

MHLUMENI-GOBA CROSS BORDER INITIATIVE



The neighbouring communities of Mhlumeni in Swaziland and Goba in Mozambique are collaborating on a cross border trail that will form the northern anchor point for the Lubombo Eco Trails network.

The Goba Community, located just 60 km west of Maputo, has established a 9,000 ha conservation area featuring mountain streams and waterfalls surrounded by rugged hills and savanna woodland. A community ecolodge, campsite and trail network is planned in the conservation area. A local community environmental NGO, Ntava Yedzu (Our Mountain) is responsible for implementing the initiative in Goba.

Mhlumeni is situated on a gently undulating plateau overlooking the dramatic Mhlabashana Gorge. Bounded on three sides by the Mlawula Nature Reserve, the area has outstanding hiking and ecotourism potential. The Mhlumeni community has identified a spectacular location for its ecotourism facility with magnificent views over the Mozambican coastal plains to the north-east and the Swaziland lowveld to the west.

Latitude: 26° 16' 04.77" S
Longitude: 32° 01' 45.76" E



MUTI MUTI CONSERVANCY



The mid-point of the Swaziland Lubombo range is marked by the town of Siteki and the nearby Muti Muti Conservancy, with its 2000ha of mountain forests and open savannah, showcasing the diversity and natural beauty of the Lubombo Mountains.

Muti Muti stretches from the top of the range down to the Lowveld and has exciting trails that reveal to the explorer the areas rich birdlife, its forest creatures and stunning views.

Accommodation at Muti Muti is provided at Mabuda B&B, which is well known in the region for its quality and affordability, and is the beginning point for the hiking and horse trails. At certain times of the year, the variety of butterflies along these trails is extraordinary. The summer frog chorus has drawn many a frog lover to the famous Lily Pond.

Latitude: 26° 27' 53.39" S
Longitude: 31° 56' 40.92" E
Website: www.mabuda.com



MANZIMNYAMA LANDSCAPE



This area has long held an almost legendary status with conservation and wilderness enthusiasts.

From the attractive open grassland on the plateau, the Mnyame River, with its many tributaries drops away steeply to the east, where it dramatically exits Swaziland into Mozambique.

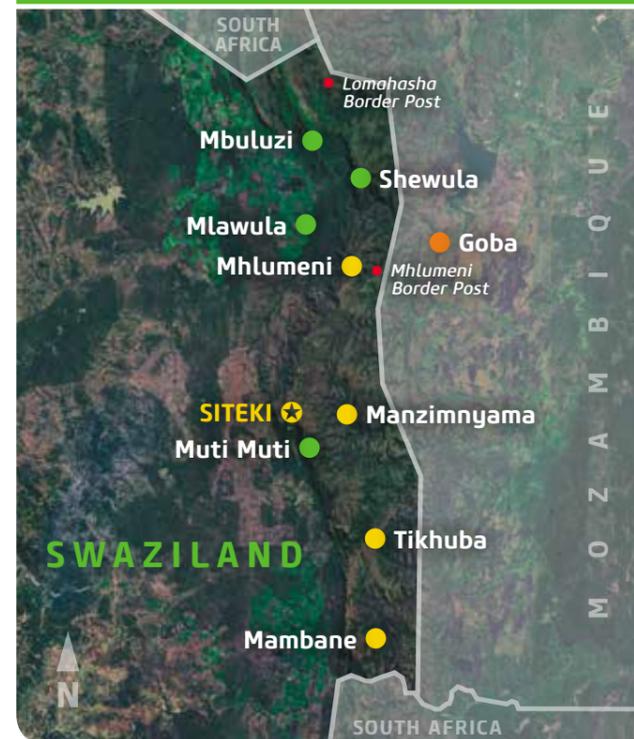
The Manzimnyama Landscape covers about 12,500 ha in size with a very high ecosystem value. It is situated in the highly important and threatened Maputal and Coastal Forest Eco-region.

