



SUNGANI

Kufantifa



THE ADVENTURE-BASED LUXURY DESTINATION IN ZAMBIA



ABOUT

In late 2018, our family fell in love with an extremely remote area of the South Luangwa National Park. This area had been in a state of neglect since 2012. There was limited road access, and consistent poaching in the area rendered it very difficult to operate. In the lead up to a family decision to join our skills and create these properties, one theme was consistent. It needed to be an adventure that would ultimately change a remote and poached area for the better and make a real and positive impact to the wildlife and the local community.

At the heart of rewilding this area is our passion as a family, the dedication from our conservation partners, the incredible guests that visit and the engagement of our local community. Just a few short years in and we have made a profound and measurable impression on the area.

Our family journey kicked off early in 2019. A father and son, along with a few local people, arrived near nightfall and had to spend the night in what were the old ruins of the site. The first few months had them sharing their accommodations with bats, snakes and various other creatures! Cooking on a fire, bread freshly baked in the ground, the story of Sungani began in this barely touched corner of Africa.

By April the project was underway and many people from the local communities were employed: either again, or for the very first time. Everything, from the architecture and interior design, down to the last detail on each scatter cushion has truly been a family collaboration and much of what you see has been created on site.

We are truly family owned and operated and this sets us apart from other lodges and camps. **Sungani** is the most southerly lodge in the park, close to the Luangwa River and fronted by an enormous lagoon. Further upstream is **Kulandila Camp**, nestled between the Luangwa River and a beautiful lagoon. Both properties are roughly 90 kilometres from Mfuwe Airport which provides a totally remote and exclusive experience that nowadays far outweighs the more conventional concepts of luxury. We include a flight transfer (using our own aircraft) for our guests allowing them to be flown directly from Mfuwe. Both properties offer a high level of luxury, quirky design and incredible cuisine, warm friendly staff and service. We offer incredible safari and wildlife journeys with fantastic guiding, activities, the latest photographic equipment for hire and an extensive hide network.

Every visitor helps to contribute towards the Sungani promise as we embark on this journey to become custodian and keeper – enabling us to give back in the years to come.





Jordan Marketing and Reservations

The Family



Lynne Owner/Director and Mum



Paul Owner/Director and Dad



Michael Resident Photographer and Guide



Darryl Owner/Director



“We are a family from Zimbabwe and our passion for Africa runs wild within all of us. Zambia has a very special place in our hearts and the South Luangwa represented a true safari experience that cannot be equalled.”



With our combined experience in hospitality, events, marketing and conservation we knew that taking on a project like this would be much more rewarding together.” Lynne Davy (Owner and Mum)





OUR COMMITMENT

Compliance and more importantly understanding of environmental impact forms a massive part of the behind the scenes of any new venture of this nature.

Visits to the site to understand and plan how to manage the waste and old buildings were crucial in the early planning stages. Early on, we made a non-negotiable commitment to reuse what we could. A small example is our scrap artwork at the entrance. What we couldn't reuse, we safely removed.

The environment certainly wasn't easy, and the team faced daily challenges, but things began to come full circle and we made a lot of progress in a short period of time.

