment to accountability and transparency, GCF voluntarily undergoes independent financial audits. These reviews provide an additional layer of oversight and help ensure that our financial

practices meet the highest standards of integrity and responsible stewardship.

We are proud of the trust our supporters place in us and remain committed to using every contribution wisely, effectively, and in support of our mission.

Fortunately, giraffe have a unique ability to inspire people around the world. Their universal appeal continues to bring together a growing community of supporters who believe that these iconic animals deserve a future in the wild.

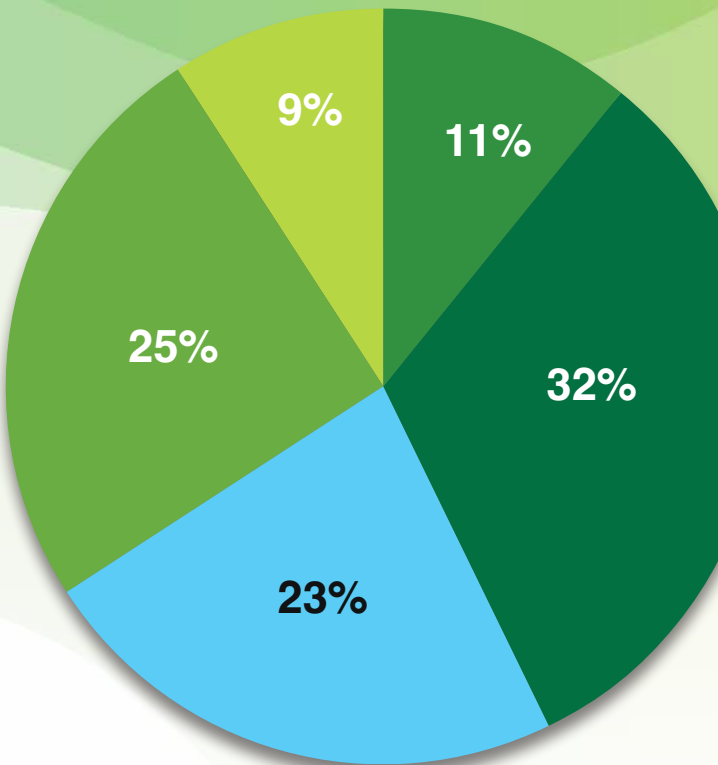
Together, we are turning that support into lasting conservation impact across Africa.

## FUNDS RECEIVED

(BY SOURCE)

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Zoos /AAZKs          | \$453,941 |
| Individual / Private | \$335,726 |
| Foundations / Funds  | \$361,185 |
| Corporate            | \$124,745 |
| Donor-Advised Funds  | \$154,158 |

TOTAL \$1,429,755



GCF is proud to have once again earned the Platinum Seal of Transparency from Candid (formerly GuideStar).

This marks the seventh consecutive year that GCF has received Candid's highest level of recognition for transparency, accountability, and organizational reporting. The Platinum Seal reflects our ongoing commitment to openly sharing our goals, strategies, financial information, and conservation outcomes with supporters and stakeholders.

Transparency is more than a reporting requirement – it is a responsibility.

By openly sharing both our achievements and challenges, we strengthen the trust that makes our work possible.

This recognition provides donors, partners, and supporters with additional confidence that their contributions are being managed responsibly and are helping create measurable conservation outcomes for giraffe across Africa.

