

Quiçama at the Crossroads

The Way Forward for Angola's National Parks with Special Reference to Quiçama and the Anderson-Morkel Report

Roland Goetz
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Executive Summary

We have been requested to respond to a report entitled "Quiçama National Park: The Status Quo, the Threats, and the Need for Effective Actions" by Anderson and Morkel.

Anderson and Morkel (A&M) have done a good job of summarizing a conversation Anderson had with Roland Goetz in November 2008. The solutions A&M offer are good but limited to symptoms rather than addressing the greatest threats to the park—a lack of funding, manpower, and authority to safeguard Quiçama for future generations.

We would like to take this opportunity to address these larger issues, basing our solutions on *The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2012)*. (This is referred to as *The Biodiversity Plan* in the rest of this document.) *The Biodiversity Plan* is a comprehensive plan that covers all aspects of biodiversity in Angola, including the issues that A&M raise. Therefore, we've used it as the basis of the recommendations we make below for both immediate and longterm actions.

We are including three areas that A&M did not include action items for but which are extremely important to Quiçama:

- Forming a National Parks Board to oversee all Angolan national parks
- Training and hiring ex-combatants as park rangers and guides
- Funding for the recommended projects. A&M suggest no solution only the problem: "The budget for the Park is totally inadequate for the maintenance of the park as it is at present. There is also no budget for future planning and development."
- The opportunity to make the park self-sufficient and not dependent upon the Ministry for funding.
- Making local communities partners that benefit from Quiçama's success

On the subject of ex-combatants, we refer to another important document--the President's letter to Minister Jardim on 23-October-2009 in which he states that training and hiring ex-combatants to preserve the biodiversity of Angola is one of his highest priorities.

The report is organized as follows:

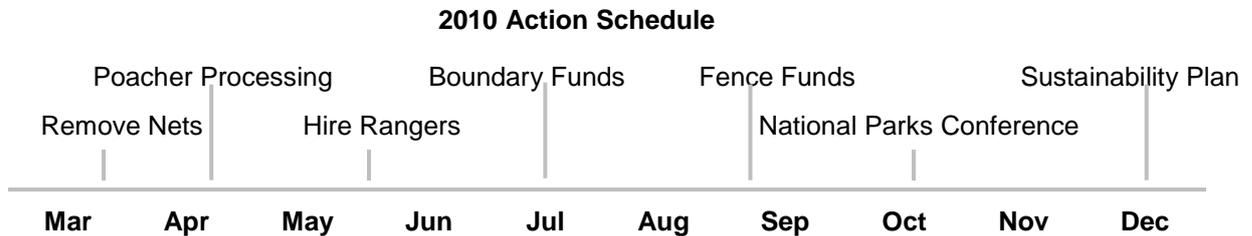
- **Immediate Actions:** Actions we must take in the next year to ensure the park's survival.
- **Longterm Plans:** A larger plan for Quiçama to implement *The Biodiversity Plan*.
- **Attachment A: Points in Anderson-Morkel Report:** The table in Attachment A relates our recommendations to A&M's report and provides further detail on our recommendations.
- **Attachment B: Zoning of Quiçama Park:** This map shows the management zones of the park

Quiçama National Park is at a crossroads. Continuing as we have been is certain death for the park. With decisive action to save the park in the next year, the Ministry of Environment can show the international conservation community that Angola is a leader in protecting the biodiversity of the planet.

Immediate Actions

There are several immediate threats to Quiçama that require the Ministry to take action in the next year. These are temporary solutions for urgent problems that require additional manpower and funding. In most cases, the Ministry need only give the financial backing and authorization to the Director to complete the actions.

