

# The Sophia FOUNDATION

*Raising consciousness for the good of the whole*



Issue 13 | Dec 2025 | End of Year Letter

## Is Humanity Awakening to a New Respect for the Family of Life?

### Dear Friends of The Sophia Foundation

In all movements of time, there are people who contribute to giving new form to our understanding of the world around us. Their work proves foundational for humanity's transition to a new level of Consciousness. This year the world said goodbye to two of these visionaries — Joanna Macy and Jane Goodall — both of whom helped to reshape how we see and relate to the world around us.

**Joanna Macy** wrote in *World as Lover, World as Self*:

"In the first movement, our infancy as a species, we felt no separation from the natural world around us. Trees, rocks, and plants surrounded us with a living presence as intimate and pulsing as our own bodies ... we were as one with our world as a child in the mother's womb.

Then self-consciousness arose and gave us distance on our world. ... With the emergence of free-will, the fall out of the Garden of Eden, the second movement began -- the lonely and heroic journey of the ego. .... some of us tend to disparage that movement of separation from nature, but it brought us great gains for which we can be grateful. The distanced and observing eye brought us tools of science, and a priceless view of the vast, orderly intricacy of our world. The recognition of our individuality brought us trial by jury and the Bill of Rights.

Now, harvesting these gains, we are ready to return. The third movement begins. Having gained distance and sophistication of perception, we can turn and recognize who we have been all along. Now it can dawn on us: we are our world knowing itself. We can relinquish

our separateness. We can come home again -- and participate in our world in a richer, more responsible and poignantly beautiful way than before, in our infancy."

She spoke of the need for compassion and of the wisdom and insight needed to recognize the mutual belonging of everything that is interwoven into the web of life.

**Jane Goodall's** mission was to create a world where humankind could live in harmony with nature. She expressed the following sentiment in various speeches, writings and interviews:

"And if we dare to look into those eyes, then we shall feel their suffering in our hearts. More and more people have seen that appeal and felt it in their hearts. All around the world there is an awakening of understanding and compassion. An understanding that reaches out to help the suffering animals in their vanishing homelands; that embraces hungry, sick, and desperate human beings - people who are starving while the fortunate among us have so much more than we need. And if, one by one, we help them, the hurting animals, the desperate humans, then together we shall alleviate so much of the hunger, fear, and pain in the world. Together we can bring change to the world, gradually replacing fear and hatred with compassion and love. Love for all living beings."

Both Joanna Macy and Jane Goodall believed a better world was possible and that it was not too late to move towards a life-sustaining civilization.

# The Sophia FOUNDATION

*Raising consciousness for the good of the whole*



## OUR PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

### ACTIVITIES AND COLLABORATIONS DURING 2025

- WATERSHED  
Sterilization, education, emergency medical care, feeding schemes, rehoming.
- MDZANANDA ANIMAL CLINIC  
Emergency funding for rebuilding operating theatre
- WILD RESTORATION  
Wildlife corridor development and biodiversity restoration.
- DAILY MAVERICK  
Maverick Earth — a fresh dimension in environmental journalism.
- PEACE PARKS FOUNDATION  
Ranger Support Programme — reflecting on a collaborative journey towards conservation.

Our main focus this year has been to complete the documentation that will be legally formalised to create the guardrails to as far as possible ensure The Sophia Foundation meets its Vision well into the future. That is of being part of the third movement in the evolution of Consciousness, where we choose to act out of our own freedom in the interests of the good of the whole. We are also in the process of identifying people who could possibly take the Foundation into the next phase of its development as guardians, stewards and custodians of its Vision, Mission and Ethos and Donor Intent.

Having learnt much from supporting a range of projects in our areas of focus we are currently seeking out initiatives where our contribution can add the most transformative value and achieve the greatest impact. We could not wish for a better partner than Watershed Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation Fund, founded by



*Having learnt much from supporting a range of projects in our areas of focus we are currently seeking out initiatives where our contribution can add the most transformative value and achieve the greatest impact.*





Stephne Jackson, to lead our outreach into Animal Anti-Cruelty, Welfare and Well-being. They remain our anchor project for this pillar.

