

CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR THE LONG-TERM SURVIVAL OF CHEETAH IN NAMIBIA

Project Executive

**Ms Laurie Marker
Director
Cheetah Conservation Fund
P.O. Box 247
Windhoek
NAMIBIA
Phone: (264) 67 306225
Fax: (264) 67 303607
Email: cheeta@iafrica.com.na**

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), founded in 1990 has as its mission 'to secure habitats for the long term survival of cheetah and their ecosystems through multi-disciplined and integrated programmes of conservation, research and education.'

CCF's base of operations is in Namibia, which has the largest and one of the few sustainable populations of free-ranging cheetah in the world. The cheetah has a special problem compared to the other big cats, such as lion and leopard, which will steal their kill and kill young cheetahs. As a result of conflict with these and other predators, the cheetah is driven out of protected areas onto livestock farmlands. This results in approximately 95% of cheetah in Namibia living on commercial farmlands where they come into conflict with human and livestock interests. Approximately 70% of the total cheetah prey species (such as oryx and kudu) live wild on these commercial farmlands.

Therefore, the cheetah's survival depends on a total ecological system of farmland management, prey species management, and habitat stability. CCF's focus is to work with livestock farming communities in order to develop ways to reduce conflict. This is achieved by devising a conservation plan that secures habitat for the species while accommodating farmers' land use needs. CCF initiates scientific research programmes in areas such as cheetah population biology, cheetah ecology, cheetah health and reproduction and human impacts on the cheetah. The results of this research form a current database.

CCF researchers develop, test and promote alternative land management practices such as; non-lethal predator controls, relocation of problem cheetahs, and eco-tourism.

Additionally, CCF conducts both Namibian and International Education Programmes, to raise awareness of the cheetah's endangered status. These illustrate ways in which the species can be protected, and encourages worldwide support.

These successes have created an increased demand for all facets of CCF's activities. New issues and data analysis necessitates further scientific research and increased education programmes. CCF is a dynamic organisation and, as such, is prepared to meet new challenges as they arise.

II. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Cheetah Conservation Fund was founded in 1990 as a project within the International Wilderness Leadership Foundation (WILD), a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization in the United States. WILD helps coordinate the activities of CCF's international grass roots network and assists with communications, financial management, liaisons among principal donors and coordinates fundraising and promotions in the U.S. Within WILD, CCF has an active Executive Committee (US), which supports the work of CCF through fund raising.

In 1991, CCF became a Namibian Trust with a Namibian Board of Directors comprising leaders in the local community, business, agriculture and government. Additionally, there is an International Scientific Advisory Board, which plays an important role in planning and advising on research projects. The Director is assisted in the management and operations of CCF by a small core staff, short-term volunteers and students.

III. ACTIVITIES AND METHODS

CCF's International Research and Education Centre is the base for all CCF's activities. The Centre is located on three farms Elandsvreugde, Osonanga and CheetahView, totaling 15,300ha. The farm base is in prime cheetah habitat and a wildlife friendly area, with neighbouring farmers who believe in conservation ethics. This ensures a large prey population, which is important for the cheetah population. CCF is an active member of the Waterberg Conservancy, which encompasses over 200,000 ha of private farmland surrounding the Waterberg Plateau Park - a national reserve dedicated to rare and endangered species. The Conservancy's farmers co-operatively manage the Conservancy's wildlife for long-term sustainability. This in turn provides habitat and prey base for the cheetah.

CCF is currently involved in the following areas of research, conservation and education:

1. Conducting field research to learn more about the biology and overall health of Namibia's Free-ranging cheetah population and gaining information about the animals' movements through the farmlands.
2. Identifying key components in farmland ecosystems, including habitat and prey base that are necessary to sustain healthy cheetah populations.
3. Evaluating current livestock practices and their impact on cheetah and addressing conflicts between farmers and predators in order to develop a conservation and management strategy that benefits both humans and cheetah.
4. Researching, evaluating and implementing various non-lethal livestock management techniques that will assist farmers in predator control, thus reducing conflicts and the indiscriminate removal of cheetahs.
5. Conducting conservation education programmes and teacher training in Namibian schools, increasing awareness about cheetah and the predator's role in the ecosystem and environment. Encouraging students of all ages to participate in cheetah conservation efforts.
6. Expanding CCF's Research and Education Centre to assist in accomplishing CCF's mission.
6. Adapting model programmes developed in Namibia for use in other countries by co-ordinating work with wildlife officials and other non-government organisations around the world.
8. Developing an international network that financially aids CCF with accomplishing its goals.
9. Creating and implementing eco-tourism programmes that financially assist CCF to achieve its objectives.
10. Bringing global awareness to the plight of the cheetah by developing links to other organisations and individuals.

IV. PROGRESS DURING 1999

A. Developments at CCF's Research and Education Centre

1. CCF Renovation Project

CCF's rebuilding is progressing rapidly under the direction of CCF's General Manager Dr. Bruce Brewer. Otjiwarongo firm, Stechman Construction, and Cape Thatch Namibia have completed the staff dormitory, the senior staff house/office and the Visitor Centre by the end of 1999. The new Visitor's Centre is currently being used as the interim education centre, main office and clinic and laboratory.

There has been substantial progress on the Research Centre. The majority of the re-construction and building is complete, as is the pole framework for the thatch roof. Thatching will begin in mid-

January 2000, after which the final construction will take place. Construction has begun on the re-building for the Education Centre and work will continue after the new year.

Windhoek firm Soltec has installed our photovoltaic (solar) electric power plant and solar hot water heater for the dormitory and the senior staff house. CCF farm staff has assisted with all of the above as well as rehabilitating the Centre's water supply system.

The renovation project has been sponsored by two grants from the Haas Family Philanthropic Fund. An outright grant supported the two staff accommodations and a matching grant supports the other structures including the Visitors Centre, the Education Centre and Research Centre. The matching grant has been met through donations from a few generous American supporters combined with donations from Namibia firms and individuals. Total expenditure on the five new or renovated buildings is estimated at N\$2.8 million. These funds are restricted and not for general operating.

2. CCF Research Farms

Haying has taken place on Elandsvreugde's 1,600 ha hay field in cooperation with several contractors. CCF receives a percentage of the hay baled.