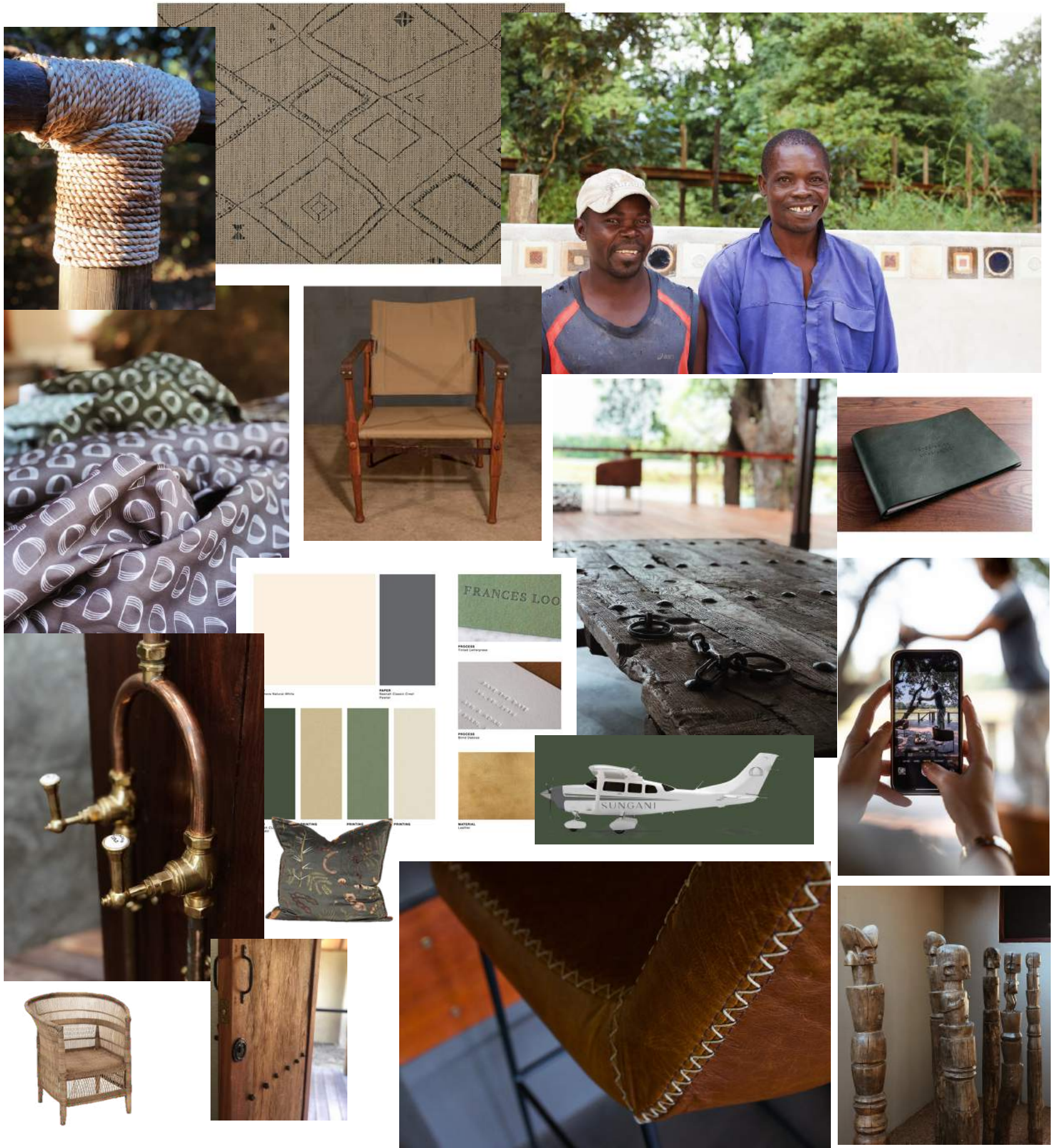
Our construction team ranged from semi-skilled local contractors to unskilled first timers who had never had real employment before. This was a challenge but Paul, Michael and the skilled workers engaged daily to empower and develop our team. It was extremely important to us that we employed local if remotely possible. Again, this was non-negotiable and has become a guiding ethos as our story continues. We built over old foundations and reused wood and scrap where possible.

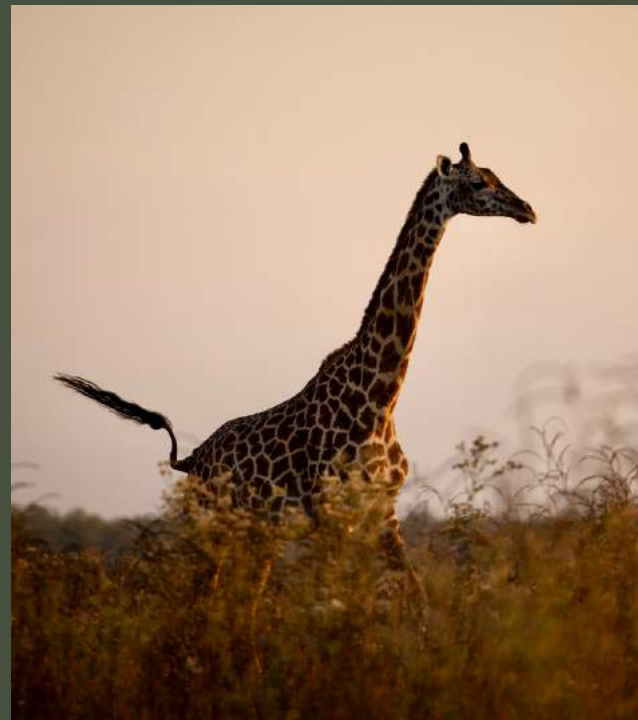
- Load by load our materials started to arrive. Given the fact we had one road in and out meant a lot of what you see has been hand-built from scratch and created onsite by our local community.
- Everything came from Lusaka on our large truck, offloaded in Mfuwe at our storage container and finally loaded onto our DAF 4x4 truck to make the long journey to the sites.
- The first critical task was to set up the solar plant that would ultimately service and run both properties. The moment the team turned on the first electric kettle there was a 'hooray' that rippled through the camp!
- Our investment goes far beyond the properties themselves and into the wider area. We own and maintain all our own equipment which we use to build, create and maintain road networks. These roads are vital, not only for game-viewing, but also for the continuous anti-poaching efforts and patrols that we support. Alongside this we also maintain our airstrip, a short 2-minute drive from Sungani depending on what you see!





Our brand is a testament to safaris of old, whilst embracing the excitement of a new and more conscious path forward. Personal touches from generations are scattered throughout both properties to give you a sense of home.





As new operators, our initial and implicit impact revolves around the fact there is now a presence in an area that has for many years been inaccessible. To assist with anti-poaching efforts was top of the priority list.

A few months into the build, Paul turned to Michael and said "**Michael, I think we have made a mistake coming here, where are the animals?**" **Michael gently replied "Dad, this is the South Luangwa... there are animals here."** The next day the two of them headed out and spotted a large herd of buffalo and elephant right by the lodge. Time and patience have been the mantra ever since.