For a number of years we have had a developing relationship with Rupert Barnard and Michelle De Bruyn, the initiators of Wild Restoration. Primarily focused on alien vegetation clearing, they recently expanded their work to include an Invasive Clearing Action Network. As one of the Foundation's areas of interest is in the creation of corridors in the Cape Floristic Region that will allow for the safe migration, interbreeding and dispersal of animals and plants, we agreed to sponsor the extension of their work to include corridors. This undertaking has grown organically, and you will read that they are in the process of building a solid basis for this corridor work whilst at the same time making some exciting discoveries!

Our emergency fund contributed to the Mdzananda Animal Clinic in Khayelitsha for the rebuilding of their operating theatre which was completely destroyed when driven into by a truck driver who lost control of his vehicle.

The survival of mankind is dependent on a healthy environment. One of the most pressing needs of our time is, I believe, the need to move from seeing nature as a commodity to be exploited to recognizing the interdependence and interconnectedness of all human and non-human entities - where value comes through reciprocity and regeneration and not through extraction. When we were approached by Styli Charalambous, the Co-founder and CEO of Daily Maverick and investigative journalist Dr. Don Pinnock

to sponsor Maverick Earth (Our Burning Planet), the environmental reporting section of the Daily Maverick, we agreed on condition they included a sixth focus area. This area would give a voice to leading thoughts promoting the belief that all humans are a part of Nature and that all living things have intrinsic value independent of their usefulness to humans, as well as advancing the recognition of the legal rights of more than human entities, like Table Mountain.

It is sometimes only in retrospect that the impact The Sophia Foundation has had on initiatives is realised. When we approached Peace Parks Foundation about sponsoring an Incentive scheme for rangers, we felt this was a gap that needed attention as rangers were widely neglected in spite of the significant risks in their essential work of protecting our wildlife. As one of the principles of The Sophia Foundation is to add value and develop people in addition to giving grants, an Inner Leadership Programme and a Top Ranger Leadership Award were included as necessary components of our sponsorship. Unfortunately, both of the leadership components were difficult to formalise so fell away and in order to be congruent with our principles we could not extend our sponsorship. We did this regrettably but with peace of mind knowing that after Prince William had highlighted the plight of rangers so publicly there would be little difficulty getting sponsorship to continue the programme. Cathryn Gill a resource developer at Peace Parks Foundation, has kindly agreed to share her insights into how the involvement of The Sophia Foundation has influenced the Ranger Incentive Scheme.



## WATERSHED

ANIMAL RESCUE, REHABILITATION AND OUTREACH

*"Only if we understand can we care. Only if we care will we help.*

*Only if we help, shall all be saved. "*

Jane Goodall

### Stephne Jackson, Founder, writes:

"Be kind, whenever possible. It is always possible" is a phrase by the Dalai Lama that keeps me grounded, especially as one of the greatest struggles we face in our work with Watershed is to help others to see animals as sentient beings with the capacity to have emotions like fear, pain and joy. We have learnt not to judge those living in the deprived areas where we focus our work as we do not live in the harsh conditions that are part of their daily lives.

Our motto is to work holistically and respectfully to create a shared vision with all involved where the animal is accepted and cared for as an integral part of the community, family and home. We aim to foster mutual respect, trust and kindness within the communities we serve and to nurture pride of place, pride of home, pride of family – and with that, pride in the dog, cat or pet under their care. I feel pride when, after months of working with people and communities, I see a clean yard, a proper area for the pet, children filling water bowls and, in some cases, even a new vegetable garden popping up.

Sterilisation, where we contribute to the control of unnecessary breeding and the birth of unwanted litters, remains our main focus. We sterilised 661 animals this year. This included both our own outreach initiatives and those of other dedicated outreach programmes to which we gave financial aid. We provide vaccinations, deworming, tick and flea treatment as well as any necessary veterinary care for all sterilised animals. Young animals are noted for sterilisation when at the appropriate age.



Sterilization in progress



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## WATERSHED

STERILIZATION, EDUCATION, EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE,  
FEEDING SCHEMES, REHOMING

Animal welfare and wellbeing in poverty stricken and neglected areas poses an ongoing challenge, as there is a continuous need for basic support. Through our feeding schemes (we in addition continue to assist other welfare organisations with monthly food donations), emergency veterinary support and sterilisation outreaches, we offer relief from the great suffering of animals from abuse, neglect, disease and often a painful and untimely death. Our targeted on-going interventions over the years are beginning to have an impact and we are starting to see improvements in the condition of animals in the areas we serve – a true reward for our efforts!