Manzimnyama is described as fascinating botanically, with numerous cycad species well represented on the steep cliffs. The presence of bushveld savanna and forest results in rich bird life, with numerous rare and threatened species, such as the Barred Owl and African Broadbill.

Latitude: 26° 27' 07.33" S
Longitude: 32° 05' 38.52" E



THE LUBOMBO ECO TRAILS



- Existing Eco Trails
- Future Community Projects
- Transborder Eco Trail



The Lubombo Eco Trails Program is proudly run in partnership with



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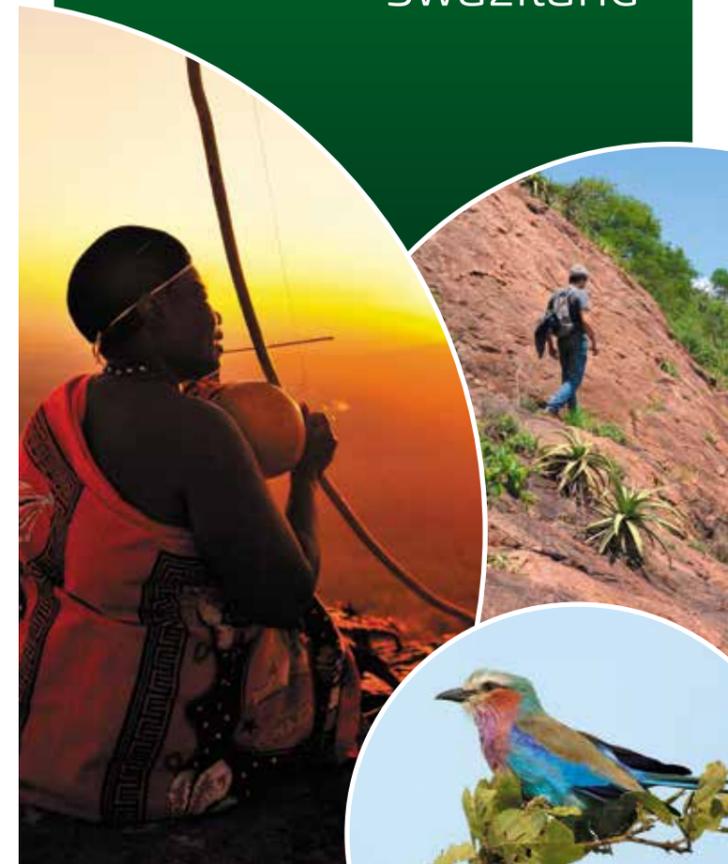
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Introducing the eco trails of the

Lubombo Mountains

Swaziland





The Lubombo Eco Trails program is developing a network of trails in the Lubombo Mountains. This will open this spectacular and little-known region to those seeking genuine adventure and a rich ecological and cultural experience. The trails will link communities in Mozambique, Swaziland and South Africa and offer a variety of products from challenging hiking and mountain bike trails, rugged 4x4 routes, river rafting and canoeing. The Eco Trails are being designed to bring maximum benefits to the environment and to local communities

The Lubombo Mountain Range

The impressive landscapes of the Lubombo Mountains are shared by Swaziland, Mozambique and South Africa along a narrow range about 800km in length, with an average elevation of 600 meters. The region is a recognized global biodiversity hotspot. Its

high diversity of flora and fauna can be attributed to its elevation within a transitional zone between two biogeographic regions: the dry thorn savannas of the west, and the moister coastal thickets of the east. Birdlife is exceptional, with more than 350 species recorded in Mlawula Nature Reserve alone. Densely forested gorges and ravines, open broadleaf savanna and vast panoramic views characterize the scenic landscape. The region has a rich history and the vitality of traditional culture continues to be reflected in the daily lives of its warm and friendly inhabitants.

The implementation of the Eco Trails initiative will take place in phases. The first phase is being implemented in the Lubombo Conservancy, which brings together the conservation areas described in this brochure. The expected timeframe for the full development of the program is between 2014 and 2020.

