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| **UNDP_Logo_NEW_color** | BACK TO OFFICE REPORT  | **ONE PAGE MISSION** **REPORT SUMMARY** **Date:** 25 April 2016 |
|  Name: Team: Tel No:  Götz Schroth Environment 927 921 113 | **Travel Authorization #:**Attached |
| 1. **Approved Mission Itinerary:**

Luanda – Namibe – Tombwa (Iona National Park) – Namibe – Luanda | 1. **List of Annexes:**

Travel Authorization |
| 1. **17 April to 22 April 2016**
 | 1. **Key Counterpart (s) in Each Location:**
* Iona National Park Management (International Park Manager, National Park Administrator)
* Municipal Representative in Tombwa
* NGO Liga 4 de Abril, Namibe
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| 1. **Purpose/Objectives of Mission**
* Understand situation in the park with regard to wildlife conservation and communities and implications for the revision of the zoning as a key element of the park management plan
* Discuss with park management activities and available funding with regard to infrastructure and communities
* Discuss the no-cost extension request with park management
* Discuss issues related to communities in the park with Municipal Government
* Discuss planned involvement in the community component of the project with NGO Liga 4 de Abril
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| 1. **Brief Summary of Mission Outcomes:**

The mission provided the first opportunity for me as manager of the GEF Iona project to visit the park together with the National Project Coordinator, Sr. Aristofanes, and obtain a first-hand impression of the problems and opportunities of the park, specifically with regard to the potential conflicts between wildlife conservation and communities. Since traveling from Namibe to the park headquarters in Espinheira takes almost a full day in each direction, we had 3 full days with the park management to see the park and discuss key issues of the project. These were used to (1st day) visit the plains where the wildlife is concentrated and understand issues of temporary use of the extremely marginal pasture resources of these areas by herders and their wildlife, enabled by the digging of artificial waterholes; (2nd day) visit the montane areas in the east where the communities are concentrated, that present much higher value for pasture use and are also of interest for tourism; and (3rd day) visit the mouth of the Cunene in the southwest corner of the park where illegal fishing is a major conservation issue that is not yet effectively addressed because of the current difficulty of controlling access to the park along the coast from Tombwa. The visit was very effective in demonstrating the need and opportunity for zoning of the park into different use and non-use zones, with the key issues being the division into a community zone in the more montane areas where the communities are currently located, and a wildlife zone in the very arid plains with minimal pasture resources where temporary ingressions by small numbers of herders with their livestock is only possible through the digging of artificial waterholes, i.e. changing the natural environment in a way that is in conflict with the objectives of the park. The exact limits of proposed zones and the rules for each zone will be defined during a visit to the park by the consulting company that is currently elaborating the park management plan, planned for May 2016. The current infrastructure of the park (buildings etc.) was seen and infrastructure investments that are still possible within the budget of the project were discussed. These include an office building in Espinheira, wells for the guard posts in Salondjamba and Pediva, and a system of solar energy for the three stations. The park management is obtaining offers from potential service providers from the region. It was also decided that the park management would obtain offers for a simple bridge over the Curoca in Salondjamba and a fence to control the access to the park in Tombwa to see whether project resources would be sufficient for these very necessary through not fully budgeted investments. It was also decided to request permission to use some funds for the purchase of motorcycles to improve the ability of the guards to patrol the park. Technical details of the planned aerial survey of wildlife in the park were also discussed and the park management is in contact with potential service providers to reach an agreement. The curtesy visit to the Municipal Administration in Tombwa was important for creating alignment on the potential and need for zoning of the park into community and wildlife zones and the potential for ecotourism, with the traditional communities themselves being a potential attraction for tourists. The current administrator of the municipality will however soon be transferred to another municipality. The Comuna of Iona was also visited but the administration was at a political event in the capital and no meeting could be arranged. The provincial government at Namibe was not included in this visit for reasons of time but will be included in a planned future visit together with the UNDP Country Director. A meeting with the NGO Liga 4 de Abril, based in Namibe, whose involvement in the project has been planned earlier but was delayed, served to discuss the current needs of the project and opportunities of the NGO’s involvement, specifically for communicating and discussing the park management plan and zoning with the communities and helping implement a tourism strategy involving the communities. In order to prepare the NGO’s intervention, a person indicated by the NGO could accompany for some days the community interviews that are planned for May 2016, with participation of the consulting company SOAPRO and the park management.  |
| **7. Key recommendations /Actions to be Taken:*** Finalization of the project extension request by UNDP
* Park Management to obtain offers for infrastructure projects to be selected and contracted by project
* Inclusion of NGO Liga 4 de Abril in preparations for community survey by SOAPRO
 | 1. **Distribution:**

UNDP CO, Project Management, Park Management |
| 1. **Proposed Debriefing Date:** n/a
 | **Participation in Briefing:** n/a |