



Akagera National Park, Rwanda

A story of partnership, rewilding, eco-tourism & community development



Akagera National Park



Nyungwe National Park

Rwanda

- 1994 Genocide against the Tutsis (1M people)
- Strong rule of law
- Highest share of women in parliament globally (61%)
- Literacy stands at 79%
- Unemployment is 12.9%



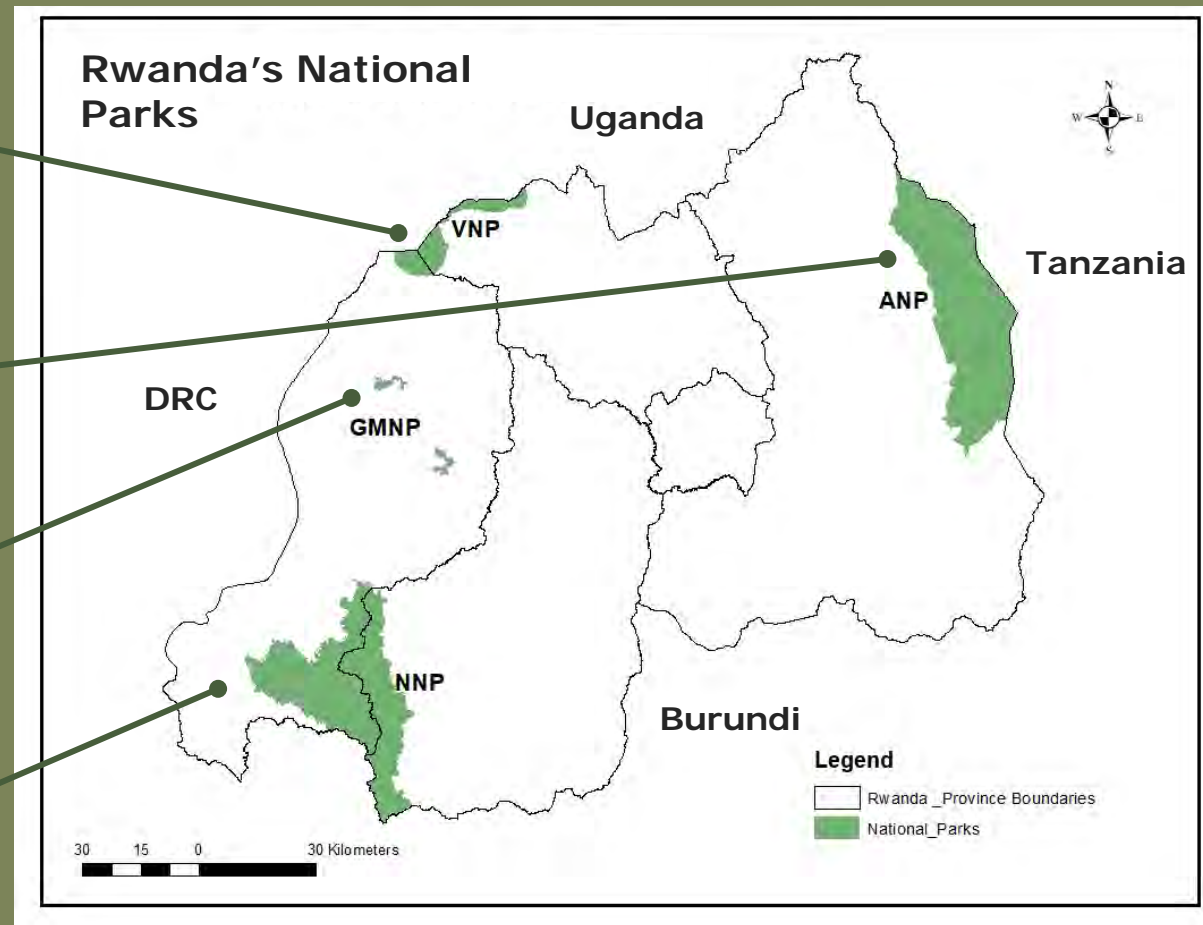
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA		SCORE	COUNTRY/TERRITORY
RWANDA		68	Seychelles
Score		62	Cabo Verde
58/100	What does the CPI score mean?	58	Botswana
Rank	Score change	58	Rwanda
41/182	↑ +1 since 2024	48	Mauritius
		46	Namibia
		46	Senegal
		45	Benin
		45	Sao Tome and Principe
		43	Cote d'Ivoire