We suggest the following timetable for 2010:



1. Develop a running and capital budget for 2010.
2. Obtain authorization from the Ministry of Fisheries to remove nets at the mouth of the Cuanza River and then formally authorize the Director to remove the nets. Otherwise, the turtle and fish populations face imminent collapse.
3. Identify a temporary authority for processing poachers until the Ministry of Environment can set up a system. We suggest the Ministry of Agriculture, which already has a process in place. Local and national police have not been willing to process poachers.
4. Hire all the rangers recently trained at the Quiçama training center. Designate 35 to Quiçama or provide the funds for Quiçama to hire them directly. They would immediately begin training to patrol areas outside the Special Conservation Area which have seen increasing poaching and illegal development.
5. Designate funds for the labor to demarcate the boundaries around Cabo Ledo and Sangano. Determine whether it should be fenced with fencing material we already have or marked in some other way.
6. Designate funds for fencing a larger area from Sangano to Cabala or Caba Ledo to Maxima to begin this year.
7. Conduct a national conference of interested groups to design a National Parks Board (NPB).
The conference can be similar to the conference recently conducted in Luanda (Programa Das Jornadas Tecnicas 2-3 dia Fevereiro de 2010-ENAD. This is the first step in developing a NPB to oversee all the national parks and allocate resources.
8. Determine a plan for self-sustainability based on revenues from oil exploration, tourist activities, and use of resources for activities like road quarrying.

Longterm Plans

The actions we suggest taking immediately are urgent but are also part of a larger plan that has already been thoroughly developed in *The Biodiversity Plan*. We believe that our longterm recommendations will help implement *The Biodiversity Plan*, including the following strategic areas:

Strategic Area	Title
A	Research and Information Dissemination
C	Biodiversity Management in Protected Areas
D	Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Components
E	Role of Communities in Biodiversity Management
G	Legislation and Its Enforcement

1. Form a National Parks Board (NPB) as designed at the National Parks Conference in 2010 with the authority to allocate resources and prosecute illegal activities. The Quiçama Foundation would then be unnecessary and could be dissolved.

We suggest forming a Board rather than hiring an outside organization to manage the parks to ensure Angola's interests are represented. Until we have a NPB, the Quiçama Foundation can fill the gap, but we should move as quickly as possible away from depending on this foundation.

2. Hire an NGO or several NGOs such as the IUCN or WWF to develop specific in-depth plans for the NPB and Quiçama. Organizations like these have the experience, manpower, and budgets to do the research, analyze the results, and write a detailed plan. We suggest an NGO rather than a private business to take advantage of their larger resources:
 - a. Management Plan: Develop an overall management plan for the park.
 - b. Baseline Flora and Fauna Survey: Thoroughly survey the park to determine flora and fauna, particularly endangered species.
 - c. Protection and Reintroduction Plan: Develop a timeline and plan for reintroducing species in the next five years. This should include enlarging the fenced area in increments, hiring and training rangers, fencing the areas, and introducing the animals only when we have the ability to protect them.
 - d. Tourism and Development Plan: Determine the best areas for tourist facilities, roads, and other development through an Environmental Impact Assessment. Develop a timetable for the development and a marketing plan.
 - e. Self-sustainability: Develop a plan to make the park self-sustainable using funds from oil exploration, illegal tourism facilities, and use of resources.
 - f. Nationalization Plan: Develop a hiring and five-year nationalization plan to demobilize non-Angolans in management positions and bring ranger staffing (not including support staff) to the following levels:
 - i. One experienced section head ranger from a country with a well-established park system for each section reporting to the Director. (Total: 6)
 - ii. One Angolan section head ranger trainee to work with each experienced ranger. (Total: 6)
 - iii. One Angolan Director trainee. (Total: 1)
 - iv. 25 field rangers for each section. (Total: 150)

The five-year plan must include education in national park management and wildlife conservation in a recognized university or school.

- g. Socio-economic: Survey the villages included in and around the park to determine baseline socio-economic conditions. Determine what would be of greatest benefit to them.
 - h. Fire Management: Develop a burn and fire management plan according to internationally accepted standards.
 - i. Security: Assess the anti-poaching operation and requirements for security.
3. Community Support: Develop a plan to ensure communities within and near the park benefit from the park's success. As stated in C.4 of *The Biodiversity Plan*, there must be an integrated management system to reconcile biodiversity, tourism, and local community interests.

One possibility is to turn land contiguous to the park over to the Quiçama tribe for the benefit of the community. (Two possibilities are the Mombondo Reserva da Casa and the area between Muxima and Mombondo, bounded by the Muxima Road and the Cuanza River) Some models to consider are the Campfire Zimbabwe, Conservancy Namibia, and the Msimsi Project in KwaZulu/Natal, South Africa.