We are also deeply proactive in terms of rehoming and adoptions. Animals we cannot leave in the community are taken into boarding, where they are rehabilitated and stay until they are rehomed via our social media networks and our sponsored flight programme with BidAir PetLounge. For the past ten years this programme has allowed us to rehabilitate and rehome animals all over South Africa – further broadening our reach and impact.

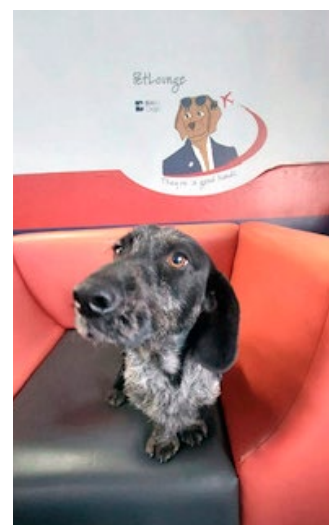
*“Sterilisation, where we contribute to the control of unnecessary breeding and the birth of unwanted litters, remains our main focus. We sterilised 661 animals this year. This included both our own outreach initiatives and those of other dedicated outreach programmes to which we gave financial aid.”*



Outreach team



Food donations



Flying to forever home

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## WATERSHED

STERILIZATION, EDUCATION, EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE,  
FEEDING SCHEMES, REHOMING

### *Sophy — the beautiful Afrikanus dog from the Transkei*

One special success story worthy of mention is Sophy, a beautiful Afrikanus dog from the Transkei. Lorraine, the founder of The Sophia Foundation, and a few friends, paid a short visit to Trennerys on the Wild Coast and were given a lovely reception by a very young and lively female dog who they assumed belonged to the hotel. On the following days they were once again charmed by her free spirit as they met “her” on the beach where she frolicked in and out of the sea, darted in figures of eight on the sand and in between bounded up to her delighted audience. Lorraine was incredibly concerned when the hotel manager said “she” had arrived a few days earlier “probably having followed a group of hikers on the trail from Wavecrest”, that it was hotel policy not to allow dogs and that “she” was destined to follow the tragic destiny of other stray dogs in the area.

Unfortunately, Lorraine had to leave without “her” but armed with a photograph and a painful heart she returned to Cape Town and contacted me.

Watershed had not worked in the Transkei area before, but I sprang into action. We would find her, and we would call her Sophia in honour of The Sophia Foundation and Lorraine’s unwavering commitment to her rescue. After many phone calls reaching out to organisations that may be able to help, I connected with Oscar from Petcare Animal Lifeline based at Hole in the Wall. He spoke of the horrific conditions facing animals on the Wild Coast and agreed to go to Trennerys with his niece, Meg, who was visiting from Durban, to assess the welfare of animals in the area and to see if he could find Sophia. By some miracle he did! Sophy (it was easier to say) was clearly not used to being indoors or in a car but she stayed close enough for them to be able to take her to meet Oscar’s pack of twelve dogs and to wriggle her way into Meg’s heart.



Meeting Sophy at reception



Oscar finds Sophy



Sophy showing her free spirit



## WATERSHED

STERILIZATION, EDUCATION, EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE,  
FEEDING SCHEMES, REHOMING



Meg took Sophy home with her to Durban, where, with our support, she was sterilised, micro-chipped and fully vaccinated. The photographs say it all. Today, Sophy lives a life full of love and joy with Meg who affectionately calls her “Little Miss Sunshine”. She found her way into many hearts in the most extraordinary way – her journey and presence has been a stark reminder of how simple and sacred love can be when it is freely given.

Sophy’s rescue led to Watershed’s further support of dogs and cats in the Transkei, where overbreeding, painful, preventable diseases like TVT and suffering at the hand of tribal practices is rampant. We now work with the Transkei Animal Welfare Initiative and aim to assist them with sterilisation outreaches throughout the region next year.