Rwanda National Parks



- 30% of National territory is covered by forestry/tree cover
- 8.9% of the whole country devoted to conservation in national parks.

Volcanoes 160 km ²	Rain forest	est. 1925	01
Akagera 1,122 km ²	Savannah	est. 1934	02
Gishwati-Mukura 35.6 km ²	Rain forest	est. 2016	03
Nyungwe 1,019 km ²	Rain forest	est. 2005	04



Conservation Successes

250 → 600+ gorillas
in Virunga Massif

\$248m in 2025



Conservation Success

PPP model with AP
(Akagera & Nyungwe)

‘Big 5’ restored Akagera

Natural Heritage Site
(Nyungwe)



Conservation Success

10% park revenue →
local projects

\$9.1m for ~1,080
projects since 2005



Akagera National Park

- On the border with Tanzania
- Central Africa's largest protected wetland
- Last remaining savannah refuge in Rwanda
- 2.5 - 3h drive from Kigali



Ecological Crisis

- Post-1994 de-gazettement ($\pm 60\%$)
- 90% wildlife loss (poaching & habitat)
- Loss of lions and rhinos
- Human-Wildlife Conflict



Why Restore Akagera?



Why Restore Akagera?

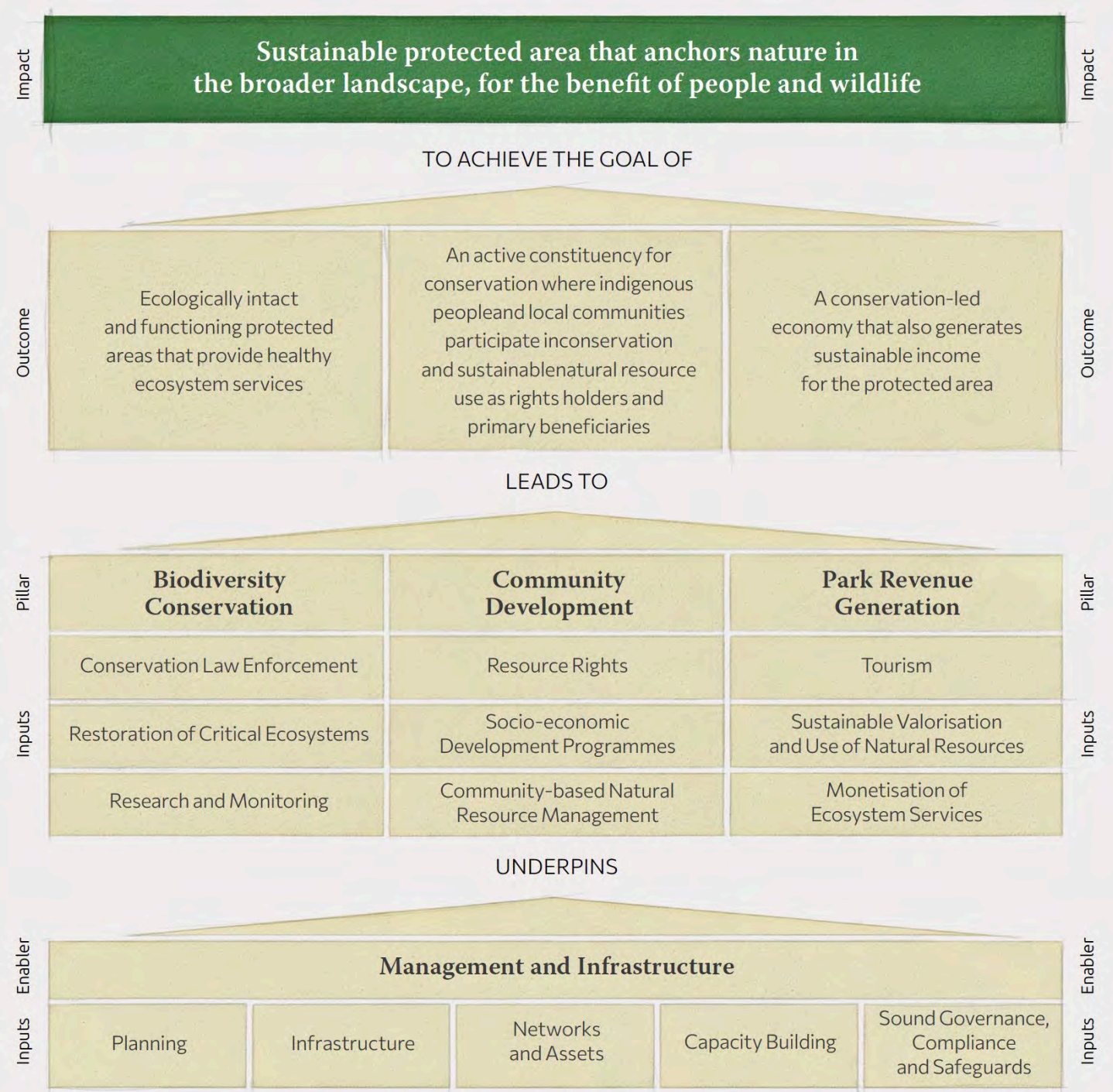


Why Restore Akagera?