4. Set up research programs with Angolan universities.

Attachment A: Points in Anderson-Morkel Report

Here are our comments on the eleven recommendations Anderson and Morkel (A&M) made in their report entitled “Quiçama National Park: The Status Quo, the Threats, and the Need for Effective Actions”.

Problems: The number and title of the recommendation in A&M’s report with a short summary of other relevant information.

Our Response: Our assessment of A&M’s suggestion.

Immediate Action and Longterm Action: Further explanation on the immediate actions and longterm plans we suggested in the previous section

Problem	Our Response	Immediate Action	Longterm Action
<p>6.1 Revise the mission statement and objectives</p> <p>Anderson and Morkel (A&M) suggest the Ministry develop a more realistic management plan with realistic priorities, objectives, and policies, including outsourcing the management of the park.</p>	<p>We suggest a more comprehensive solution--developing a National Parks Board whose priorities and objectives are based on <i>The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2012)</i>.</p> <p>Once there is a countrywide plan, each park can develop its own management and action plans based on the overall objectives.</p>	<p>Hold a conference in October to plan a National Parks Board. Invite all stakeholders, including ministry officials, park staff, international wildlife and conservation authorities, local community representatives, tourism experts, developers, and the Angolan public.</p>	<p>Create a National Parks Board whose members are chosen by the Ministry of Environment. The Board will be under the Ministry yet somewhat independent, having the resources and authority to manage the entire Angolan national park system. They will develop a management plan and action plans based on the objectives and priorities set forth in <i>The Biodiversity Plan</i>.</p>

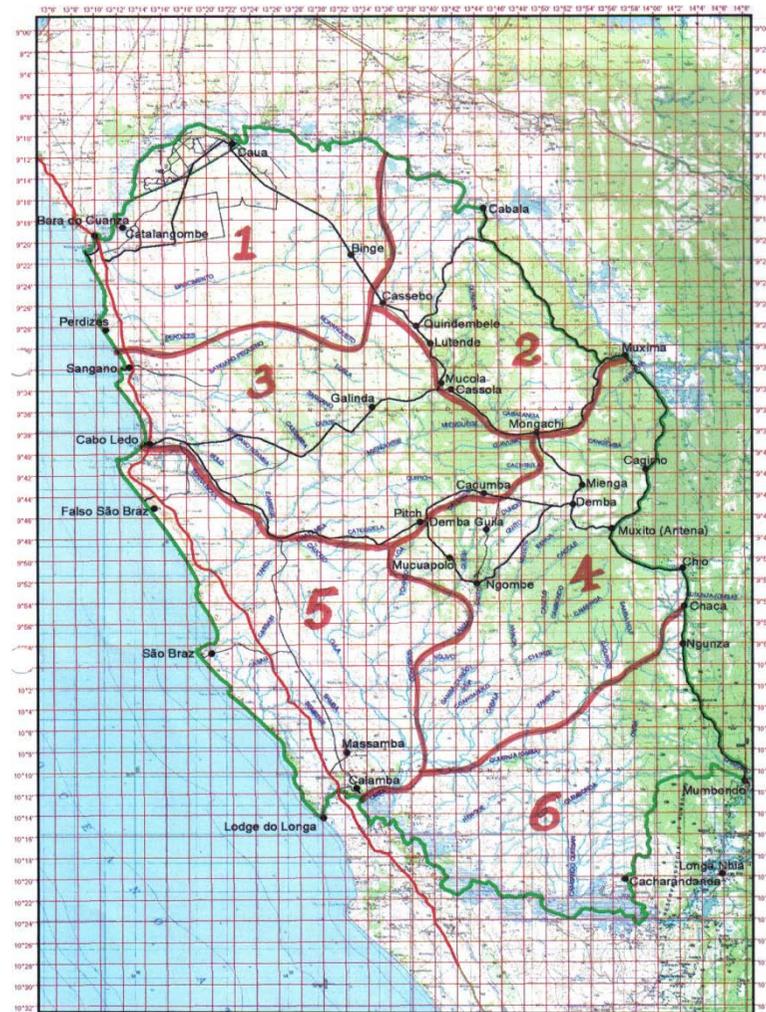
Problem	Our Response	Immediate Action	Longterm Action
<p>6.2 Fence out the Cabo Ledo development immediately</p> <p>A&M suggest the fence because of illegal private development in the park, which is destroying park land and depriving the park of the financial benefits of tourism. They also mention road quarrying and a Chinese building built on park land.</p>	<p>We agree that illegal development is a major threat to the park. It's not realistic to remove these developments now they are in place, but we can limit their growth and make sure the park benefits financially from their existence.</p> <p>Ideally, the area should be fenced. As A&M point out, we have the fencing materials. However, we have no funds for labor.</p>	<p>Determine exactly what areas require demarcation. (A&M have combined Cabo Ledo and Sangrano. These are two different problems.)</p> <p>Determine whether to fence or demarcate the boundary in some other way.</p> <p>Determine what—if any—supplies are needed for demarcation.</p> <p>Determine whether the funds will come directly from the Ministry or from rental fees from the illegal developments.</p> <p>Demolish or take over Chinese building for park use.</p>	<p>Engage an NGO to write a Development, Land Use, and Biodiversity Plan which will allow the park to benefit from the proximity of Luanda yet protect the park.</p> <p>The plan will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the park as a whole and designate which areas can be developed with the least impact on biodiversity. • Designate a clear approval process
<p>6.3 Rezone the park various zones & levels of development.</p> <p>The park is divided into six zones. A&M suggest designating a use level for each zone, such as wilderness areas or multiple-use areas.</p>	<p>Such designations have to be determined on the basis of impact rather than arbitrary zones. The six zones are administrative areas rather than ecological areas that can be treated as a block.</p> <p>The NGO report mentioned in 6.2 will look at the park as a whole but also each of the zones to determine various levels of use within the zones.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Include in Impact Assessment Plan. (See 6.2)</p>
<p>6.4 Fence the southern boundary of the proposed strict Managed Natural Zone</p>	<p>We agree that this needs to be done immediately but have no funds to do it.</p>	<p>Designate funds.</p> <p>Begin putting up the fence from Sangano to Cabala or Caba Ledo to Maxima</p>	<p>Finish fencing the area indicated.</p> <p>Establish legal boundaries of the park.</p> <p>Set up a timeline for fencing in the entire park in phases.</p>