One of the old houses on farm Cheetah View has had some rehabilitation including general cleanup, constructing a bathroom, shower and toilet, wiring it for electricity, and painting. The house has been furnished to house up to 12 students, 2 professors and has two small classrooms. One of the main dams on Cheetah View has been enlarged.

A 2.5km aerodrome was built at CCF's Centre by CCF board member Carl Hilker. The aerodrome will be used primarily for CCF's aerial radio-telemetry research, but also by special tour groups visiting the Centre.

B. Research Activities

1. Population Biology

The Fund conducts field research to gather data on distribution, behaviour, biology, demographics and overall health of the cheetah population. Farmers participate in CCF's research through live capture of cheetah on their farms and assist in collecting biological samples and measurements, ear tagging, radio collaring, and release and report other cheetah/livestock interactions. CCF's director, Laurie Marker, and research assistant, Bonnie Schumann, work directly with the farmers and all cheetah issues. Other CCF staff and volunteers assist.

Between 1 January and 31 December 1999, CCF has worked on 39 (25.14) cheetahs, of which 18 (10.8) were released, back into the wild. Of these, 7 (5.2) were radio-collared and 11 (6.5) were ear-tagged. Multiple work-ups were performed on several of these cheetahs. In addition, three males marked during the period of reporting were also recaptured and re-released. One farmer caught six (6.0) cheetahs, as part of the National Carnivore Monitoring Programme's tag-and-release.

A male cheetah originally radio-collared by CCF in March 1997 and relocated. The collar stopped functioning in 1998 and it was assumed that the cat was dead. This cat was re-caught in March 1999 and re-collared and returned to his original area to be monitored by a MET biologist. In October, he was caught in a gin-trap and his front leg was badly injured, resulting in the decision to euthanise him. A full necropsy was performed and the testicles were sent to the Wildlife Breeding Resource Centre in South Africa and the sperm from this dead cheetah was collected and banked. CCF had already collected sperm from this cheetah prior to release.

In August, a member of the Nagorangombe Conservancy caught an unmarked male cheetah as well as a previously tagged cheetah. Biological collections on both these cheetahs were performed in the field so that other conservancy members could attend, in addition, one of the males was brought back to CCF and sperm was collected. Both were released on site. In October, a female cheetah was radio collared after Round River Students, who had been monitoring the trap, caught her on CCF's farm Cheetahview.

In March, a farmer caught a female cheetah, originally tagged by CCF in March 1997 at the Neudamm Agriculture College as a seven-month old along with its mother and three other siblings. The cat was re-examined and released by the same farmer. In October, CCF collected the carcass of a cheetah that was run over on the main road to Windhoek, approximately 50 kilometers north of Windhoek. This cheetah was one of the male siblings of the above female also tagged in March 1997 at the Neudamm Agricultural College, providing valuable information on cheetah movements. In September, the Neudamm Agricultural College participated in another tag and release of a female cheetah they captured on the college's farm. The biological collection was performed at the college so that students and staff could attend and participate in the research.

CCF recently dealt with two cheetahs, a female and her cub, both of which broke their necks in unusual accidents. The female cheetah, attempting to hunt an antelope, was found dead in the game fence by the farmer. He found a young cub by the dead female, and set a trap cage to catch the cub. The cub subsequently panicked in the trap cage and broke his neck. A post-mortem revealed extensive damage to two vertebrae in the neck. Cheetahs often injure themselves in trap cages, but injuries are usually superficial, consisting of cuts and scrapes, except where poor trap design can result in e.g. broken legs. This was the first time CCF has dealt with this type of lethal injury.

One of the female cheetahs CCF had been radio tracking since 1995 was killed and its collar and skin were hidden in the farmer's barn. CCF, with the farmer's permission, found the collar using radio-telemetry and the farmer had no idea how the cheetah was killed or who hid the collar and skin in his barn.

One radio-collared cheetah, belonging to a coalition of three males CCF tracked since 1995 was shot by a farmer in the Waterberg area. The cheetah was shot for suspected livestock predation, however, radio-tracking data shows that the cheetahs spent minimal time on the farm concerned and that was the first time they had been on the property for at least six months. Unfortunately the farmer did not return the carcass, but the radio collar was returned several months later.

CCF also received information that a radio-collared female cheetah with three six-month old cubs was shot in a game camp. The cheetah had been collared in December 1998. The ear-tag was returned to CCF, but the radio collar was not returned. It is assumed that the cubs died, as they were too young to survive on their own.

An ear-tagged cheetah (1.0) was reported shot. The cheetah was tagged when it was 14 months old, in 1998. The cheetah had not been responsible for any livestock losses, but due to this farmer's leopard problem, he shot the cheetah. We have since spent quite a bit of time with this farmer and he has joined the Large Carnivore Management Forum.

One of the dead cheetahs dealt with was a female originally radio-collared in 1993 by CCF. This female had three eight-month cubs (1.2) which were held at CCF, as they were not old enough for release back into the wild. Two (2.0) five-month old cubs caught without an adult and not able to be released back into the wild were housed at CCF. All five of these non-releasable cheetahs were placed on loan on Namibian guest farms.

Four cheetahs that were confiscated by MET were held at CCF. The three males, two years old, are not releasable due to the having been in captivity since they were young, but the female was radio-collared

and released after minor wounds were treated. Another male cheetah was donated to CCF and is non-releasable. This cheetah has been in captivity since he was approximately four months old, living on a chain in a farmer's garden, prior to being collected by CCF.

At the end of 1999 CCF is holding 10 (6.4) non-releasable cheetahs at their holding facility. Of these, 3 (1.2) are long-term CCF resident cheetahs; 3 (3.0) are adult cheetahs that were confiscated by MET, they have been in captivity since the age of nine months; 3 (1.2) are two years old that have been in captivity since they were seven months old; 1 (1.0) is a young male that has been in captivity since he was approximately four months old, living on a chain in a farmers garden, prior to being collected by CCF. None of these animals are suitable for release back onto Namibian farmland. A further 13 (9.4) cheetahs are currently out on loan to various guest farms.

In 1999, CCF placed a total of 11 (7.4) non-releasable cheetahs on loan to two Namibian guest farms. A recent permit has been submitted to MET to export 4 (2.2) cheetahs to the Cincinnati Zoo in the USA as a part of the AZA's Species Survival Plan. It is currently unknown if an export permit will be granted as due to new government policies, it is no longer possible to move cheetahs to captive facilities outside Namibia, where they could enter captive breeding programmes. Captive breeding of cheetah in Namibia is also prohibited. It is thus unfortunate that none of these valuable, healthy young cheetahs may ever have the opportunity to reproduce in captivity. CCF supports the management of captive populations and captive breeding of endangered species as a conservation tool and has voiced this opinion at various meetings, such as the National Carnivore Forum, despite stern opposition.