Platinum Transparency 2026

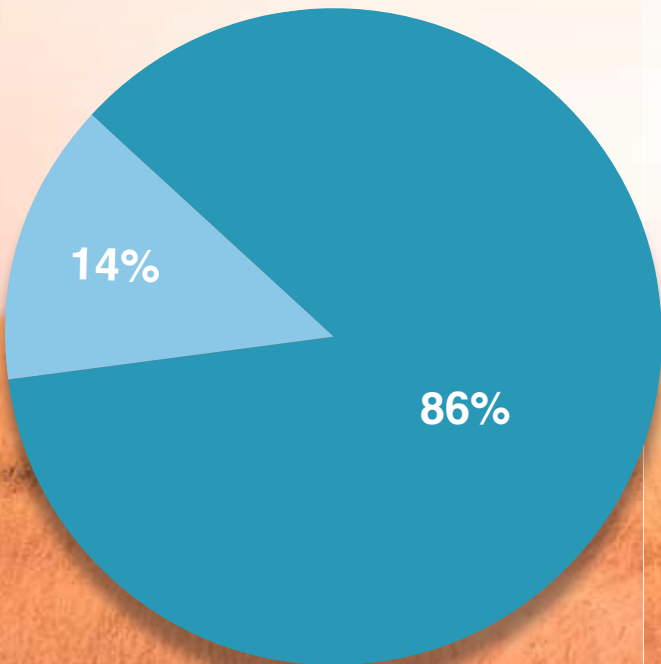
Candid.

## EXPENDITURE

|                                                  |             |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Programme & Grant Expenses                       | \$1,369,346 |
| <i>(Conservation, Education &amp; Awareness)</i> |             |

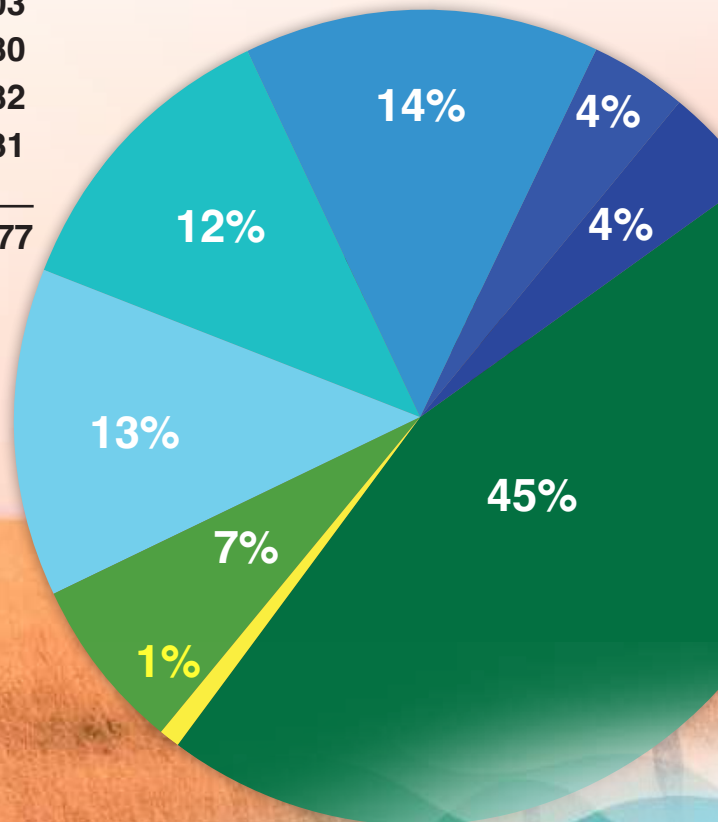
|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Administrative Expenses | \$227,731 |
|-------------------------|-----------|

TOTAL \$1,597,077



|                                        |           |
|----------------------------------------|-----------|
| Conservation Health Initiative         | \$60,207  |
| Giraffe Rewilding & Action Fund        | \$66,641  |
| Operational Expenses                   | \$717,215 |
| Conservation Strategies & Action Plans | \$16,919  |
| Giraffe Surveys                        | \$116,603 |
| Twiga Tracker Initiative               | \$205,480 |
| Twiga Wetu Initiative                  | \$186,282 |
| Administrative Expenses                | \$227,731 |

TOTAL \$1,597,077



\*All amounts are in USD.



# DONORS

Behind every conservation success story in this report is a community of people who care deeply about giraffe.

At GCF, we are continually inspired by the individuals, zoos, foundations, companies, and partners who choose to invest in giraffe conservation. Together, you form a global community united by a shared belief that giraffe deserve a future in the wild.

Your support makes our work possible.