Problem	Our Response	Immediate Action	Longterm Action
<p>6.5 Improve the anti-poaching operations.</p> <p>A&M indicated concern that poaching was occurring within 8 km of Caua and that mangroves and other trees were being harvested illegally for building materials and charcoal.</p> <p>They suggested 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week surveillance at places like the mouth of the Cuanza and the Cabo Ledo and Sangano areas.</p>	<p>We certainly agree with A&M that this is a priority. However, with only 17 rangers we must devote 80% of our time to patrolling the Special Conservation Zone (SCZ). We devote 20% of our resources to the rest of the park in our twice-monthly patrols.</p> <p>At present, we are unable to protect the areas outside the Special Conservation Area. However, within the SCZ, we have not lost one animal to poaching since their reintroduction.</p> <p>We have succeeded in reducing cutting of mangroves near the mouth of the Cuanza River but are now facing an increase in charcoal production.</p>	<p>Hire 25 new rangers from the class recently graduated and train them to patrol the area newly fenced in. (See 6.4)</p> <p>Build 5 outposts and acquire 3 vehicles for these rangers.</p>	<p>As the President stated in his 23-October-2009 letter to Minister Jardim, training and hiring ex-combatants to preserve the biodiversity of Angola is one of his highest priorities.</p> <p>Hire all the new rangers recently trained and assimilate them into the national park system. If the Ministry of Environment does not have the capacity to employ all 100, we suggest they give Quiçama the budget to employ and begin training the rangers.</p> <p>Start putting in ranger stations in other areas. Cover all of Quiçama by 2015.</p>
<p>6.6 Control Commercial Netting at the Cuanza Mouth</p>	<p>This is such an urgent concern that we requested authorization from the Ministry to remove the nets last year.</p> <p>If the nets are not removed within the next six months, they threaten extinction for our endangered sea turtle and manatee populations and collapse of the local fishing industry.</p> <p>The international conservation community recognizes that netting at the mouths of rivers should be prohibited.</p>	<p>Obtain authorization from the Ministry of Fisheries to remove nets at the mouth of the Cuanza River and formally authorize the Director to remove the nets.</p> <p>Immediately notify net fishermen that their nets will be removed in six months (July 2010) from the mouth of the Cuanza River at the direction of the Ministry of Fisheries.</p> <p>Station rangers at the mouth of the Cuanza to guard the area 24/7.</p>	<p>Engage an NGO to assess the current status of the park's flora and fauna, with particular emphasis on endangered species.</p> <p>Acquire results of present studies of sea turtles and preserve in database suggested in the Biodiversity study.</p> <p>Work with the Ministry of Fisheries to plan for resettlement and re-employment of the fishermen affected.</p>