2. Health and Reproduction

CCF collects biological samples to assist in evaluating the health of the cheetah population. A full set of measurements, blood samples and skin biopsies are taken on all animals as well as semen samples from male animals. The information gathered from the sperm is used to monitor the genetics, virology and morphology of the species and to contribute to a genome resource bank. CCF collaborates with other researchers and institutions from the United States, Europe, Namibia and South Africa. This collaboration has allowed experts in genetics, reproduction, veterinary medicine, pathology and conservation to work with CCF thus expanding the use of this valuable data. These studies are on going.

To date, over 400 cheetah have been sampled and an extensive database has been developed, with new data continually being added. During the past year, samples were collected on 40 (26.14) cheetahs. Eleven (8.3) other necropsies were conducted and tissue samples collected for pathological analysis and include: 2 (2.0) adult cheetahs trophy hunted; 2 (1.1) 6 month old cubs were deliberately run over by a farmer; 2 (2.0) that had been tagged by CCF in November, 1998 and shot for suspected livestock predation, although their stomach contents contained kudu meat and hide; 1(0.1) cheetah was euthanised due to extensive septic injuries on her hips caused by being confined for an extended period in a trap cage; 1 (1.0) adult cheetah was killed near a goat-pen, a goat's ear-tag was found inside the stomach on necropsy; 1 (0.1) died from capture complications due to dehydration after the farmer left the cat in the capture cage for too many days before contacting CCF; 1 (1.0) adult that was euthanised after being caught in a gin-trap; and 1 (1.0) cub that was euthanised with a broken neck from a capture cage.

3. Cheetah Ecology

At the end of 1999, 9 (5.4) cheetah are radio-collared in CCF's research area encompassing approximately 15,000 km² in the Waterberg- Otjiwarongo region of the north-central part of Namibia. During the past six years of this research, over 40 cheetah have been collared. These radio-collared animals have actually provided information on more than just the animal collared, as some of the

females have cubs, and most of the males are part of coalitions (male groups). Radio-collared animals are tracked weekly by fixed-wing aeroplane.

Radio-telemetry is a powerful tool and is important to CCF's work with the farming community. The data collected from the tracking is used to show the farmers the actual movements of the cheetah through their land. The information collected also illustrates where cheetahs are in relation to the farmer's calving herds, indicating areas on farms that attract cheetahs and the duration of time spent in an area. Furthermore, it demonstrates to farmers that cheetahs range over large distances and that an individual animal may be seen on many farms.

CCF's radio-tracking programme continues to shed new light on home-range sizes and cheetah behaviour. Each collar brings new information. Currently this data is being analysed for publication.

a. Leopard Ecology

Along with the cheetah, CCF is currently radio-tracking 1 (1.0) leopard and 2 (2.0) caracal in order to understand interspecies habitat use and movements. The leopard radio-telemetry forms part of the Waterberg Conservancy and CCF's leopard research efforts.

For the past year, the leopards CCF has been tracking are ones that have under-gone Conditioned Taste Aversion (CTA). The first leopard to under-go this research, an old female, was released at the end of 1998. She was re-captured in June after killing a calf. This cat was placed in captivity and shortly after gave birth to cubs.

The second leopard to be released as part of CCF's pilot study on CTA in large African carnivores was found dead on the farm where he was originally caught and released. Scavengers had consumed most of the carcass so the cause of death was not determined. The remains of the carcass were found about 500 m from a cattle kraal with calves, but the farmer was not experiencing predator problems. A third leopard is currently undergoing CTA trials at CCF.

One of CCF's radio-collared leopard (1.0) that had not under-gone CTA trials, was recaptured after killing a calf and was moved to Africat, where it had been previously held for an extended period. In addition, a leopard too young to radio collar was tagged and released on a neighbouring farm. One necropsy was performed on a leopard shot for livestock predation.

4. Ecosystem Research

Assessment of the Namibian farmland's ecosystem for the long-term habitat viability for the cheetah is currently being conducted. The farmlands support a rich prey base, as 70% of the country's game inhabits these areas. CCF assesses the farmland ecosystem and monitors the wildlife prey base available to predators in CCF's primary research area. Several techniques are used for these assessments and include ongoing research and monitoring.

This research is conducted in co-operation with members of the Waterberg Conservancy. As a model for the Conservancy, CCF began an ongoing wildlife-monitoring programme on its farm, designed to understand game densities, movement, demographics, and habitat utilisation. The monitoring involves conducting visual road counts of game at regularly measured points throughout the farm at various times of the day, tracking and counting spoor, categorising vegetation types, densities and distribution and soil analysis. CCF also conducts regular full moon 24hour waterhole counts on its farms. EarthWatch volunteers assist with this research.

These methods estimate which animals are utilising CCF's farm. Furthermore, they should indicate, as a percentage, the utilisation of the various sample areas within the farm, according to species

identified. Information gathered from these results will be used to identify areas and patterns of utilisation of the land by wildlife. It will provide valuable information leading to wildlife farming management decisions within the conservancy. This game count project has been on-going for the past 3 years and will continue. Currently, CCF's Don Muroua is working in his B-tech and will be analysing this data for his thesis.

Under the direction of Dr. Richard Jeo, professor from Round River Conservation Studies, a number of ecological studies were initiated with his students. Eight experimental plots, each one-hectare in size, were created to study the effect of management practices on bush encroachment.

Along with this, the students conducted general vegetation mapping and baseline carnivore and ungulate surveys on Cheetah View.

The Waterberg Conservancy once again held a full moon waterhole count during August. CCF hosted the waterhole count, with more than 80 volunteers from around the country. Volunteer counters overnight at CCF's Centre and are presented an evening slide show explaining the information required from counters. The waterhole count provides an estimate of populations and density of various game species on the farms of the Waterberg Conservancy. The count also provides information on group sizes and population demographics, all vital to a long-term monitoring program. For the second year, CCF's volunteer Isabelle Dutiot from France compiled the waterhole count results. This is the fifth count completed in the Waterberg Conservancy.