None of our work would be possible without the wonderful and generous support of The Sophia Foundation. Over the years, our partnership has been vital in helping us improve the lives of neglected animals in poorer communities and bring about meaningful change by allowing us to build long-term relationships.

I would like to end by saying that every life we save reminds us of what’s possible when compassion leads the way. Whether you open your home, your heart or simply share our mission – you are part of every wag, and every happy, new beginning in that animal’s life. Together, we make second chances happen. Every rescued animal has a story – and every story needs someone to believe in it. Thank you to The Sophia Foundation for listening, believing and standing by us.

We are forever grateful.





**mdzananda**  
animal clinic and shelter

Caring for the animals of Khayelitsha

*The Sophia* FOUNDATION

*Raising consciousness for the good of the whole*

## MDZANANDA ANIMAL CLINIC

EMERGENCY FUNDING FOR OPERATING THEATRE

*“Let us develop respect for all living things. Let us try to replace violence and intolerance with understanding and compassion. And love”*

Jane Goodall

For many years, Mdzananda Animal Clinic in Khayelitsha has worked to build a community that cares for every animal - be it a pet, a neighbour's pet, a stray or a farm animal. They provide low-cost veterinary health care services, empower the community through education, and build partnerships based on respect and trust, inside and outside of the community. Thanks to their commitment, over 1500 pets receive vital care every month.

The relationship between our founder Lorraine Forbes and Mdzananda Animal Clinic goes back to 2011 when she personally contributed to the building of cages for the cats, an important addition that increased capacity to rescue, rehabilitate and rehome cats in need. Fostering responsibility, respect for all life forms and compassion are values shared by Mdzananda Animal Clinic and The Sophia Foundation.

Marcelle du Plessis, Mdzananda's Fundraising and Communications Executive, shares below the story of how “In a time of dire need, The Sophia Foundation came to the rescue.

The Mdzananda Animal Clinic and shelter suffered a horrific accident in September 2025 where a truck drove at full speed into our operating theatre. The theatre, significantly damaged, luckily contained no animals or staff at the time. An appeal for funding assistance to rebuild the uninhabitable structure was released and, with so much gratitude, The Sophia Foundation stepped in to help with a sizable donation. The remains have been demolished, and a temporary refurbished shipping container has been obtained in which to continue operations. Discussions with an architect are now underway to build a new theatre which will be even better for the animal's health care and recovery than before. Our greatest gratitude goes out to The Sophia Foundation for helping us in this time of need.”







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## WILD RESTORATION

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT AND  
BIODIVERSITY RESTORATION

*“By inviting in these experiences of interconnectedness we can enhance our sense of belonging to our world. This mode of being widens and deepens our sense of who we are.”*

Joanna Macy

### Rupert Barnard and Michelle de Bruyn, co-founders, write:

Wild Restoration focuses on invasive clearing, biodiversity restoration and reconnecting people with nature, all with the intention of helping nature to thrive. The support of The Sophia Foundation has enabled the expansion of our work to include the development of corridors where we are making steady progress in several areas.

We have been able to install numerous trail cameras across the Western Overberg that are helping us and landowners to understand which animals are present in the habitats where we are working, and how they are moving. The ease of movement of animals is hampered by roads, fences and infrastructure, transformed lands, as well as human presence and noise. Connection across landscapes is vital for the long-term vitality of both individual species, and ecosystems as a whole. Animals often avoid contact with people, and so trail cameras are an effective way to understand more about how corridors can reconnect landscapes. Based on this knowledge, we can then work out how to remove obstacles and improve the flow of wildlife.

We have facilitated and coordinated collaboration with landowners around wildlife corridors and biodiversity restoration in multiple locations within the Western Overberg region. These include the Riviersonderend mountains, Kleinriviersberg, Swarttrivier and Steenboksberg, near the towns of Botrivier, Greyton, Tesselaarsdal and Stanford. As development and urban encroachment further reduce wild areas in this region, coordinating biodiversity restoration has become ever more important.



Trail camera footage from the cameras secured through The Sophia Foundation's support.



Meeting with landowners and LandCare in the Swarttrivier area around cooperative clearing and biodiversity restoration.