From conducting research and monitoring populations to supporting community conservation programmes, training wildlife veterinarians, inspiring the next generation through environmental education, and helping governments develop conservation strategies, every achievement highlighted in these pages is built on the trust and generosity of our supporters.

The dedication of zoos and their staff around the world remains particularly inspiring. Through fundraising initiatives, conservation education, advocacy, and long-term partnerships, they continue to play a vital role in raising awareness and generating support for

giraffe conservation. Their commitment has helped ensure that giraffe have a voice far beyond Africa's borders.

At the same time, we are equally grateful to the many individuals, families, foundations, and businesses who choose to support our work. Whether a contribution is large or small, every gift represents a shared commitment to conservation and a belief that positive change is possible.

While this report recognizes donations of US\$250 and above, we want to acknowledge that every contribution matters. Together, these gifts create the foundation that allows us to respond to conservation challenges, pursue new opportunities, and continue safeguarding giraffe across Africa.

To every donor, supporter, fundraiser, advocate, and friend of GCF: thank you.

Thank you for believing in our work, for sharing our vision, and for helping us be a stronger voice for giraffe.

## SPECIAL RECOGNITION

We would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to **Shores, Tagman, Butler & Company, P.A.**, whose support extends well beyond financial contributions. By generously providing the use of their postal address and offering pro bono administrative assistance, they continue to be valued partners in our mission.

We are equally grateful to **The Metzger Group at Morgan Stanley** for their professional stewardship of GCF's investment portfolio. Their expertise helps ensure that resources entrusted to us are managed responsibly and sustainably, strengthening our ability to deliver long-term conservation impact.

A very special thank you goes to **Lars Markgren**, whose generosity has provided GCF with a true home in Namibia. By purchasing and making available a property specifically for our organization's use, Lars has created a dedicated space where our team can work, collaborate, and grow together. This extraordinary contribution allows us to direct more resources toward conservation while providing the stability and environment needed to operate effectively. His support is a powerful example of how generosity can strengthen conservation far beyond a financial contribution.

### \$50,000 and above

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo  
Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco  
Glenmorangie & Edinburgh Zoo  
Moondance Foundation  
Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens  
Wallace Research Foundation

### \$20,000-\$49,999

Betty Jean Areson  
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo  
Galanthus Foundation Trust  
In memory of Carvel Wayne Glenn  
Daniel Houck II  
Kratt Family  
The Mey Share Foundation  
Sandra Moss  
Stichting Wildlife  
The Waterloo Foundation  
Wildlife Conservation Alliance

### \$10,000-\$19,999

Auckland Zoo  
Candis J Stern Charitable Foundation  
Chester Zoo  
Dallas Zoo  
Detroit Zoo  
Fota Wildlife Park  
Knies Kinderzoo  
Linda McIngvale  
Reid Park Zoo  
The Safari Collection / Giraffe Manor  
Safari Park Dvůr Králové  
Safarious  
San Antonio Zoo  
B. Alexandra Szerlip  
Turtle Back Zoo  
Virginia Zoo

### \$5,000-\$9,999

Africa Adventure Consultants  
Beauval Nature  
Blank Park Zoo  
Chantecaille  
Cranaleith Foundation Inc  
Summer & Mikey Derrick  
Dublin Zoo  
Ann Eignor  
Sallyann Garner  
Global Wildlife Center  
Sue Heim  
Till Hollmann  
Jacksonville Zoo  
Janet Buchanan Smith Giving Fund  
Jeanne & Frank Trainer Fund  
Laura Landau  
Gayle LeJeune  
Longneck Manor  
Natural Selection  
Odense Zoo

Phoenix Zoo  
Mieka Ritsema  
The Herman Foundation  
CK Torrence III  
Wags & Menace Make A Difference  
Wilhelma  
Woodland Park Zoo  
Zoo Boise  
Zoo Dresden