5. Human Impacts on Cheetah

Livestock loss to cheetahs is an economic and emotional issue. While farmers perceive cheetahs as having an excessive economic impact on their livestock and wild game industries, many Namibian farmers have done little, from a management perspective, to alleviate their problems in a non-lethal manner. By addressing the farmer's conflicts with predators, CCF is devising a conservation and management strategy that benefits both humans and cheetahs, thus ensuring the species' survival on livestock farms. Through direct contact with individuals, farmer association meetings, a bi-annual Farmer's Newsletter and survey forms, CCF informs the community of its progress and encourages it to remain actively involved in all aspects of its programmes.

CCF made presentations at Kamanjab, Immenhof, Otjiwarongo, and Platveld Farmer's Associations during the year. The Otjiwarongo Farmer's Association held their meeting at CCF to see first hand our facilities and research programmes. The opportunity to exchange information on CCF's activities and problems experienced by farmers with predators is invaluable. CCF once again attended the Otjiwarongo Show. CCF volunteers took turns operating the stall and sharing information on CCF's work with the public and many farmers took time to exchange information.

During August, two Carnivore Information Workshops created a forum for exchanging information on carnivores and carnivore conservation between farmers, NGO's and other interested parties. Co-sponsors of the workshops included the Namibian Professional Hunting Association (NAPHA), the Namibian Agricultural Union (NAU) and the Cheetah Conservation Fund. CCF hosted the first meeting in the Otjiwarongo area at its Research and Education Centre. The second meeting was held in Windhoek at the Country Club. Both meetings provided lively and constructive discussions following presentations by a variety of people.

Individuals working on Namibian carnivores, including Dr. Flip Stander, Lisa Hanssen, Harold Foerster and Laurie Marker, as well as farmers Harry Schneider-Waterberg and Ralf Hoffman and NAPHA representative Jochen Hein, described their work and results. NAPHA representatives Frank Heger and Marina Lamprech facilitated the meetings.

Slide presentations by specialists from Drs. Gus Mills and Berty van Hensbergen from South Africa. Dr. Mills, a scientist for the South African National Parks and Head of the Carnivore Conservation Group for the Endangered Wildlife Trust, provided particularly valuable information on predators from his years of research and experience working with carnivore issues throughout Africa. Dr. van Hensbergen, a professor of Nature Conservation at the University of Stellenbosch and specialist in wildlife statistics, dealt with options and values in wildlife management, and provided anyone involved in wildlife management with much to think about.

a. Livestock Guarding Dog Programme

CCF's Livestock Guarding Dog Programme has continued to grow with over 70 Anatolian Shepherd Livestock Guarding Dogs being donated to farmers to place with livestock. Livestock guarding dogs provide a method of non-lethal predator control that protects the farmer's livelihood while also conserving the predator species. The dogs continue to be monitored by CCF in a bi-annual evaluation of adult dogs and monthly evaluation of puppies for the first six months. CCF has developed a Livestock Guarding Dog and Livestock Research Programme at its Centre, and continues as a breeding facility for these dogs. Long-term volunteer, Susan Deshaies and Don Muroua, CCF's Community Development Officer, are responsible for the Livestock Guarding Dog programme

The Livestock Guarding Dog programme in the eastern communal area was initiated in 1996. During the past six-months, three puppies were placed, one dog was pulled because it was not doing its job properly and placed in a pet situation, and one of the dogs died due to secondary poisoning. Presently, there are a total of 12 dogs working in this communal area. During the year, six of the dogs (5.1) were neutered, which is necessary to ensure that the Anatolian breed is not mixed with local breeds.

A workshop took place for these dogs owners to develop a strong communication channel between themselves and CCF. The workshop was organised by Don Muroua, CCF's Community Development Officer and Information Ranger of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Mr. Samuel Upora. The farmers spent four days at CCF's Wilderness Camp discussing many issues from the raising of the Anatolian puppies to a perfect working dog. Individual owners gave a report back on how their dogs were raised and how they are currently performing. The communal farmers also had the opportunity to visit the Waterberg Plateau Park. During their visit to the Plateau, the farmers were exposed to the different conservation issues affecting Namibia's economy, which directly and indirectly affect their daily livelihood.

Twenty-five LSGD puppies were born in three litters during the past four months. A neighbour's dog as a part of CCF's breeding programme produced one of the litters, and the puppies were placed in October. The other two litters were born at CCF and will be placed in January/February 2000.

An in-depth evaluation of CCF's Livestock Guarding Dog Programme was undertaken with the help of research assistants Lien Malan and Yonida Corteze, a Tuft's veterinary student. Results are currently being analysed, but the over-all evaluation was positive towards the programme and how the dogs are working.

b. Conditioned Taste Aversion

Research on Conditioned Taste Aversion (CTA) continues but is progressing slowly with interesting results. With only two animals to compare at present, it will take a great deal more time to analyse the success of the project.

During five months of the reporting period, a young mature male leopard underwent aversion training and was released at place of capture with a radio-collar. Currently, trials continue with a two-year old male leopard.

The first leopard that underwent CTA trials last year was recaptured this year. She had caught a two-day old calf on the same farm she was originally caught and re-released on, 6 months earlier. The old age of this female could be a causative factor in the aversion treatment not working.

In past research trials, CTA was shown to be an effective non-lethal predator control method. Predators, such as cheetahs, jackals, leopards, lions and hyena are baited using livestock, which has been laced with a substance (lithium chloride) that makes the predator ill when eating the bait. This teaches the predator that livestock is "poisonous," creating an aversion for that prey.

c. Community Outreach

Don Muroua, CCF's Community Development Officer continues to work closely with the Namibian communal farmers. CCF believes that conservation programmes and efforts will not succeed if the targeted communities are not benefiting from it. With this in mind, CCF has been actively involved in the development of conservation programmes in the Otjozondjupa and Omaheke Region. The communal farmers in these regions are dependent on their livestock for their daily livelihood therefore livestock losses through predation has a large impact on their income generation. Predators therefore become problems. The main predators causing problems in these regions are the black-backed jackal, leopard, caracal lynx, wild dog, and cheetah. Livestock and predator conflicts in these regions are very common, because there is not enough wild game left to support the predators in the regions. CCF assisted with the establishment of a communal farmer's conservation group to promote conservation ethics and to facilitate cooperation between the farmers and the different conservation organizations.