Akagera
NATIONAL PARK
RWANDA

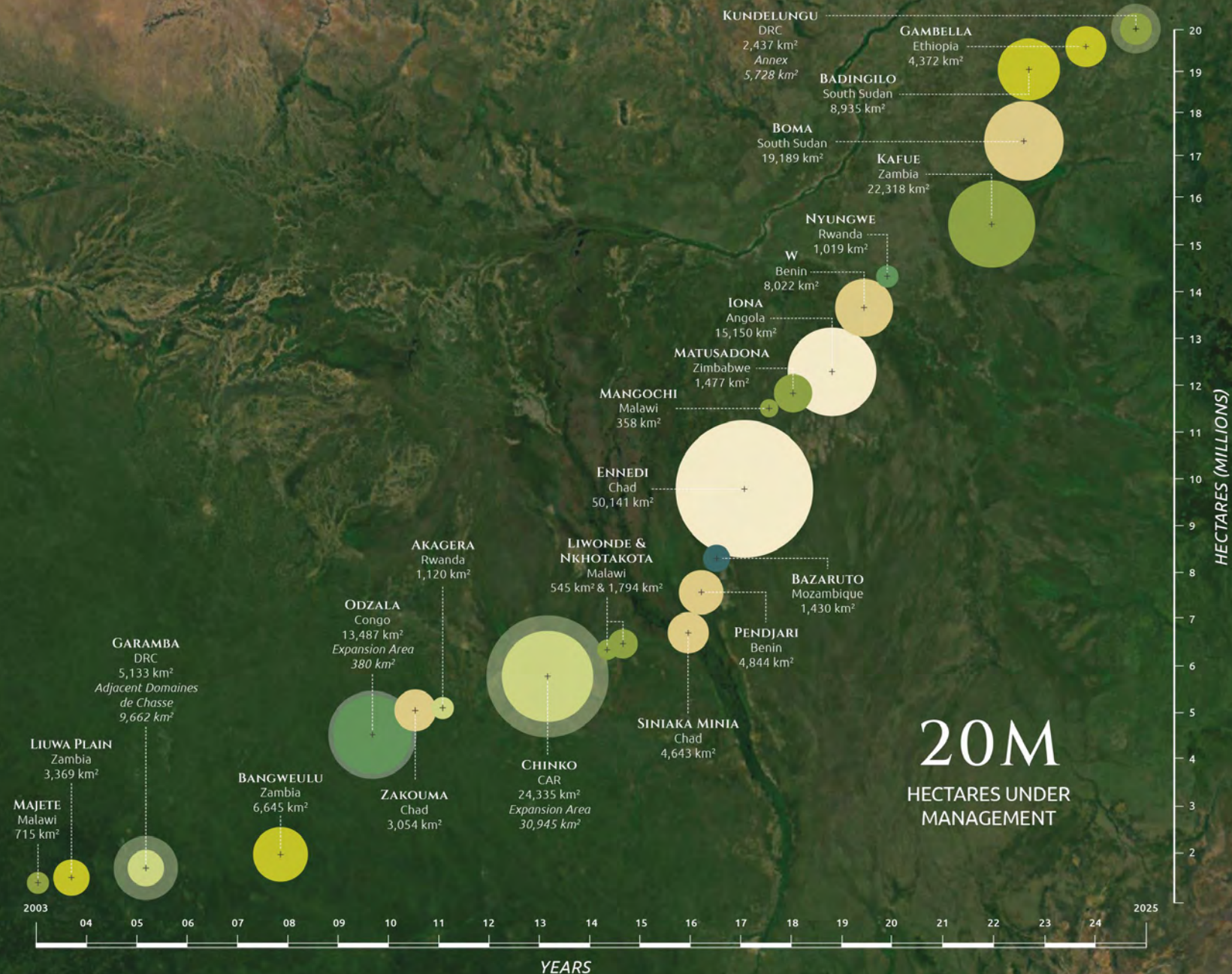
The African Parks Model



African Parks Growth

BIOMES:

- Miombo and Mixed Woodlands
- Forest Savannas
- Montane and Lowland Forests
- Sudanian Savannas
- Flooded Grasslands
- Arid Desert Ecosystems
- Coastal Forests and Mangroves



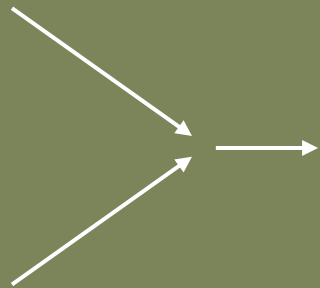
20M
HECTARES UNDER
MANAGEMENT

Akagera's Vision

“Rwanda’s only protected tropical savanna ecosystem is intact with a representative suite of species, achieved through biodiversity rehabilitation, sound conservation, and tourism development, bringing myriad benefits for local communities and Rwanda.”



How: Governance & Partnership



Akagera
Management
Company
(AMC)



How: Conservation Actions

- Electric fencing on western boundary
- Anti-poaching measures
- Species reintroductions
- Habitat restoration (removal of invasives, fire management)