### \$2,500-\$4,999

ATI Holidays  
Bellewaerde Belpark  
Birmingham Zoo  
Blackpool Zoo  
Katrina Blake  
Chattanooga Zoo  
Eric Flossic & family  
McKenna Frease  
Fundación Parques Reunidos  
Jane Goodman  
Victoria Gordon & Bob Bradley  
Michael & JoAnn Hamm  
Elizabeth Herman  
Hirth Family Fund  
Ann Marie Kohlligian  
Lehigh Valley Zoo  
Lion Habitat Ranch  
Longnecks for Longnecks  
Milwaukee County Zoo  
John & Nuri Pierce  
Jorge Vazquez  
Wild Animal Safari  
Eric Woburn Safari Park  
Zoo Knoxville  
Zoos South Australia

### \$1,000-\$2,499

Association Les Korrigans des Terres de Nataé  
Audubon Nature Institute  
Binder Park Zoo  
Boissière Mervent  
Conservation / Zoo de La Boissière du Doré  
Caldwell Zoo  
In memory of Lynne Carron  
Margaret Croucher  
Colleen Crowley  
D&D Charitable Fund  
Donna De Weil  
Detroit Zoo AAZK Chapter  
Dickerson Park Zoo  
EGW Trust  
Eudora Wildlife Safari Park  
Peter H. Fogtdal  
Robert Fulton  
Gladys Porter Zoo

Victoria & James Granade  
Lucy Hairston  
Vaughn Hasslein  
Joy Helbing  
Henry Vilas Zoo  
Honolulu Zoo  
In memory of Anne Innis Dagg  
Klara Kurowski  
Eva Lee  
Jes Lefcourt  
Linda & Bill Murray Charitable Fund  
Donald Livingstone  
Sheryl & Gary Lum  
Maryland Zoo  
Susanna McDonald  
Heather McLaughlin  
Medical Imaging Namibia  
In honor of Reba Mehta  
Nancy Latner Charitable Fund  
Nogeyama Zoological Gardens  
Dianne Nowell  
Vicky & Orin Oberlander  
Pairi Daiza  
David Penswick  
Cheryl Rothman  
Saint Louis Zoo AAZK  
In memory of Hans Paul Schneider  
Sedgwick County Zoo  
Cindi Shapiro  
Six Flags Discovery Kingdom  
Diane Stone  
Kristina Stump  
John Sturtevant  
Tangible  
Pamela Tate  
The Buffalo Zoo  
The Larry & Therese Schmidt - Lakeland Stewardship Fund  
Jennifer Theissing  
Suzanne Twohig  
Tyler Family Fund  
ultimate.earth  
Margaret & Robert Van Andel  
Victoria Sujata Charitable Fund  
James Weckerle  
Wellington Zoo  
Wild Florida  
Wild Florida Airboats  
Wildlife World Zoo  
Penelope & Philip Wright  
Zoological Association of America  
ZOX

### \$500-\$999

Jackie Alschuler  
Linda Anderson  
Amanda Baldwin  
Rachel Bhattacharyya  
Susan Boron  
Boulder Ridge Ranch  
Bremick Pty Ltd  
Katherine Brennan  
Cape May County Zoo AAZK  
Frank Cermak  
Sally Clair  
Robert Clark  
Ruth Cooper  
David Posner  
Nancy Duarte  
Elmwood Park Zoo  
Lee Farrar  
Kathy Gerry  
Cathy Godwin  
Sarah Goldsmith  
Governors' Camp Collection  
Damon & Teri Ground  
Diane & Jeffrey Hall  
Kate Hancock  
Harrington-Spink Chartiable Fund  
Anne Hoffman  
Michael Hughes  
In memory of Humphrey John & Maureen Riffle  
Charitable Gift Fund  
Maureen Julian  
Kathryn & Peter Ozimek Giving Fund  
Hayden Kiri  
Mark & Indra Frank Giving Fund  
Barbara McIntyre  
Georgann Meadows  
Katya Melliush  
Robert Menzies  
Dinah Miller  
Christine Mittelstead  
John Murphy  
Istvan Zoltan Nagy  
Valeria Nava-Jimenez  
Julie Newcome  
Our Green House  
Tristan Petrie  
Alan Rafferty  
Richard Rawson  
Alan Redder  
Rockford Reformed Church  
Youth Ministries  
Virginia Rogers  
Anna Schnetzer  
Schussler Family Fund  
Cindy Shapiro  
Sonja Sorbo