In July, the Namibia Communal Wildlife Conservation Group (NCWCG) was established to promote conservation ethic and to facilitate cooperation between the farmers and the different conservation organizations. CCF played a very important role in the establishment of the group.

CCF was asked to facilitate two workshops for the farm workers of the Waterberg and Ovipuka Conservancies. The goal of the workshops was to promote general conservation ethics, introduce them to predator and cheetah conservation programmes, to inform the workers how Conservancies work and why, and to motivate the farm workers to be active stakeholders in the conservation efforts initiated by the conservancies. Twenty-four farm workers representing 13 conservancy member farms attended these workshops. The workshops were informative and were conducted in a participatory manner to encourage and motivate all participants to be active in all activities exercised.

The workshop revealed farm workers were not well informed about the aims and objectives of the conservancies, and why they were established. And for this reason, the workers did not understand the role they have to play within the conservancy. Farm workers had a problem in understanding why the predators sometimes prey on their livestock. Over all, the workers were well informed about the importance of wildlife conservation. Informing the participants about the importance, aims, and objectives of a conservancy highlighted the workshops' success.

CCF was invited to share information regarding cheetah at the Okakarara Agriculture and Industrial show. The turnout at CCF booth was overwhelming, especially with communal farmers who showed interest in our livestock guarding dog program.

d. Namibian Professional Hunters Association

In February, several members of CCF's board of directors met with NAPHA's executive board to discuss issues arising from a paper CCF presented at a cheetah symposium in South Africa. CCF presented the lack of cooperation by NAPHA members in the Large Carnivore Monitoring project, a NAPHA member objected. A positive outcome occurred from this meeting in that consensus was reached to hold a public

meeting to educate NAPHA members and other landowners in their role in cheetah conservation programmes necessary to support sustainable use of cheetahs. Two meetings were jointly sponsored in August.

e. Large Carnivore Management Forum

CCF regularly attends meetings of the Large Carnivore Management Forum initiated by MET. The Group consists of members from MET, NGO's, farmers and veterinarians concerned with carnivore conservation. The group meets every eight weeks to discuss issues pertaining to carnivore conservation in Namibia. Issues that have been dealt with in the last 6 months includes, legislation on carnivores, from captive holding to trophy hunting, the national census for cheetah, developing a cooperative display for the Windhoek Show, and other predator issues.

The 14th Large Carnivore Management Forum meeting was held at CCF in January. Over 40 members and farmers attended the meeting from the Waterberg area. Contributions from the farmers proved to be valuable to achieving the Forum's objectives. At the Forum meeting, CCF presented posters and a summary of their research programmes initiated in 1991, followed by a tour of their facilities.

The LCMF collaborated on a detailed exhibit for the Windhoek Show in October. The exhibit highlighted various issues dealing with carnivore conservation, as well as the research being conducted by Forum members. Information on the Large Carnivore Monitoring Project, one of the projects undertaken by the Forum, brought the public up to date with this aspect of research. CCF staff put a great deal of time into assisting with this exhibit.

In 1998, CCF received grants from WWF-US and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to support a workshop on cheetah census and survey techniques and analysis. As of yet, this workshop has not been conducted due to lack of willingness on MET's part to invite outside specialist, which is one of the requirements of using the grant funds. But the farmers meeting in August in cooperation with the Namibian Agriculture Union (NAU) and the Namibian Professional Hunters Association (NAPHA) laid the groundwork for the need to explore more ways to census large carnivores.

f. Waterberg Conservancy and CANAM

CCF continues as an active member of the Waterberg Conservancy. CCF's Director serves on two of the sub-committees and was nominated to the executive board of the Conservancy Association of Namibia (CANAM). CANAM is the umbrella organisation for conservancies in Namibia. Conservancies encourage sustainable utilisation of natural resources through co-operative management, based on sound conservation principles. One of the major issues being addressed by both the Waterberg Conservancy and CANAM is gazetting law officiating conservancies. This is being undertaken as a part of the new Wildlife and Environment Legislation Act, which is being written currently by MET. Recently, a CANAM meeting was held with MET representatives to discuss game monitoring methods by each of the Conservancies. CCF presented the Waterberg Conservancies water-hole count results.

During the past six months, the Waterberg Conservancy has continued to be involved in tourism initiatives for the region and are actively developing a Master Plan for the Conservancy. CCF's research collaborators, Dr's Hu Berry, Gus Mills, and Berty van Hensbergen attended a Conservancy meeting to provide guidance on Conservancy research methods. Dr. Berry subsequently conducted a Master Planning meeting for the Conservancy.

As a part of the Master Plan, it has been recognised that the farm workers are a very valuable resource and need more conservation training. CCF has been asked to assist in this training. A

workshop was conducted by CCF's educators, Don Muroua and Matti Nghikembua, in July at CCF's Wilderness Camp for 28 of the Conservancies farm workers from five farms.

CCF brought four zoo tour groups into the Conservancy in August, September and December. Groups spent two nights at the Conservancy Guest Homes and visited CCF. Several of the TV crews filming at CCF also stayed in Conservancy guest homes.

C. Education Activities

1. School and Community Education

Public education and the development of an active grassroots constituency are integral components of the overall cheetah conservation programme. CCF is educating farmers, teachers and the public about the need and methods to conserve Namibia's rich biodiversity and the role of the cheetah and other predators in healthy ecosystems. Public education and the development of national pride in the cheetah are critical to its survival in Namibia.

During the year, CCF visited eight schools, totaling nearly 2,000 learners. Besides CCF's primary and secondary educational programmes, a presentation on conservation as a career choice was conducted to grade 10 students and a more in-depth programme conducted for an environmental club. Most of this year's programmes were conducted with nature clubs at schools, and with individual classrooms, and not a massive school assembly.

Using CCF's cross curricular teacher's resource guide entitled *Cheetahs: A predators role in the ecosystem*, teacher training workshops were presented to 15 Peace Corp teacher trainers and 36 teacher students at the Windhoek College of Education.

Four of the 13 Geo-Cheetahs released to schools in other parts of the world last year returned to Namibia. The Geo-Cheetahs were to return to the Namibian classrooms after a period of one year. Letters have been sent to the Namibian schools in order to inform them about the arrival of their Geo. cheetah.