In a few short years, the reduced incidence of poaching due to improved accessibility and being able to assist Department of National Parks and Wildlife and CSL with deployment and support is the most profound and measurable impact of our presence in the area.

When we first arrived here even the impala scattered. Now, they graze peacefully wherever we go. Over the last few years our careful and patient work with the prey base around Sungani and Kulandila in the remote Lusangazi sector has become well established.

This in turn has had the knock-on effect of causing the predator population to re-establish itself. Hours spent out in the field with careful and considerate habituation are culminating in the growth of predator sightings – not only the large felines but other, smaller predators as well.

We view this re-habitation holistically and take stock of all the flora and fauna, not just the large mammals. The positive impact and change are cumulative and an ongoing undertaking that is truly measurable.





CONSERVATION

The work our conservation partners do is so fundamental, and we are privileged to play a part in their mission. The way that we are able to assist Conservation South Luangwa and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife as operators is:

- Create and grade road networks to make the area more accessible.
- Create firebreaks and other infrastructure.
- Assist with deployment of scouts and by boat in the rainy season.
- A constant 365-day presence in the area to report any incidents.
- Another pair of eyes from the air when our aircraft completes transfers.
- Michael, our head guide and operations manager, is an honorary wildlife police officer and is able to assist DNPW and CSL in that role.
- Construct, maintain and keep registered the airstrip allowing CSL and other conservation partners to access the area easily by air.
- Tsetse Fly control - 250 traps deployed with a dedicated vehicle patrolling constantly.

Conservation does not start and end with wildlife, the community is key. Local populations are beginning to appreciate the benefits of anti-poaching and conservation. One vital aspect of this is when the community is able to benefit from new skills and income security derived from the tourism sector.

Employing people from our neighbouring villages with zero to little experience was a challenge, but with persistence and structured training, they now make up 85% of our front and back-of-house team. A part of the blanket training has been to ensure all staff learns the value of protecting the wildlife and the area. To accomplish this, we have ensured staff have regular access to game drives with our safari guides, whose shared knowledge and passion has culminated in a radical mindset shift. During the difficult time of the pandemic, we were able to maintain our staff levels on full remuneration. This was not easy, and the ripple effects are still felt today, but it was important.





“We really appreciate your support to CSL over the past few years and hope our efforts down south continue to protect wildlife and make it a safer haven for them. You being there is a massive contribution in protecting that area so thank you!”



Rachel McRobb – Chief Executive Officer
Conservation South Luangwa – May 2023





SOCIAL

- Employ local staff where possible and implement written policy governing fair remuneration, respect for all and continuing education. 45+ of our staff are from our neighbouring villages (Malama, Nyamlaluma, Chilikati, Malanga.) Each employed person can support up to 5-10 people in their extended family. It is extraordinary and incredibly rewarding to realise this could mean up to 450 people.
- Create opportunities and skill transfer for school leavers and support staff by providing support for their offspring to be able to consider tertiary education.
- Source from and support local farmers and beekeepers – (Mayana Farms, Chikowa Honey and weekly produce deliveries from Lusaka.) We have a 10-acre plot in Mfuwe where we intend to create even more socially responsible projects and as it all unfolds we will share progress through the website and social media channels.
- Our longer-term philanthropic endeavours are always under discussion and evolving. At this early stage it seems that creating opportunities for school leavers is an area we believe deserves our focus. Skill transfer will hopefully develop young men and women to become safari guides and above all conservationists. Above all, transparency is key to our continuing efforts.
- Our goal over time is to create a dedicated fund for school leavers to apply for grants to fund careers in medicine or conservation.





ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

- Reduce and recycle - Control all waste and recycle what we can through local projects such as glass tiles from Tribal Textiles in Mfuwe.
- Reusable glass bottles used exclusively at both properties.
- Pump, filter and purify all our own water.
- Both properties are run completely on solar power with a backup generator for safety.
- Luxury, Eco-Friendly, Biodegradable, Vegan, Paraben & SLE/SLES free Guest Amenities, proudly endorsed by Beauty Without Cruelty.
- Support on the ground efforts and contribute to Conservation South Luangwa – raised over \$75,000 for CSL in 2022 – see [here](#).
- In 2023 we raised \$67,972 through our Campaign for Conservation – see [here](#).
- Contributions to the Zambian Carnivore Programme – we have sponsored 3 lion collars and 2 wild dog collars and hope to sponsor more soon.
- Responsible guiding practices – our guiding team have been employed since the middle of 2021 and move day and night to habituate the wildlife – time carefully spent in the field means they are able to monitor animal behaviour and report any sightings or incidents.
- Maintain vehicles and machinery to monitor and control fuel consumption.
- Membership of ETAZ to lobby with all related sectors to continually improve and protect Zambia's wild spaces.
- Enrich guests with newfound knowledge and an understanding of how their visit translates into the ability to continue to work towards leaving a healthier and better Africa for future generations to enjoy.
- Support vendors who value ethical practices.