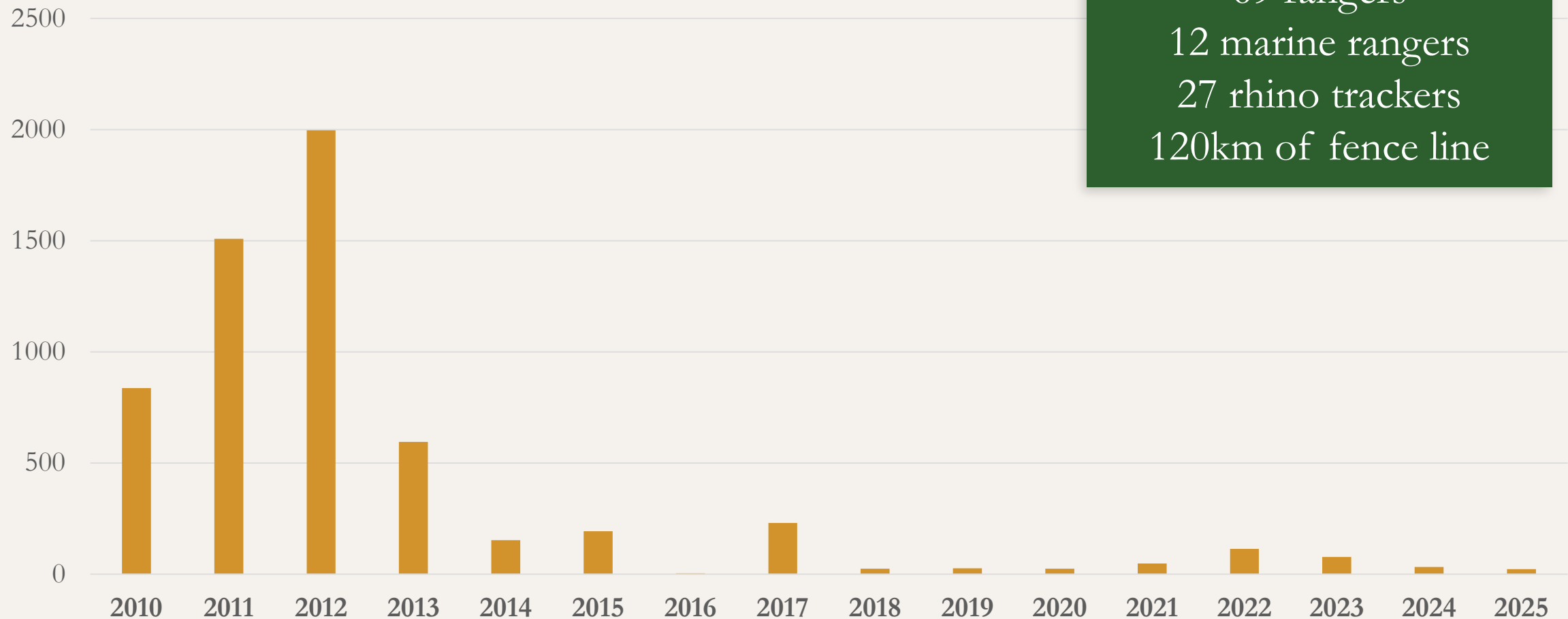
Outcomes: Ecological

- Wildlife recovery (11,000+ large mammals)
- Lions reintroduced (2015, 2017)
- Black rhinos (2017, 2019)
- White rhinos (2021, 2025)