Various presentations were done at official functions including two workshops with youth official from various regions, and an environmental workshop with officials from the Ministry of Youth and Sports, at Waterberg Plateau Park's Okatjikona Environmental Education Center.

In February, CCF was invited to attend the launching of the Kunene Sub South Regional Youth Forum which represented over 50 participants from various district youth forums from the region and officials from the National Youth Council in the Ministry of Youth and Sports. CCF's presentation emphasised the importance of our environment and encouraged the youth to take part in conservation efforts in the region.

CCF attended an environmental education-training workshop at Okatjikona Environmental Education Centre in May by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The 22 participants in the workshop included regional youth officers, MET officials and IRDNC and provided training for regional youth officers of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. CCF's slide presentation highlighted the importance of youth and conservation

In May, Matti and volunteer Meredith Brown attended a meeting for the Namibia Environmental Education Network (NEEN). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the future of NEEN. The participants reached an agreement that NEEN should not dissolve and came up with various suggestions on how the organisation should operate, and possibilities to house it within another organisation. A new NEEN steering committee was selected, on which Matti was elected.

An official book donation function was held by CCF at the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture head offices in Windhoek. The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, Ms Loini Katoma opened the function, which was attended by CCF staff and the education directors from various school districts around the country. A total of 50 copies of CCF books were donated to school libraries and active environmental clubs throughout the country. The book donation idea was that of CCF's main donor, Mr. Bobbie Haas, who has supported CCF's Centre re-building project. He donated 50 copies of his recently published wildlife photography book titled "*A Vision of Africa*". CCF additionally donated copies of CCF's Teacher's Resource Guide, *Cheetah: A Predators Role in the Ecosystem*, *The Orphan Calf and the Magical Cheetah*, and *Cheetah Survival on Namibian Farmlands*. A CCF presentation was also done in order to familiarise the officials of the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture about CCF's programmes with the schools.

CCF assisted in the organisation of a World Environment Day celebration on 5 June, at Paresis Secondary School in Otjiwarongo along with the Regional Youth Officer of Otjiwarongo in the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The day's events were opened by the Mayor of Otjiwarongo, and were celebrated with various environmental activities and presentations. Among the participants were members of the Otjiwarongo District Youth Forum, Catholic Youth Choir, Paresis Environmental and Science clubs, learners from Primary schools: Karundu, Spes Bona and Rogate, the staff of CCF, Ministry of Health and Social services official, and an official from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. A total of 300 participants turned out for the event. The Namibia Dairies and Namibia Breweries sponsored food and beverages for the participants.

2. CCF Education Centre and Wilderness Camp

CCF's Research and Education Centre provides on-site public education and student training to local students of all ages and foreign university students. It allows CCF to expose them to integrated studies on the cheetah's habitat and prey, and the space to demonstrate non-lethal livestock/predator management techniques. CCF's Education Centre and Wilderness Camp hosts school and community groups, exposing them to different environmental education activities, which include a Nature Trail, games and other environmental awareness activities. Learners and visitors from various regions visit the Centre.

The majority of CCF's educational programmes during the year have taken place at CCF's Centre. The Center continues to receive visitors from schools, regional youth groups, youth officials, tourists, teachers, health officials, farmers, conservation and agriculture extension officials, students and the general public.

During February 20 learners from various grades from the Paresis Secondary School's Science and Environmental club visited the Wilderness camp. The learners were exposed to ideas on how to identify environmental problems and to act on them as well as the cheetah and it's ecosystem.

A group of 50 primary grade learners from the Walvisbay Primary School came for a day visit to learn about the cheetah and familiarise themselves with CCF's projects in April. And in June, 48 learners who were the winners of the different categories in the Art for the Earth Competition, organised with the assistance of the National Art Gallery of Namibia, visited CCF.

In June, a teacher-training workshop was conducted at CCF with 16 Peace Corp teacher trainers. The workshop was organised by CCF and Enviroteach with the assistance of Peace Corps Training Director. A group of British VSO officials visited CCF in October, which consisted of health officials, teachers, extension officials, and psychologists. This group over-nighted at CCF's Wilderness Camp.

CCF's Community efforts also deal directly with youth that are interested in conservation. The youth are the future leaders of tomorrow, and they will determine the future of the cheetah in Namibia. Youth from various regions visited CCF during the past six months. Most of the youth spend 2 to 3 days at CCF's Wilderness Camp. Youth participating were from Oshana, Omusati, Grootfontein, Otavi, Opuwo, Anker, Kamanjab, Outjo, Khorixas, Omaruru, Swakopmund, Walvisbay, and Okakarara. The frequency of youth visits has increased considerably, with a special growing interest in CCF's projects. Over 160 people participated in CCF's Wilderness Camp programmes.

Apart from being exposed to CCF's research and conservation programmes, youth were encouraged to commit themselves to environmental conservation. They are asked to identify local and regional environmental problems, their causes and effects. Some of the issues identified by the youth that affects conservation include: commitment by the youth; lack of or inadequate support from the local businesses, local community and authorities; lack of resources, money, skills, manpower; and coordination of activities

3. CCF In-service Training and New Field School

Each year CCF hosts Namibia students for their in-service training. During the past six-months, Fanuel Ekondo completed his in-service training. His student project was to determine the carrying capacity of livestock that can be supported on CCF's farm Cheetah View. The project consisted of a grass survey on the farm between April and May. While at CCF, Fanuel also assisted in other activities such as cheetah and leopard research, game counts and collecting rainfall data. CCF's Education Coordinator, Matti Nghihembua, guided Fanuel during his in-service training.

During the six-month training, Matti and Fanuel attended a veld evaluation practical for the Polytechnic at Waterberg Plato Park and learned about the Becvol (Biomass Estimate for Canopy Volume) survey technique. The Becvol survey technique, which is used to determine browsing capacity of the bush, was tried at Cheetah View but unfortunately not enough data was gathered in order to write up a report.

CCF's Matti Nghihmebua was invited to participate in the panel discussion for the final evaluation of Polytechnic of Namibia's 3rd year agricultural students who completed their six-month of in-service training. Twenty students were evaluated.

International students at CCF for in-service training included Oregon Global Graduate, Terri-Jo Richter, Tufts veterinary student Yonida Corteze, University of Davis veterinary student Amy Wells, Oxford research assistant Amy Dickmann, and cheetah specialist from Moscow Zoo's research centre.