Lilly Spitz  
James Stringer  
Lucy Teuten  
The Nicholson Fund  
Thomas/Alson-Milkman Charitable Fund  
Twiga Coffee  
Bettina Weber  
Jeff White  
Nicole Wood  
Patrick Zehr  
Zoo de Plaisance du Touch  
Biodiversité

**\$250-\$499**  
Claire Risseuw  
Renee Abbot  
James Adams  
Andrew & Gemma Major Giving  
Theo Armstrong  
LindsayBanks  
Lauren Birks  
Marie Bittner  
Jodi Breuer Seshan  
Michael Briselli & Jeannee Sacken  
Norm Bruckman  
Mary Bullard  
Nikki Burt  
Irene Cannon-Geary  
Kevin Carmody  
Linda Carrasco  
Raad Chalabi  
Barbara Clark  
David Cohen  
Jackie Condon  
William Coronel  
Sandra Cregan  
Diane Curtin  
Matthew Curtiss  
Chris DeLeon  
Donovan Family Charitable Fund  
Sarah Dupee  
Elmwood Park Zoo AAZK  
Nora Faldum  
Robert Farrar  
Leslie Flemming  
Alison Fontenot  
Nancy & Chip Ford  
Vicki Fragasso  
Gloria Freeman  
Joanna Fringer  
Susan Fromkes  
JoyceFuller  
Denise Gaines

Gewirtz/Johnson Family Foundation  
Edward Gilpin  
Clay Goldberg  
Ellen Goldberg & Barnaby Grist  
Joseph Gonzalez  
Sian Goodspeed  
Judith Gust  
Phillip Hamilton  
Miriam Harrington  
David Harris  
Elizabeth Haslup  
John Hayes  
Dirk Heimermann  
Sylvia Hepler  
Andrew Hollo  
Janet Holman  
J Kent Howard  
Kennon Hudson  
Elizabeth Hughes  
Lydia Huynh  
Jo Jack  
Kahn Family  
Edward Kane  
Susan Kirby  
Jeffrey Knollmiller  
Karen & Mark Kotten  
Julie Lapitino  
Scott Larson  
Gwendolyn Lee  
Lee Family Charitable Giving  
Jeanne Lehmann  
Christianne Leidecker  
Suan Levine  
Clifford Lidell  
Sophia Lima  
Craig Little  
Wayne Little  
Madeline Lonky  
Jem Manley-Buser  
Ann Marie Marinaccio  
Jean Mccarty  
Mathieu Menard  
Kory Mingus  
Tiffany Morency  
Lizzie Morgan  
Lynette Morgan  
Patricia Murphy  
Joyce Namde  
Mary Nelson  
Richard Nevelos  
Susan Newberry  
Maureen O'Donovan

Okano Charitable Fund  
Dallas Passmore  
Greg Pennington  
Reno Petersen  
Joan Phillips  
Jenna Pratt  
Bobbie Pray  
Valerie Preston  
Christine Prior  
Kate Rae  
Martin Ramirez  
Kelly Reynolds  
Susan Riley  
Graham Ritchie  
Monika Rodas  
Laura Roe  
Rogow-Plavsic Family Fund  
Gracie Rury  
Elizabeth Ryba  
Kasmara Savard  
Luanne Schafner  
Zach Schrier  
Brenda Serniak  
Lindsay Sharpe  
Jenna Smith  
Sonja Sorbo  
Rhonda Speer  
Conor Spendelove  
Daniel St Onge  
Heather Stalter  
Rob Stevens  
Stifel  
Sally Sweeney  
In memory of Sharon Topp  
Lena Townsend  
Tracy Valdez  
Steven Veloza  
Anita Voltz  
Gretchen Warren  
Rhoda Weinstein  
Kenny Wen  
N Whiting  
Wildwood Wildlife Park  
Douglas Winings  
James Wyrsh  
Patricia Zagelow

# CONTACT

## Giraffe Conservation Foundation

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 [giraffeconservation.org](http://giraffeconservation.org)