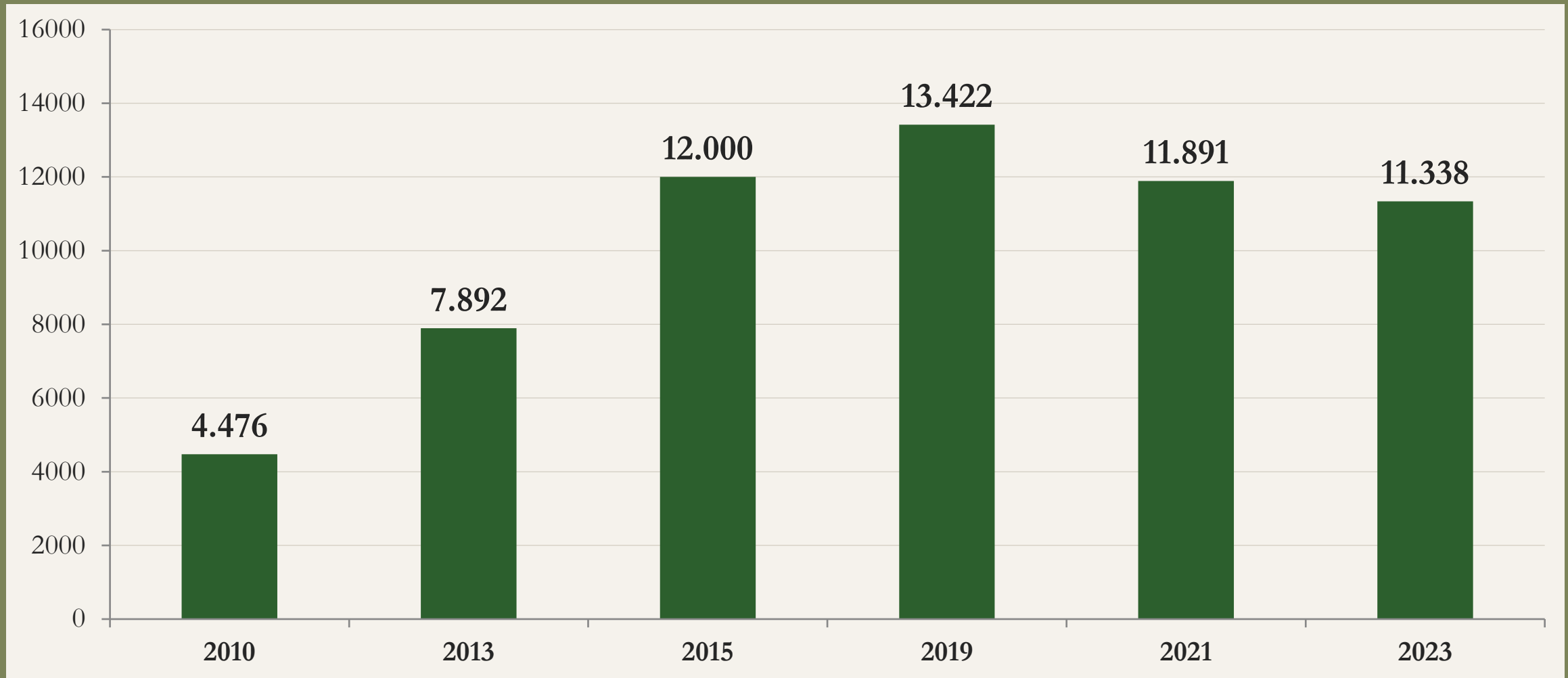
Since 2010 - no lion, rhino or elephant has been poached

Snares removed



69 rangers
12 marine rangers