Future Community Participation

In the next phase the Eco Trails will incorporate the communities of Goba in Mozambique and Mhlumeni, Sitsatsaweni, Tikhuba and Mambane in Swaziland. Mhlumeni and Goba communities are in the process of developing basic ecotourism facilities and Mambane Community has allocated 14,000 ha area for conservation and natural resource management that will link to the Usuthu Gorge Community and Ndumo Game Reserve in South Africa and to Catuane in Mozambique.

The Lubombo Eco Trails initiative is part of the Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Areas initiative and is being implemented by the Lubombo Conservancy and COSPE through the Eco Lubombo Program in partnership with a number of agencies and NGOs.

SHEWULA MOUNTAIN CAMP & NATURE RESERVE



The Shewula Mountain Camp is the first community eco-tourism project in Swaziland and one of the most successful in southern Africa.

The camp is fully owned and run by the community and is a vital source of income and employment, as well as pride.

The Shewula Mountain Camp straddles the Lubombo Mountains with a vast panoramic view of Swaziland. The camp is ideal for cultural tourists, families, nature lovers and backpackers.

While at the camp, guests will be entranced by the cultural music and dance, dazzled by the gorgeous sunsets, and challenged by a mountain bike trip around the plateau. The community set aside 2650ha of land for conservation with hiking trails linking into those of Mbuluzi and Mlawula.

Latitude: 26° 08' 31.99" S
Longitude: 32° 02' 22.99" E
Website: www.shewulacamp.org



MBULUZI GAME RESERVE



Mbuluzi Game Reserve is a privately owned and managed game reserve that is open to the public.

The reserve has created a conservation area for a range of habitats. There is a good diversity of game, fantastic examples of the vegetation unique to the Lubombo and a great diversity of birdlife including a number of Southern African 'specials'.

Since there is little dangerous game it means that the reserve can be safely explored on foot, on bicycle or in open vehicles on well-maintained roads. Due to a traversing agreement guests can visit Hlane Royal National Park to see big game such as rhinoceros, elephant and lion or visit Shewula Community Reserve for a cultural or community experience.

Accommodation ranges from basic camping to luxury self-catering lodges.

Latitude: 26° 09' 22.02" S
Longitude: 31° 58' 58.35" E
Website: www.mbuluzigamereserve.co.sz



ALL OUT AFRICA RESEARCH & TOURS



All Out Africa operates both a not-for-profit Foundation implementing community development and ecological research projects in Swaziland and a responsible travel business (Adventure Tours).

The Foundation has established the Savannah Research Center in Mbuluzi Game Reserve and a long-term savannah monitoring program in partnership with the University of Florida. This is a key facility and scientific attraction for the Lubombo Conservancy and offers an opportunity to host scientific researchers and students while building local capacity.

All Out Africa Adventure Tours has helped to establish a four-day Eco Trail between Shewula, Mlawula and Mbuluzi and has the capacity and interest to further market and operate guided hiking tours in the region. It is well placed to cater for groups and is a key operator in the Lubombo Eco Trails program.

Latitude: 26° 08' 04.8" S
Longitude: 32° 00' 16.9" E
Website: www.alloutafrica.com
www.alloutafrica.org



MLAWULA NATURE RESERVE



This beautifully scenic reserve covers an area of about 16,500 ha. It has prolific birdlife and over sixty species of small and large mammals are present. This does not include elephant or lion, allowing visitors to explore the area on foot without a guide. There are 10 walking trails ranging from 1.5 km to a full days hike.

The reserve also features a plateau, which is home to unique species of cycads and the Lubombo ironwood forests. The hiking trails lead visitors past numerous caves and seasonal pools and waterfalls. The Mlawula Stream and the Mbuluzi River flow through magnificent valleys where Stone Age tools have been discovered, providing hikers with interesting insights into the history and culture of the region.

True bushveld camping is available at the Siphiso campsite and comfortable accommodation is available at the Magadzavane Lodge situated on the edge of the Lubombo with spectacular views over the lowveld.

Latitude: 26° 10' 49.34" S
Longitude: 31° 59' 54.15" E
Website: www.sntc.org.sz