Between February and April, six university students from throughout North America were the pioneers of the first Round River Conservation Studies (RRCS) Field College. RRCS is an ecologically oriented research and education organisation whose goal is the formulation and carrying out of conservation strategies that preserve and restore wildness.

RRCS students spent three months learning the basics of Conservation Biology and conducting field studies on CCF's farm Cheetah View under the guidance of Dr. Richard Jeo. Round River Conservation Studies is linked to Utah State University and has developed partnerships in field conservation focusing on predators. During the three months four other guest lecturers visited the program to share their expertise with the students. Three Namibian students, Don Muroura, Matti Nghihembua and Fanuel Ekondo, participated in all classes and activities. Between October and December, eight university students from throughout North America completed the second course at Round River Conservation Studies field school at CCF. During the three months one other guest

lecturers visited the program. CCF's Don Muroura and Matti Nghihembua participated as assistant teachers sharing their knowledge of the Namibian ecosystems

4. Staff Education

Two members of CCF staff are currently enrolled in higher education as well as continuing their regular duties at CCF. CCF's director, Laurie Marker, has recently been accepted as a Ph.D. candidate at Oxford University in the Zoology Department's Wildlife Ecology Programme, known as WILD CRU, under the supervision of predator specialists Drs. David McDonald and Gus Mills. Don Muroura, CCF's Community Development Officer is now enrolled in a B-Tech programme at Polytechnic of Namibia.

5. Media and Public Relations

CCF has maintained a high profile in the media through numerous broadcasts on television and in the print media. Between January and March, the cheetah documentary starring Holly Hunter aired in Namibia and South Africa and Namibian in-flight movies. A programme featuring CCF was shown on South African TV, and programmes were made about CCF's efforts for the German TV 6, and a French TV station. An important South African TV programme, CarteBlanche, was made highlighting CCF's Livestock Guarding Dog programme.

In October, German TV and Canadian TV programmes were both broadcast on international satellite TV. An international TV programme called Champions of the Wild has been released. In September CCF's work was highlighted in Reader's Digest, in October in Defenders of Wildlife, and in December National Geographic. CCF recently worked with a film group for a Japanese TV programme and with a Canadian TV producer on a programme about CCF's Livestock Guarding Dogs, and a short programme with National Geographic TV on bush encroachment and its affects on cheetah's eyes. While in the USA, news interviews were conducted at 2 New York City TV stations and two in Dallas, Texas.

D. International Activities

The Fund assists in international programme development and adapts model programmes developed in Namibia for use in other countries, distributing CCF materials and information throughout Africa, Europe and the United States. CCF's director is one of five vice chairs of the IUCN's Cat Specialist Group and maintains international communications on the status of the wild cheetah population world-wide, including its relationship with man and threats to its survival.

1. International Conferences and Meetings

In February, CCF's Susan B. Deshaies represented CCF at the biennial Baden-Wurttembergische Jagd und Fischerei Ausstellung in Ulm. The hunting and fishing tradeshow presented an opportunity for CCF to inform attendees of the plight of the cheetah and to discuss the concept of sustainable utilization, advocated by CCF, NAPHA and the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

During the year, CCF's director Laurie Marker was invited to address farmer's meeting in South Africa, Kenya and Zimbabwe. The South African meeting was organised by Ms Anne van Dyk of the De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Centre, was attended by farmers, representatives from the Northern Provinces of South Africa, and the Endangered Wildlife Trust. In Kenya Marker presented CCF's research to farmers and researchers in Nairobi hosted by the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF). AWF has been a CCF sponsor for several years. And in Zimbabwe, two farmer's meeting were addressed, one was the Midland's and the other the Bulawayo Farmer's associations. All meetings were well attended by farmers and representatives from government and non-government conservation bodies.

At these farmers' meeting Marker was asked to share CCF's work and the predator conservation programmes being conducted in Namibia. These presentations led the way for open discussions between the various parties represented. From these discussions, Marker found that Namibian farmers have a great deal of insight they could share with their South African, Kenyan and Zimbabwe counterparts. Zimbabwe farmers were invited to meet with Namibian farmers and a delegation will most likely visit in 2000. The sharing of information between people in different countries helps all involved in facing the issues, from the farmers to the conservationists.

In March, AWF's Predator and People program director, Phillip Muruthi visited Namibia to see first hand CCF's programs and met many of CCF's neighboring farmers around the Waterberg and Okakarara. Joint programs are being discussed which could include possible exchanges between Namibia and Kenya of researchers and farmers.

In June, CCF's director, Laurie Marker, presented CCF's programmes at the 2nd International Wildlife Conference in Hungary. International wildlife specialist attended the conference and CCF's programmes were highly praised.

CCF's director was a guest speaker at the American Zoo Association's Annual Conference in Minnesota, USA. She presented CCF's programmes and how zoos can participate in eco-tourism to support local farmers that allow the cheetah to range on their lands. Zoo's have extensive eco-tourism and travel programmes for their members.

In May, Bonnie Schumann attended the 10th annual general meeting. During the meeting she was asked to present the Namibian cheetah export policy to captive facilities as well as the African Preservation Programme (APP) Annual Cheetah Report. Namibia's export policy excludes the export of cheetahs to captive facilities despite the breeding success of the facilities. There is virtually no cooperation in the exchange of cheetahs for breeding purposes due to the strong competition between the South African facilities. South Africa's captive cheetah population represents nearly 30% of the world's captive cheetah population and consists of 30% wild caught animals.

CCF's Education Officer, Matti Nghikembua, attended the annual EEASA Conference in September at the University of Rhodes in Grahamstown, South Africa. The Namibian Environmental Education Network (NEEN) sponsored his trip. The theme the conference was "Growing together" and was aimed at assessing the past growth to enable participants to plan for the future. Important topics, issues, challenges and experiences that face environmental education within the Southern African region dominated the conference. The knowledge and experience gained will contribute towards his career as an education officer and to environmental education in Namibia.

2. International Cheetah Studbook

The *1997/1998 International Cheetah Studbook* was published and distributed worldwide in November. The Studbook is a registry of all cheetahs in captivity and serves as a guide for regional and global captive breeding programmes. As of 31 December 1998, the world's captive population of cheetahs was 1270 (652.599.19) in 254 facilities in 49 countries. Published within the Studbook were 15 articles and reports about cheetah from captivity as well as in the wild.