27 rhino trackers
120km of fence line

Wildlife Population Growth



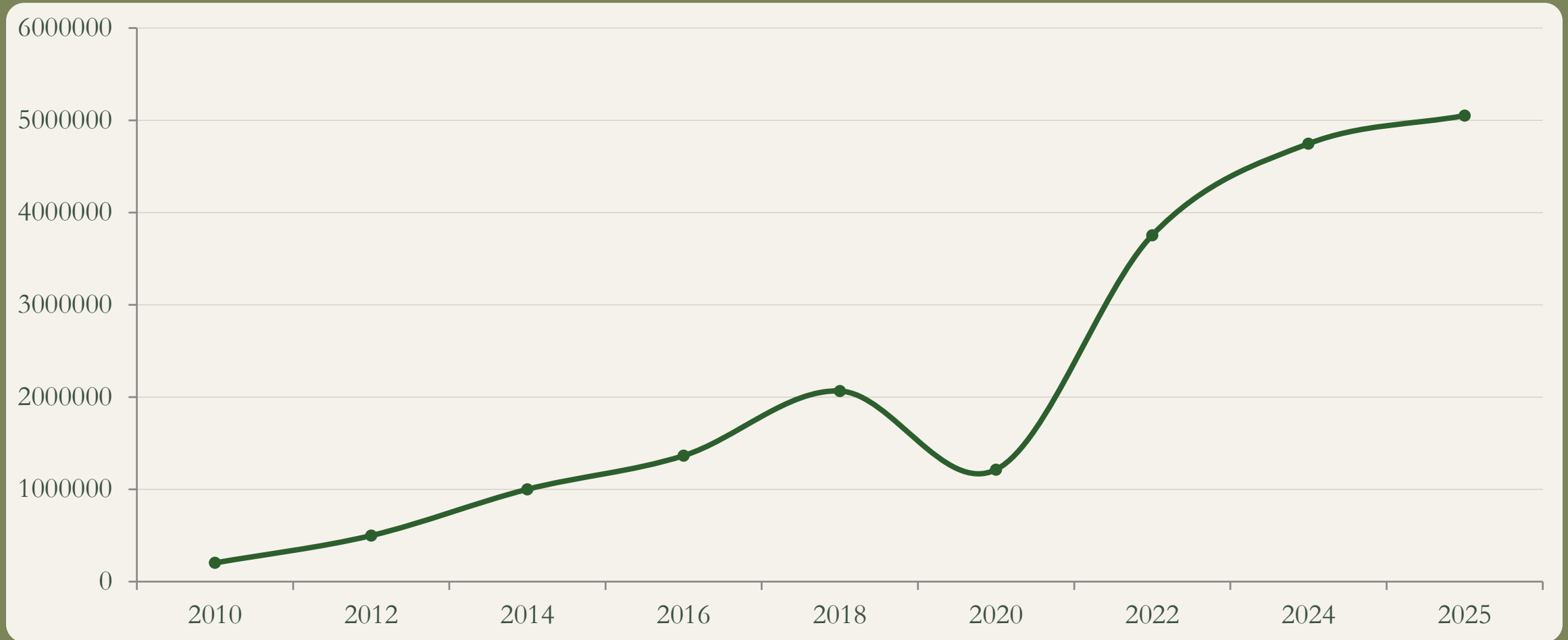
Aerial census data · 50% increase from 2010 to 2023