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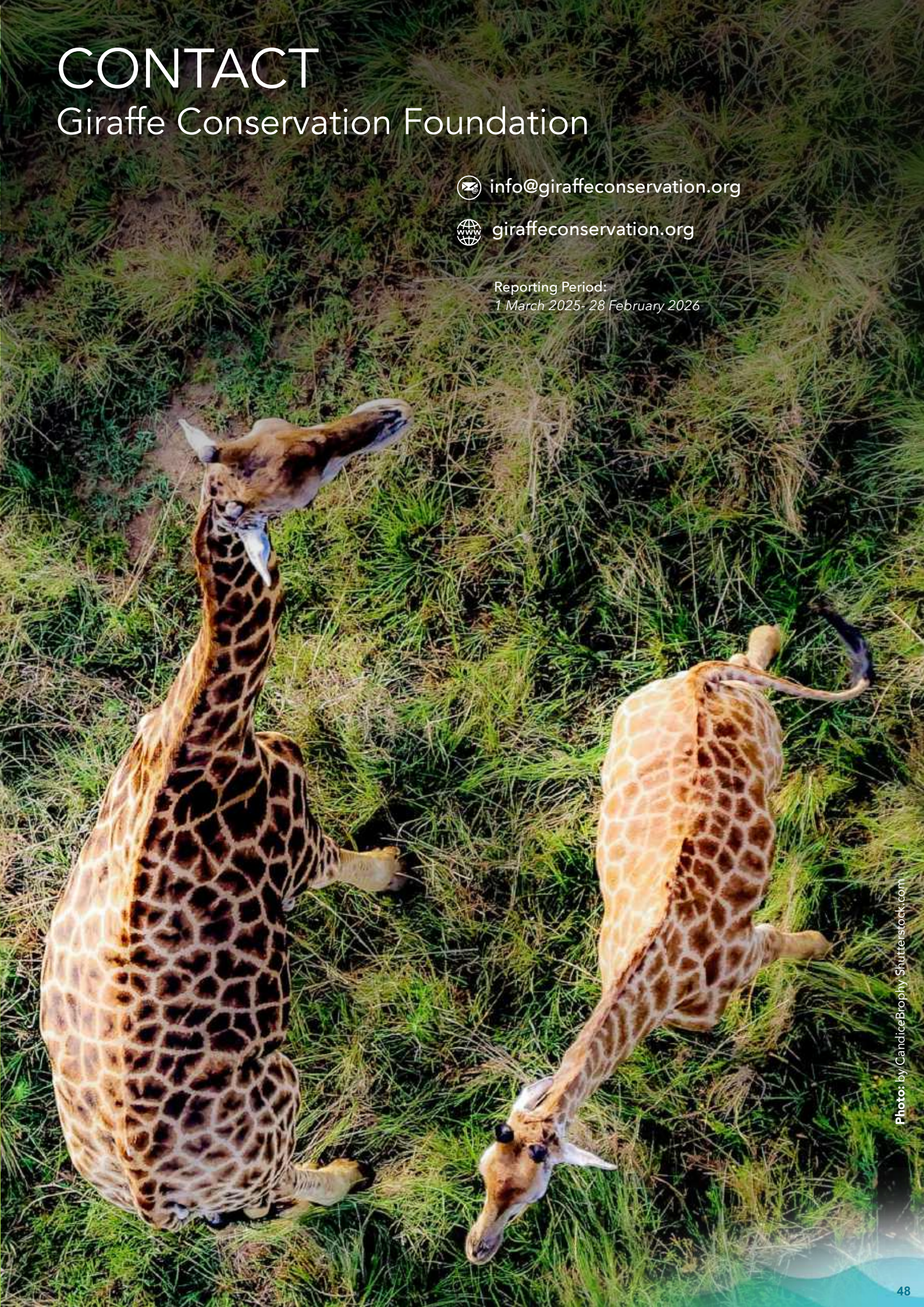


Photo: by CandiceBrophy Shutterstock.com





[giraffeconservation.org](http://giraffeconservation.org)