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## WILD RESTORATION

### WILDLIFE CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT AND BIODIVERSITY RESTORATION



Trail camera footage of duiker



Restorative retreat at Bodhi Khaya



Trail camera footage of honey badgers

Our entry point with landowners has often been around the urgent need for invasive clearing on their land. This has then led to conversations and collaborative action with their neighbours covering broader biodiversity management, strategic firebreaks, wildlife corridors and formal land protection to support longer term biodiversity stewardship.

With our support, the Kleinriviersberg landowners have collectively designed a shared firebreak, and begun implementing key sections of the firebreak that will help to protect the biodiversity of parts of these mountains. Varied ages of vegetation help to nurture greater biodiversity in an area and prevent excessively large and hot fires that threaten both wildlife and plant recovery.

In the Swartrivier, landowners are stepping up their invasive clearing work and have opted into a joint plan going forward building on a shared love for nature. The trail camera results in their area are also helping landowners to be enthused about the wildlife that they are stewarding.

We also hosted a restorative retreat at Bodhi Khaya near Gansbaai with conservation stakeholders from

the Cape Floristic Region. It was an opportunity for people working in conservation to reconnect with themselves, each other and wider nature, and rebalance their thinking. Participants gained experience with various tools around listening, thinking and systems change. The group also collectively modelled the current conservation system and how it could shift in time to better support nature and connectivity.

Next year, we will deepen our coordination and corridor work in the Overberg. We intend to strengthen partnerships in the landscape, bring on board more landowners, and open safe movement for animals within the corridors

We very much appreciate the support of The Sophia Foundation in our efforts to mitigate habitat fragmentation caused by human development and look forward to an ongoing partnership with the Foundation as together we work towards securing effective biodiversity corridors and conservation leadership in the years ahead.







## MAVERICK EARTH

A FRESH DIMENSION IN ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM

*“To those who hesitate to act I gently ask: what if caring for our planet is not merely an environmental concern but the very foundation of our survival.”*

Jane Goodall

### Don Pinnock, investigative journalist, writes:

In the past decade, the way we consume news has been turned on its head. What was once the territory of print newspapers has shifted increasingly to online. It's been a revolution with mixed blessings – faster, more immediate and infinitely adaptable, but also relentless, overwhelming, and sometimes worryingly shallow.

When **Daily Maverick** founders **Branko Brkic** and **Styli Charalambous** launched their platform, their goal was simple but radical: to do things differently. They set out to create a space for daily in-depth, long-form journalism that was freely accessible – and it worked. Maverick has become home to some of South Africa's finest reporters, responsible for investigations that have changed the course of the nation. Uncovering and exposing the corrupt empire of the Gupta brothers, aided by then-president Jacob Zuma, is just one landmark example.

As climate change and biodiversity loss grew impossible to ignore, the Maverick team launched a specialist section: **Our Burning Planet**. Staffed by six full-time journalists, it quickly became the continent's largest environmental newsroom.

But the work was tough. Day after day, the reporters confronted massive, accelerating planetary crises – and the emotional toll was real. Recognizing this, Daily Maverick took an unusually compassionate step for a newsroom: they brought in psychological support for their journalists, available at any time.

Running such a powerhouse of environmental journalism isn't cheap. Initial support came from a major bank, but when that funding ended, Maverick faced a dilemma: how to keep a vital public service alive.



*Both sides valued environmental journalism – but Sophia's vision reached deeper: the evolution of consciousness itself, toward living more harmoniously with one another and with the natural world.*

Enter **The Sophia Foundation**. Early conversations between **Lorraine** and the Maverick team revealed a shared sense of purpose. Both sides valued environmental journalism – but Sophia’s vision reached deeper: the evolution of consciousness itself, toward living more harmoniously with one another and with the natural world.

