

# Irish Aid and Gorongosa National Park

## Word Bank

Word	Meaning
Biodiverse (Biodiversity)	Stands for: biological diversity or the many forms of plant and animal life in a place
Conflict	A strong disagreement between people; a fight, battle or war
Ivory	A hard, white material that forms on the tusks of elephants and other animals. Ivory is very valuable (worth a lot of money)
Poachers	A person who illegally hunts animals or takes protected plants
Restore (restoration)	To return to an earlier or normal condition
Conserve (conservation)	To keep or protect
Drought	A long time with little or no rain
Irrigation system	A way to get water to land or crops
Development work	Help or support for people who are in need, at risk or vulnerable (e.g. because of poverty, war, climate change or inequality)
Philanthropist	A person who uses their own money to fund good works

## A GLOBAL TREASURE

Gorongosa National Park in Mozambique is one of the most “**biodiverse**” places on earth - that’s a scientific way of saying that the Park is home to a wide range of creatures, some of which are unique to Gorongosa.

So far, 398 bird species, 123 mammals (including humans!), 34 reptiles (snakes, lizards, crocodiles and turtles) and 43 amphibians (like frogs or toads) have been discovered there.

But 43 years ago, the Park came under threat during a civil **conflict** in Mozambique which ended in 1992. Hungry soldiers killed many of the Park’s large animals, especially elephants, for their meat and **ivory**. Later, illegal hunters or **poachers** killed more animals - and the elephants, Cape buffaloes, hippos, lions, warthogs, and antelopes almost disappeared. This affected the environment and the people living around Gorongosa. For example, without zebra herds to graze on grass and shrubs, dangerous wildfires happened more often.



Mozambique is an Irish Aid partner country since 1996

## Irish Aid and Gorongosa National Park

In 2008, the Government of Mozambique and Greg C. Carr, an American philanthropist, set up the Gorongosa Restoration Project to **restore** and **conserve** (protect) the wildlife and the landscape, and return Gorongosa to its original condition.

**PHILANTHROPIST:**  
a person who uses their own  
money to fund good works.



Photo courtesy of Gorongosa National Park

## IRISH AID'S WORK

The health of the Park's wildlife and landscape is linked to the wellbeing of the 200,000 people living around the Park. They face huge challenges such as,

- not enough land to grow food
- many health problems
- very few doctors or clinics
- low levels of education.

These communities are also affected by **conflict** and **drought**.

In 2014, Irish Aid began funding (giving money to) the Gorongosa Restoration Project in its work with the communities on the northern boundary of the Park. This funding provides small farmers with advice, seeds, fertilizers, tools, and access to markets to sell their crops. It is also used to give local families access to clean water and to create **irrigation systems** for school vegetable gardens.



Farmers from the northern boundary of the Park learning different ways to get the most from their land.

Photo courtesy of Gorongosa National Park

The restoration of the Park and the **development work** with the local communities is not easy. But it is already making a big difference and, with the continued partnership between the local people, the Government of Mozambique, the Gorongosa Restoration Project and Irish Aid, this work can help both people and wildlife.