Outcomes: Economic & Social

- >\$5M annual revenue
- 51,000+ paying visitors/year
- ~60% domestic tourism
- Jobs & community benefits through procurement
- Tourism Revenue Sharing program
- Special Guarantee fund (5%)

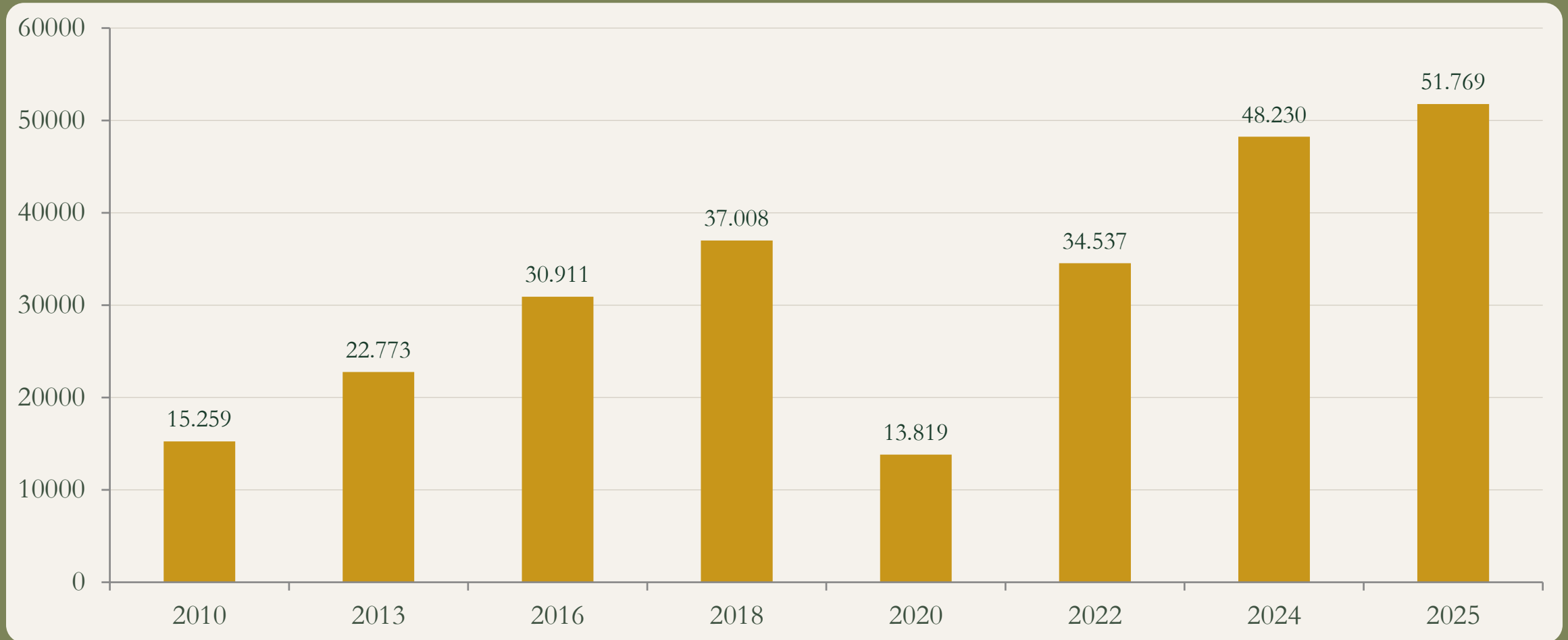


Commercial Revenue Growth



Revenue grew 25× from \$200K (2010) to \$5.06M (2025) · Park now 100% self-funded

Visitor Numbers



Visitors tripled from 15,000 (2010) to over 51,000 (2025) · COVID dip in 2020

Threats & Challenges

Dense Population Pressure

- ~500,000 people on W boundary
- Encroachment
- Limited fuel sources in region

Invasive Species & Wildfires

- Prickly pear, lantana, & water hyacinth
- Wildfires managed via firebreaks and community-led block burns

Small, Isolated Ecosystem

- Small area restricts wildlife movement & genetic diversity = vulnerability to disease and environmental change

Growing Tourism Demand

- Risk of unsustainable tourism practices.
- A Commercial Development Plan guides sustainable growth.

Opportunities

- Sustainable tourism growth (60% domestic tourism)
- Community livelihoods
- Gishanda Fish Farm
- African Conservation Academy



Lessons Learned



Lesson 1: Government partnership is foundational

Strong collaboration with the Rwandan government - through RDB and local and national leadership - created the enabling environment necessary.



Lesson 2: Tourism can finance conservation

Sustainable tourism transformed Akagera from 10% self-funded (2010) to operationally 100% self-funded (2025).