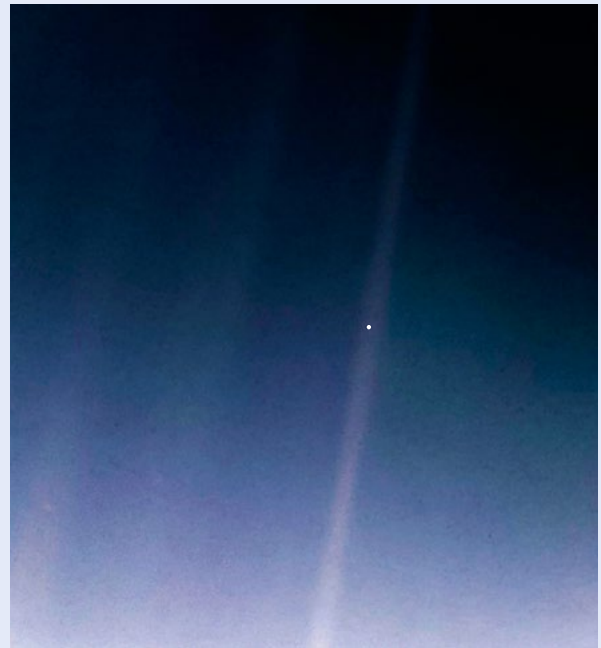
Through a series of energizing and insightful discussions, the partnership found its shape. Together, they imagined not only sustaining environmental reporting, but expanding it – delving into what could be called **deep ecology**: exploring the philosophical, ethical and cultural currents that shape how we understand and interact with our planet.

From this collaboration, **Our Burning Planet** will evolve into **Maverick Earth**, featuring an ongoing series titled **Notes From a Small Planet**. This new space will bring readers into contact with the thinkers, scientists, activists and artists re-imagining our ecological future. It will offer slow, reflective storytelling – pieces that spark curiosity, challenge assumptions and reveal the deeper meanings behind sustainability.

The tone? Accessible but rigorous. Sometimes playful. Always curious. It’s for readers who crave more than headlines – who want to understand the world in all its complexity and wonder.

What has emerged from this collaboration is not just funding support, but a **fresh dimension in environmental journalism** – one that recognizes that solving the planet’s crises requires not only data and policy, but imagination, courage and expanded awareness. Daily Maverick and The Sophia Foundation are joining forces to help foster exactly that.

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## OUR PALE BLUE DOT

Welcome to the first of our series **NOTES FROM A SMALL PLANET**, supported by the Sophia Foundation. Maverick Earth was started out of concern over global warming, declining biodiversity and the unravelling of the fabric which holds life together. For five years we have reported from the frontlines of conservation, energy use, pollution and developments concerning the impact of humans on the biosphere.

**NOTES FROM A SMALL PLANET** takes you deeper, to the people and ideas that can and have brought about the healing of our small, blue dot in the depths of space, the only home we have. There can be no better starting point than the words of astrophysicist Carl Sagan who was involved with NASA’s Voyager space programme.

He wrote these words after viewing a photograph taken by Voyager 1 in 1990 when it was about 6.4 billion kilometers from Earth. The small spacecraft turned its camera back toward the solar system and captured Earth as a tiny speck of light suspended in a sunbeam.

To read the article “Our Pale Blue Dot” click [here](#)





PEACE PARKS™  
FOUNDATION

## PEACE PARKS

RANGER SUPPORT PROGRAMME — REFLECTING ON A  
COLLABORATIVE JOURNEY TOWARDS CONSERVATION

*“Everything we do has ripples of influence extending far beyond what we can see”*

Joanna Macy



### **Cathryn Gill, Resource Developer, writes:**

As the year comes to a close, we at Peace Parks Foundation take the opportunity to reflect on the remarkable impact of our ongoing partnership with The Sophia Foundation. Together, we have been committed to tackling global environmental and social challenges through people-centred conservation efforts. Over the past three years, this partnership has been instrumental in enhancing the welfare and effectiveness of Rangers across the transboundary landscapes where Peace Parks operates.

Central to our collaboration has been our shared understanding of the indispensable role Rangers play in conservation. These dedicated individuals serve as the frontline defenders of our natural world, often working in remote and challenging environments. Recognising their critical contributions, The Sophia Foundation generously committed to support the rangers through an extensive Ranger Support Programme. This programme is built on three core components:

*The visionary support from The Sophia Foundation has not only bolstered frontline conservation but has also sparked the creation of the Ranger360 programme. This multi-year initiative aims to expand and deepen ranger support across Southern Africa, integrating technology, integrity management, wellness, and community engagement into a cohesive framework.*

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## PEACE PARKS

RANGER SUPPORT PROGRAMME — REFLECTING ON A  
COLLABORATIVE JOURNEY TOWARDS CONSERVATION



- The Success-Based Ranger Incentive Scheme
- The Best Performing Ranger Awards
- The Inner Development Training Programme

These initiatives have collectively contributed to a more professional, motivated, and resilient ranger workforce, setting a new benchmark for conservation efforts in the region.