Problem	Our Response	Immediate Action	Longterm Action
<p>6.7 Commence Removal of Invasive Alien Plants</p> <p>A&M suggest using <i>Cochineal</i> beetles to remove the cactus at the tourist restaurant and mention the lack of a fire management and burning program.</p>	<p>We are very concerned about invasive species that endanger the ecosystem of the park, such as the water hyacinths. It is a major problem with potentially devastating effects. However, the cactus has remained in the same area and causes no problem for the ecosystem. In fact, it actually aids in stabilizing the soil.</p> <p>We have previously investigated using the <i>Cochineal</i> beetles. However, it is illegal to import them to Angola. Cutting down the cactus only makes it proliferate.</p> <p>We agree there should be a burn and fire management plan.</p>	None	<p>Investigate changing import regulations on the <i>Cochineal</i> beetle.</p> <p>Include the list of invasive species, their impact, and plans for their removal in the baseline report on the flora and fauna of the park.</p> <p>Develop a burn and fire management plan according to internationally accepted standards.</p>
<p>6.8 Planning</p> <p>A&M suggest writing a park management plan and producing and implementing a tourism development strategy.</p>	See 6.1.	See 6.1.	<p>Engage an NGO to write a management plan for the park including the overview of a tourism and development plan.</p> <p>Develop a separate, more detailed tourism and development plan, including a marketing plan.</p> <p>Any tourism plan should capitalize upon the proximity to Luanda, including facilities for corporations to conduct training.</p>

Problem	Our Response	Immediate Action	Longterm Action
6.9 Restart the Wildlife Reintroduction Program	<p>We agree. However, this requires a budget and infrastructure that we do not have. It would be irresponsible to introduce animals into a larger area before it was fenced and secured.</p> <p>As we indicated in our report, “_____”, we suggest moving the buffalo already inside the park.</p>	<p>Contact Anderson and Morkel about reintroducing the red buffalo. This is the area of their expertise.</p> <p>Reintroduce red buffalo from southern section of park.</p>	<p>Develop a plan and timetable for the reintroduction of species as part of the overall park plan.</p> <p>Complete fencing and hire a sufficient number of rangers to guard the larger area.</p>
6.10 Review the Leadership in the Park A&M suggest that the present director should be replaced or follow specific plans.	We suggest a more comprehensive plan for nationalization that will replace all non-Angolans with Angolans in the next five years. (Opening up a larger area of the park will require employing other experienced field rangers.)	See 6.1.	As part of the Quiçama plan, create a comprehensive nationalization plan with specific requirements for each position: competency requirements, a training plan with training inside and outside Angola, a mentoring plan, and timetable for nationalization.
6.11 Review the role of the Quiçama Foundation. A&M suggest that an NGO or private company take over management of the park.	<p>The National Parks Board should take over management of the park. We suggest the Board rather than an NGO or private company manage the park because entities outside of Angola will have their own interests that may no coincide with Angola's interests.</p> <p>The Quiçama Foundation is essentially defunct and contributes nothing to the management of the park</p>	See 6.1.	See 6.1.

Attachment B: Zoning of Quiçama Park



Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Quiçama Foundation and Quiçama National Park, we would like to thank Ms. Bobby Dempsey for her unstinting professional help in the preparation and writing of this report.

Bobby is committed to the protection of our national parks in Angola.