Takes time, requires right environment and the ability to reinvest into the project.



Lesson 3: Conservation and communities aligned

Communities surrounding the park are its greatest allies - when they benefit.

Revenue sharing, jobs, fish farms, and freelance guides turned neighbours into stakeholders.



Lesson 4: The work never stops



Key Takeaways



Akagera shows how degraded landscapes can be restored through

**GOOD
MANAGEMENT &
GOVERNANCE**

PARTNERSHIPS

REWILDING

**LONG-TERM
VISION**

As evidenced by the results below

50%

More wildlife
since 2010

25×

Revenue
growth

100%

Self-funded
today

0

Key species
poached

AMC Impact by Numbers



LOCAL IMPACT

\$5.9M

To local communities via wages & procurements since 2010

\$1.07M

Community Freelance Guide Cooperative earnings since 2014

326

Permanent employees as of 2025

\$18.8M

Total paid in salaries incl. RSSB contributions

NATIONAL IMPACT

\$8.7M

Taxes & social security contributions 2010–2025

\$4.7M

Revenue Sharing & Special Grant Fund since 2010

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

\$5.6M

Net Asset Value since 2010

\$130K

Gishanda Revenue since 2022

\$5.7M

Special Projects since 2015

821,555

Kg of Fish Harvested 2019–2025

TOURISM IMPACT

481,400

Paying visitors since 2010

\$33.2M

Total revenue generated since 2010

\$51.8M

Total Opex & Capex costs since 2010

11K

Students on Environmental Education programs since 2010

MURAKOZE