E. CCF Organisational Activities

1. Development and International Fundraising

a. United States Fundraising

The initial phase of CCF's development, dorm and senior staff housing has been totally funded through a generous grant of \$150,000 from the Robert B. Haas Family Foundation. A challenge grant to CCF of an additional \$125,000, will allow for the renovation/construction of the three major buildings; the Visitor Centre, the Education Centre and the Robert B. Haas Cheetah Research Centre. In May, a major fundraiser sponsored by CCF's San Francisco CCF Chapter raised the remaining funds to meet the match. Various other private donors also assisted in the match.

From mid-September through mid October CCF's Director conducted her annual lecture and fund-raising tour in the United States. During this time she visited 12 states, 19 cities and gave over 30 presentations at universities, zoos, and private functions. The majority of CCF's annual operating budget comes from this annual trip. This year's tour was the most successful to date.

b. Namibian Fundraising

The CCF Namibian Board of Directors continues to be become more active in CCF's activities. A fund raising committee was created to raise funds from Namibian businesses. In August, "A Celebration of Speed and Elegance" was the theme of CCF's first "Supporters' Dinner". This prestigious event, held at the Kalahari Sands Hotel, acknowledged the support received from Namibians for cheetah conservation efforts in this country. The evening's highlight was the keynote address by CCF's International Patron, His Excellency Dr. Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia. CCF's dedicated Board of Directors, consisting of Namibian farmers, researchers and businessmen received special tribute. Over 140 distinguished guests representing Namibian businesses, farming communities, Ministries, and educational institutions filled the audience.

Dr. Nujoma delivered an inspiring keynote address in which he thanked Namibians for their ongoing support of CCF's efforts. Dr Gus Mills, a renowned predator specialist from South Africa's Kruger National Park and the Endangered Wildlife Trust, gave an excellent slide presentation on the various predator and people issues in Southern Africa and also shared interesting facts on the predators' complex role in the ecosystem. Included in the evening programme was a silent auction of various items which Namibian artists and businesses, as well as international supporters had generously donated for the event. Funds raised by the auction and through this event contribute to the current renovation of CCF's Research and Education Centre.

c. South Africa Cheetah OutReach

Cheetah OutReach has continued to support the efforts of CCF through their educational outreach programmes. Financial support from this programme has contributed to CCF's Centre renovation project.

d. UK Fundraising

Due to the great interest in CCF's work an UK chapter of CCF has been started. Two developmental meetings have taken place. EarthWatch's International Programme Director, Andrew Mitchell is chairing CCF UK, and past EarthWatch volunteer and now CCF architect Peter Stewart is the Secretary. A supporter's brunch was held in October when CCF's director was traveling back from the US. CCF is currently planning a launch for sometime in 2000.

2. Volunteer Programme

Volunteers are the backbone of CCF's programmes. During the past year over 80 volunteers have assisted at CCF. CCF continues to work closest with EarthWatch, of which four volunteers come to the Centre every other month for a three-week period. In August another 2-week EarthWatch programme was added, totaling 16 EarthWatch volunteers that assisted in all aspects of CCF's programmes.

Two of CCF's long-term volunteers recently left. Aaron Conrad, who assisted as the Facilities/Farm manager, and Phillipa Clinch whom assisted as the Marketing/PR officer. Ex-Peace Corp volunteer Meredith Brown assisted with education programmes, marketing and as the coordinator of EarthWatch and Raleigh volunteers for a six-month period.

CCF continues to work with the British youth development organisation, Raleigh International. Between August and October 35 Raleigh ventures built eight game count blinds on CCF's farms. These blinds will be used during monthly 24hour waterhole game counts. The same group also built a second toilet at the Wilderness camp. Raleigh International continues to be of great assistance to CCF.

Several other long and short-term volunteers have assisted including a mechanic who made road-worthy two of CCF's older vehicles.

2. CCF Staffing

CCF staff members include:

Laurie Marker – CCF Executive Director

Dr. Bruce Brewer – CCF General Manager

Bonnie Schumann – CCF Research Assistant

Don Muroua – CCF Community Development Officer

Matti Nghikembua – CCF Education Officer

Susan Deshaies – CCF Business Manager and Livestock Guarding Dog Coordinator

Lien Malan – Part-time, CCF Public Information Officer and Research Assistant

CCF also supports eleven Namibian farm workers.

V. PLANNED ACTIVITIES: JANUARY – DECEMBER 2000

- Continue the building and renovation of facilities on Elandsvreugde. This phase of the project will include finishing the construction of new renovated Research Centre and Education Centre. Work should be complete by mid-2000.
- Plan CCF's facility dedication ceremony for July 2000.
- Develop exhibit designs for the new Education Centre.
- Continue repair work on the old house on Cheetah View and the workers houses.
- Conduct the third and fourth sessions of the Field College on Cheetah View in cooperation with Round River Conservation Studies.
- Work towards a Cheetah Census Workshop in co-operation with the Large Carnivore Management Forum. CCF will work together with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) in organising the Workshop to invite qualified census researchers to assist with the methodology and data analysis.
- Continue working with farmers in tag- and-release programme and biological sampling of wild-caught cheetahs.
- Continue work with the Large Carnivore Management Forum.
- Expand the radio-tracking programme to include more collared cheetahs, with an emphasis on female cheetahs.

- Continue working with the Waterberg Conservancy in wildlife, habitat monitoring, eco-tourism activities and promoting the concept of conservancies in Namibia through CANAM. CCF will continue working with communal conservancies.
- Continue to expand the Livestock Guarding Dog Programme through breeding and placement of dogs on farms.
- Continue research on Conditioned Taste Aversion.
- Expand CCF's community development programme with emphasis on youth groups.
- Continue to conduct educational assembly programmes in schools throughout Namibia and assist teachers in the use of CCF's revised Teacher's Resource Guide through teacher training workshops.
- Continue with student research projects in co-operation with Namibia's Polytechnic and the University of Namibia. Other international students will also be joining CCF for intern programmes.
- Continue as a field station for EarthWatch.
- Continue working with Raleigh International volunteers.
- Continue working with CCF's Namibian fundraising committee to recruit partnerships with local businesses.
- Assist with the development of CCF UK.
- Conduct a research trip to Iran to assist with conservation of their remaining cheetah population.
- Assist India with developing a cheetah programme in their country.
- Continue to host national and international journalists.

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