The visionary support from The Sophia Foundation has not only bolstered frontline conservation but has also sparked the creation of the Ranger360 programme. This multi-year initiative aims to expand and deepen ranger support across Southern Africa, integrating technology, integrity management, wellness, and community engagement into a cohesive framework. Ranger360 is poised to benefit over 500 rangers and impact more than 200,000 individuals living around protected areas, building on the successes of our collaboration.

As we conclude this grant period, Peace Parks, particularly our Protected Area Integrity Management team, extends heartfelt gratitude to The Sophia Foundation. Your financial assistance and insightful contributions have been invaluable, underscoring the internal aspects of the dedicated individuals who form a well-motivated Ranger Corps.

The Sophia Foundation's willingness to experiment and collaborate has been crucial in transforming challenges into opportunities. This partnership has laid the groundwork for proactive and predictive conservation strategies, enhancing the efficiency of our law enforcement efforts. By addressing skill gaps, promoting non-lethal enforcement strategies, and fostering a culture of integrity, the programme has set a new standard for ranger operations across Mozambique and Malawi.

While not every aspect of the Ranger Support Programme unfolded as initially planned, the commitment and growth mindset shared by The Sophia Foundation and Peace Parks have been key in driving positive change. As we look to the future, Lorraine and her Foundation's support remains invaluable in our mission to protect both people and nature. The initiatives pioneered through this collaboration promise lasting impacts on ecosystem protection and community trust, ensuring that rangers are well-prepared to face the challenges ahead.

In closing, we express our profound gratitude to The Sophia Foundation for its unwavering dedication and support. Together, we are creating safer, more efficient, and more sustainable conservation efforts, paving the way for a brighter future for rangers and the ecosystems they tirelessly protect.



# The Sophia FOUNDATION

*Raising consciousness for the good of the whole*

As the year approaches its end, I reflect with gratitude on the rich relationships we have had with our partner organisations and the many people who have played a role in supporting me and The Sophia Foundation as it continues its transition into the future. In particular, I wish to thank Koos Rossouw, my trustee who in spite of his full schedule, has continued to answer my calls for advice, input and support and to join me in making decisions on major funding initiatives; Cecila Solis-Peralta who with her research skills and penetrating understanding of The Sophia Foundation's Ethos has played a vital role in supporting our work on succession planning documentation; Bryn Hatty and Richard Minnaar from Stonehage Fleming who have been hugely generous with their time and interest in creating funding models for the future grant-making of the Foundation; and Bryony De Stadler who has joined the Foundation part time as my administrative assistant and has shown her excellent written communication talents and attention to detail making sure every "t" is crossed and "i" dotted in our correspondence.

It has also been a gift to meet Dr. Don Pinnock who has used his journalistic skills to edit some of our pillar guidelines but also introduced me to a number of his fellow leaders in the field of conservation including Dr. Andrew Muir the CEO of Wilderness Foundation Africa and Cormac Cullinan who has been a driving force in promoting the Rights of Nature. This is a global movement that recognises that Nature is not mere property, but has inherent rights, such as a forest's right to health or a river's right to flow.

And then I wish to thank all those Friends of The Sophia Foundation who have offered words of encouragement, input and support as the Foundation has grown from being a vision of possibility to slowly finding its place as part of a movement for change. This third movement is beginning to gain momentum. In 2019 the United Nations recognised Rights of Nature as the fastest growing legal movement in the world. It

is a change that was recognised by Jane Goodall when she wrote:

*"We still have a long way to go. But we are moving in the right direction. If only we can overcome cruelty, to human and animal, with love and compassion we shall stand at the threshold of a new era in human moral and spiritual evolution—and realize, at last, our most unique quality: humanity."*

With my warmest wishes for a peaceful transition into 2026

Lorraine

Lorraine Forbes

